

Hopkinton School District
Data and Planning Subcommittee of the Facilities Committee
Minutes 12/7/05

Present were: Katie Merrow, Kevin Chittim, Richard Ayers, Bill Carozza, Joyce Rose, Tony Walker, Byron Carr, Marshall Rowe, Julie Morris, Bob Gerseny, Peter Gagnon, Nelson Thibault, and Russ Thibeault.

Katie Merrow began the meeting at 7:00 a.m. by introducing Russ Thibeault of Applied Economic Resources and briefly explained what he would be presenting.

Russ began by showing a PowerPoint presentation (which will be posted on the District Website for review). The presentation was created by using data obtained from Doug Brown. The figures were calculated by aging current children, adding new births, and accounting for the average number of housing permits. Growth in the area was most significant in the 1990's. Overall enrollment seems stable over the next ten years. Enrollment may decline slightly which could be in a particular grade level, not overall. Some grade levels could still be at or above capacity. If the number of births, or housing permits increased, the numbers could change drastically. Historically, there is a significant migration of families with children into Hopkinton. The number of students enrolling in Kindergarten and first grade are markedly higher than the number of births in town.

Russ continued pointing out that population trends show the number of resident's ages nineteen and under is declining overall. It is anticipated that in the next ten years, Merrimack County's population will decrease in the under 19 age group by 561, the 20-34 will increase by 5,665, the 35-54 age group will decline by 8,036, and the 55+ age group will increase by 16,110. Russ attributed this shift largely to baby boomer children having completed 12th grade.

One of the most consistent predictors of growth in school age children is the number of bedrooms in the available housing. There is a correlation between a greater number of bedrooms and more school age children. To do a complete in-depth study of Hopkinton, assessment information from the Town would need to be cross referenced with school information to determine the true migration numbers. The question was raised whether or not housing prices have an impact on families moving in i.e. affordability. Russ replied that the number of bedrooms correlate to the number of students, not housing prices.

Russ concluded by saying that the focus for School Districts in the future will be shifted to the quality of facilities rather than quantity. Priority should be given to ensuring that the facilities are adequate in the areas of: auditorium space, music rooms, computer labs, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25.

Submitted by Marcy Bauers