SPECIAL MEETING
CONWAY CITY COUNCIL
BUILDING & PLANNING DEPARTMENT
196 LAUREL STREET, CONWAY, SC 29526
MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2023 - 10:00 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. CONSIDERATION OF EMERGENCY DEMOLITION OF WHITTEMORE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

III. CONSIDERATION OF CLOSING REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR WHITTEMORE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROPERTY

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor
Barbara Blain-Bellamy

Mayor Pro Tem
Justin. D. Jordan

City of CONWAY SOUTH CAROLINA

FIRE DEPARTMENT

"STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE"

Council Members
Amanda Butler
William M. Goldfinch IV
Beth Helms
B. Alex Hyman
Larry A. White

March 10, 2023

Re: 1615 Horry Street

On Tuesday, March 7, 2023, Conway Fire was dispatched to this address for a reported structure fire at the former site of Whittemore Elementary School. After battling the fire for nearly 24 hours, it was extinguished. Portions of the building were required to be demolished to battle the fire.

Multiple rooms were at flashover stage upon arrival, which occurs at fires exceeding 1,100 degrees.

International Fire Code, Section 114 addresses Unsafe Structures.

[A]114.1.1Unsafe conditions.
Structures or existing equipment that are or hereafter become unsafe, insanitary or deficient because of inadequate *means of egress*, inadequate light and ventilation, or that constitute a fire hazard, are otherwise dangerous to human life or the public welfare, or involve illegal or improper occupancy or inadequate maintenance, shall be deemed an unsafe condition. Unsafe structures shall be taken down and removed or made safe, as the *fire code official* deems necessary and as provided for in this section. A vacant structure that is not secured against unauthorized entry shall be deemed unsafe.

Per this section, the remains of Whittemore Elementary are deemed unsafe.

Phillip L. Hendrick, Jr., MPA, CFO
Fire Chief/Emergency Manager
City of Conway

1600 Ninth Avenue ◊ Post Office Box 1075
Conway, South Carolina 29528-1075
Telephone (843) 248-1720 ◊ Fax (843) 248-1725
www.cityofconway.com

1615 Horry Street Structure Fire
March 7, 2023

12:43:44 – 911 call received
12:47:42 – Call dispatched
12:51:55 – Arrival of first Conway Fire units (Squad 51 and Battalion 51)
- Reported fire showing from the front side and requested a second alarm
    - Second Alarm – Additional fire apparatus from Horry County Fire Rescue dispatched

12:55 – Engine 52 arrival
12:58 – Ladder 53 arrival
12:56 – Chief 50 arrival
1:03 – Division 51 arrival
1:12 – Chief 51 arrival
1:14 – Received a second structure fire report on Woodward Drive
1:15 – Chief 51 cleared Horry Street to respond to Woodward Drive
- Horry County Engine 3 (Bucksport) cleared from Horry Street to respond
- Horry County Engine 46 responded from their station (Pitch Landing Road)

4:30 – Fire was deemed under control
4:47 – Division 51 cleared
6:09 – Public Works notified to send heavy equipment for demolition of affected areas due to unsafe conditions
7:05 – Public Works equipment and manpower arrived on location
7:15 – Demolition on the main area of fire origin began
7:45 – Demolition was concluded
8:17 – Allan Huggins requested by Chief Long to fly the drone
8:46 – SLED requested by Chief Long
10:39 – SLED arrived on scene
12:30 – Assistant Chief Perzan contacted DHEC due to the history of asbestos
13:27 – Engine 52 cleared
13:54 – Ladder 53 cleared
16:30 – Investigation was concluded by SLED
16:45 – Demolition on remaining portion of the burned section began
17:35 – Ladder 53 arrived back at the scene to assist with the remaining hot spots after demolition of the remaining burned portion of the building
18:49 – All units cleared

<u>Conway Fire Units</u>
Squad 51 – Fire Engine from Station 1 (1600 Ninth Avenue)
Engine 52 – Fire Engine from Station 2 (704 Country Club Drive)
Ladder 53 – Aerial Ladder from Station 3 (703 Century Circle)
Battalion 51 – Shift Commander (Acting Captain Jeromy Herndon)
Chief 50 – Chief Le Hendrick
Chief 51 – Assistant Chief Jason Perzan
Division 51 – Training Officer Patrick O'Leary

Horry County Fire Rescue Units
Engine 23 (University)
Squad 8 (Juniper Bay)
Engine 40 (Reaves Ferry)
Engine 43 (Lee's Landing)
Engine 27 (Allen's Crossroads)
Engine 21 (Maple) [all volunteer station]
Engine 16 (Cates Bay) [all volunteer station]
Engine 3 (Bucksport)
Engine 4 (Forestbrook)
Rescue 3 (Allen's Crossroads)
Medic 29 (Conway Medic Unit)
Basic 46 (Pitch Landing Medic Unit)
Ladder 39 (Carolina Forest)
Ladder 1 (Socastee)
Rehab 45 (Carolina Bays)
Chief 4 – Assistant Chief Doug Cline
Battalion 2 – Battalion Chief Mike Noreck
Battalion 3 – Battalion Chief Matt Smith
EMS 1 – Captain Patrick Ellis
Investigator 2 – Captain Matt Rice
Training 2 – Captain Wayne Jones

SECTION 114
UNSAFE STRUCTURES OR EQUIPMENT

[A] 114.1 General.

If during the inspection of a premises, a structure, or any building system, in whole or in part, constitutes a clear and inimical threat to human life, safety or health, the *fire code official* shall issue such notice or orders to remove or remedy the conditions as shall be deemed necessary in accordance with this section, and shall refer the building to the building official for any repairs, *alterations*, remodeling, removing or demolition required.

[A] 114.1.1 Unsafe conditions.

Structures or existing equipment that are or hereafter become unsafe, insanitary or deficient because of inadequate *means of egress*, inadequate light and ventilation, or that constitute a fire hazard, are otherwise dangerous to human life or the public welfare, or involve illegal or improper occupancy or inadequate maintenance, shall be deemed an unsafe condition. Unsafe structures shall be taken down and removed or made safe, as the *fire code official* deems necessary and as provided for in this section. A vacant structure that is not secured against unauthorized entry shall be deemed unsafe.

PHOTO TAKEN WITH CITY DRONE AT APPROXIMATELY 9AM

Source: Airb

PHOTO TAKEN WITH CITY
DRONE AT APPROXIMATELY
9AM

Mayor
Barbara Jo Blain-Bellamy

Mayor Pro Tem
Justin D. Jordan

City of CONWAY SOUTH CAROLINA

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Council Members
Amanda Butler
William M. Goldfinch IV
Beth Helms
B. Alex Hyman
Larry A. White

March 10, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is state an opinion of the Chief Building Official for the City of Conway. I am very familiar with the Whittemore Elementary School Building, both prior to the fire of earlier this week and after.

A part of my job duties include assessing buildings that may be unfit due to dilapidation, defect, hazard, or other conditions rendering them unsafe. Throughout my career, I have made these determinations many times. Typically, this results in the structure being demolished. Sometimes, a property owner will repair the structure. But that is not always possible under City Code.

Sec. 5-1-62(a) states that if a repair to a structure exceeds 50% of the value of the building, then the structure must be removed or demolished. In the case of Whittemore Elementary, the cost to repair the structure exceeds 50% of the value as determined by Horry County.

Very truly yours,

Robert Cooper

Robert Cooper
Chief Building Official
City of Conway.

206 Laurel Street ◊ Post Office Box 1075
Conway, South Carolina 29528-1075
Telephone (843) 488-9888 ◊ Fax (843) 488-9890
www.cityofconway.com

ARTICLE C - Unsafe Buildings

Sec. 5-1-61. - Removal or renovation of unfit buildings.

(a) Repairing, closing or demolishing unfit buildings . Whenever the building official finds that there exists in the city buildings which are unfit for human occupancy or habitation due to (1) dilapidation, (2) defects increasing the hazards of fire, accidents or other calamities, (3) lack of ventilation, light or sanitary facilities, or (4) other conditions rendering such dwellings unsafe or insanitary, dangerous or detrimental to the health, safety or morals or otherwise inimical to the welfare of the residents of the city, the city may exercise its police powers to repair, close or demolish any such building in the manner herein provided.

(b) Preliminary investigation; issuance and service of notice and complaint; hearings . Whenever a petition is filed with the building official by any public authority or by at least five (5) residents of the city charging that any dwelling is unfit for human occupancy or habitation, or whenever it appears to the building official (on his own motion) that any building is unfit for human occupancy or habitation, the building official shall, if his preliminary investigation discloses a basis for such charges, issue and cause to be served upon the owner of and all parties in interest in such building a complaint stating the charges in that respect and containing a notice that a hearing will be held before the building official or his designated agent at a place therein fixed not less than 10 days nor more than 30 days after the serving of such complaint; that the owner and parties in interest shall be given the right to file and answer to the complaint and to appear in person or otherwise and give testimony at the place and time fixed in the complaint; and that the rules of evidence prevailing in courts of law or equity shall not be controlling in hearings before the building official.

(Ord. No. 2001-06-25(D), 6/25/01)

Sec. 5-1-62. - Determination and order by the building official; service of order.

If, after notice and hearing, the building official determines that the building under consideration is unfit for human occupancy or habitation, he shall state in writing his findings of fact in support of such determination and shall issue and cause to be served upon the owner thereof an order requiring repair, alteration, improvements or removal pursuant to this section.

(a) Repair, alteration, improvement . If the repair, alteration or improvement of the building, as determined by the building official, can be made at a cost that is less than 50 percent of the tax value, the owner, within the time specified in the order, shall repair, alter or improve such building to render it fit for human occupancy and/or habitation or to vacate and close the building.

(b) Removal . If the repair, alteration or improvement of the building, as determined by the building official, is 50 percent or more in relation to the value of the building, as determined by the tax value, the owner, within the time specified in the order, shall remove or demolish such building.

(c) Failure to comply . That, if the owner fails to comply with an order to repair, alter or improve or to vacate and close the building, the building official may cause such building to be repaired, altered or improved or to be vacated and closed; that the building official may cause to be posted on the main entrance of any building so closed, a place card with the following words: "Condemned: This building is unsafe and its use or occupancy has been prohibited by the building official." If the owner fails to comply with an order to repair, remove or demolish the building, the building official may cause such dwelling to be repaired, removed or demolished. The owner shall be assessed amount of the costs of such repairs, alterations or improvements, vacating and closing or removal or demolition of such building, an administrative charge of 25 percent of the actual costs, and reasonable attorney's fees. Interest shall accrue on the total outstanding balance at the rate of one and one-half (1½) percent per month until paid in full. The city shall be entitled to a lien on the property for the total due. This lien shall be filed with the city clerk and with the county register of deeds and shall be enforceable as any judgment or mortgage lien and may be foreclosed on in like manner. If the city in demolishing unfit buildings as permitted by this article, and contracts with a third party not employed by the city to do the work, it must bid the work in conformity with the applicable procurement code.

(d) City council action. Notwithstanding the city's remedies to assess costs, administrative charge(s), attorney's fees, and interest by reason of owner's failure to comply under subsection 5-1-62(c), city council is authorized to approve action to repair, alter, improve, and/or remove buildings referred to in this section upon such terms as the city council may deem appropriate to carry out the purposes of this chapter, and to enter into agreements with landowners.

(Ord. No. 2005-03-28(A), 3/28/05; Ord. No. 2008-04-14, 4/14/08; Ord. No. 2009-05-11(A), 5/11/09)

Sec. 5-1-63. - Power to declare nuisances paired.

Nothing in this article shall be construed to impair or limit in any way the city's power to define and declare nuisances and to cause their removal or abatement by summary proceedings or otherwise.

(Ord. No. 2001-06-25(D), 6/25/01)

Sec. 5-1-64. - Standards for determining fitness of buildings.

The building official may determine that a building is unfit for human occupancy if he finds that conditions exist in such build which are dangerous or injurious to the health, safety or morals of the occupants of such building, the occupants of neighboring buildings or other residents of the city. Such conditions may include the following (without limiting the generality of the foregoing): Defects therein increasing the hazards of fire, accident or other calamities; lack of adequate ventilation, light or sanitary facilities; dilapidation; disrepair; structural defects; uncleanliness. The building official shall have the discretion to utilize the provisions of the International Property Maintenance Code, 2000 Edition as a guide for himself or his agents in determining the fitness of a building for human occupancy and/or habitation.

(Ord. No. 2001-06-25(D), 6/25/01)

Adam Emrick

From: John Rogers
Sent: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 6:29 PM
To: Adam Emrick; Mary Catherine Hyman
Subject: Fwd: SKM_C25823030716460.pdf

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Boyd, John" <jboyd@hsblawfirm.com>
Date: March 7, 2023 at 6:24:50 PM EST
To: John Rogers <jrogers@cityofconway.com>
Cc: "Zeigler, Ben" <bzeigler@hsblawfirm.com>
Subject: RE: SKM_C25823030716460.pdf

CAUTION-External Email: This email originated from outside of the City of Conway. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

John-

I understand there was a major fire at the property and it has been deemed unsafe of re-use and inhabitance by the Fire Marshal. The property should be secured and prior to removal of debris testing should be conducted to determine the presence of asbestos containing material (ACM). If there is friable ACM at the site that is accessible that is a risk to human health and the environment. Given the knowledge of existing ACM, the site should be secured as quickly as possible. Any remaining debris should be tested and then properly disposed in a landfill.

If the remaining property is no longer safe for reuse then it may need to be demolished and secured for safety purposes. I recommend hiring a certified ACM inspector to conduct testing and advise on proper disposal of debris. If there must be further demolition after the fire is safely extinguished then testing of any remaining structure should also occur but only if it is safe to do so.

JPB

HAYNSWORTH SINKLER BOYD

John P. Boyd | Attorney
Direct 803.540.7731 | jboyd@hsblawfirm.com

Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd, P.A.
1201 Main Street, 22nd Floor | Columbia, SC 29201
Main 803.779.3080 | Mobile 803.315.9528 | Fax 803.765.1243

Web | Bio | vCard | Map | Linked In | Blog

November 10, 2017

Horry County School District
335 Four Mile Road
Conway, SC 29526

Attention: Joe Burch
Re: Whittemore School Property

Dear Mr. Burch:

The City of Conway values the relationship it has with the Horry County School District, specifically the Conway area schools. The City has offered grant money to each of the Conway schools, maintains the track area behind Conway Elementary, helped spearhead the Safe Routes to School Project aimed at bringing much needed sidewalks to Conway Elementary, provides SROs to Conway schools, offers additional police to assist in traffic control in the mornings, afternoons and during special events at Conway High School, including football games, basketball games and other sporting events.

The City is a proud sponsor of the Solid Gold Booster Club and broadcasts the voice of the Tigers, Ashley Smith's live broadcast on the City Access Channel on game days. Downtown Conway is the home of the Conway High School Homecoming Parade and has encouraged the parade route to be moved to Main Street in each of the last two years to expand visibility and community pride in the event. City Council is honored to get to ride in the Homecoming Parade every year.

Few cities can show a stronger commitment to their schools than Conway and we hope to continue that pride in even greater ways. The City hopes to partner with Horry County Schools to acquire the old Whittemore School property. We plan to demolish some portions of the school building and restore the core of the building as a Community Center that can benefit all of the surrounding areas. Specifically, though, Conway hopes to host afterschool programming at this Community Center which will be a direct benefit to the Whittemore Middle School, providing a safe, educational, and monitored location for kids to be after school when children are most at risk of being led astray. While there are no immediate plans to add sports or recreational offerings at this site, were we to do so, we would certainly offer those amenities to Whittemore School to help accommodate their recreational and athletic needs.

Given the partnerships that the City and the Horry County School District have formed in Conway, the City asks Horry County Schools to consider donating the Whittemore School property to the City of Conway. While there may be some value in the land that the school is sited upon, we understand that the expense of demolition and restoration may easily outweigh the value of the land. To that end, the City has committed more than $500,000 of Community Development Block Grant funds to the restoration of the Whittemore School site.

We thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this request and ask that if you have any questions or concerns, that you please share those with us at your earliest convenience.

Very truly yours,

Adam Emrick, AICP
Interim City Administrator

DATE: December 11, 2017

ISSUE:

The City of Conway's request for Horry County Schools to sell the old Whittemore School property to the City

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS:

City Council committed funding from FY 2016-2017 Community Development Block Grant funding to the construction of a new Community Center in the Whittemore Park area. They allocated all CDBG funds for FY 2017-2018. In total, nearly $500,000 has been committed to the development of a Community Center in this area.

For the last year, the City has been working with Horry County Schools to acquire the former Whittemore School building located behind the current Whittemore Park Middle School. This building is in very poor condition and was heavily damaged during Hurricane Matthew. Large portions of the building will be required to be demolished before any restoration can commence. Further, there is asbestos in the building which will need to be safely and correctly removed.

The City of Conway values the relationship it has with the Horry County School District, specifically the Conway area schools. The City has offered grant money to each of the Conway schools, maintains the track area behind Conway Elementary, helped spearhead the Safe Routes to School Project aimed at bringing much needed sidewalks to Conway Elementary, provides SROs to Conway schools, offers additional police to assist in traffic control in the mornings, afternoons and during special events at Conway High School, including football games, basketball games and other sporting events.

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offerings at this site, were we to do so, we would certainly offer those amenities to Whittemore Middle School to help accommodate their recreational and athletic needs.

REQUEST:

The City of Conway requests that Horry County School District give the Whittemore School property to the City. The City is committed to making the building and site a viable amenity for the community and restoring a source of pride for those who consider the school a landmark.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA }
COUNTY OF HORRY } **R E S O L U T I O N**
CITY OF CONWAY }

COMMITMENT TO ACCEPT THE FORMER WHITTEMORE SCHOOL BUILDING PROPERTY

WHEREAS, Conway City Council has expressed a desire to develop a community center that would benefit the greater Whittemore Community and, as evidence of this desire, has set aside funding for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, the City believes the best location for this proposed community center would be that property which is the site of the former Whittemore school building; subject property being a portion of TMS# 136-04-03-001 and owned by the Horry County Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, City Council has expressed a commitment to restore and maintain historical structures, such as the Whittemore School; and

WHEREAS, the City has approached the Horry County School District regarding the possibility of the subject property being donated to the City; and

WHEREAS, the Horry County Board of Education has requested a public commitment from the City to accept this property should it be given to the City: Therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Conway City Council hereby declares its commitment to accept the property which is the site of the former Whittemore school building should the Horry County Board of Education elect to donate it to the City.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this resolution is hereby adopted and made a part of the City records this 4th day of December, 2017.

Barbara Blain-Bellamy, Mayor

Randle L. Alford, Mayor Pro-Tem

Thomas K. Anderson II, Council Member

William M. Goldfinch IV, Council Member

Ashley Smith, Council Member

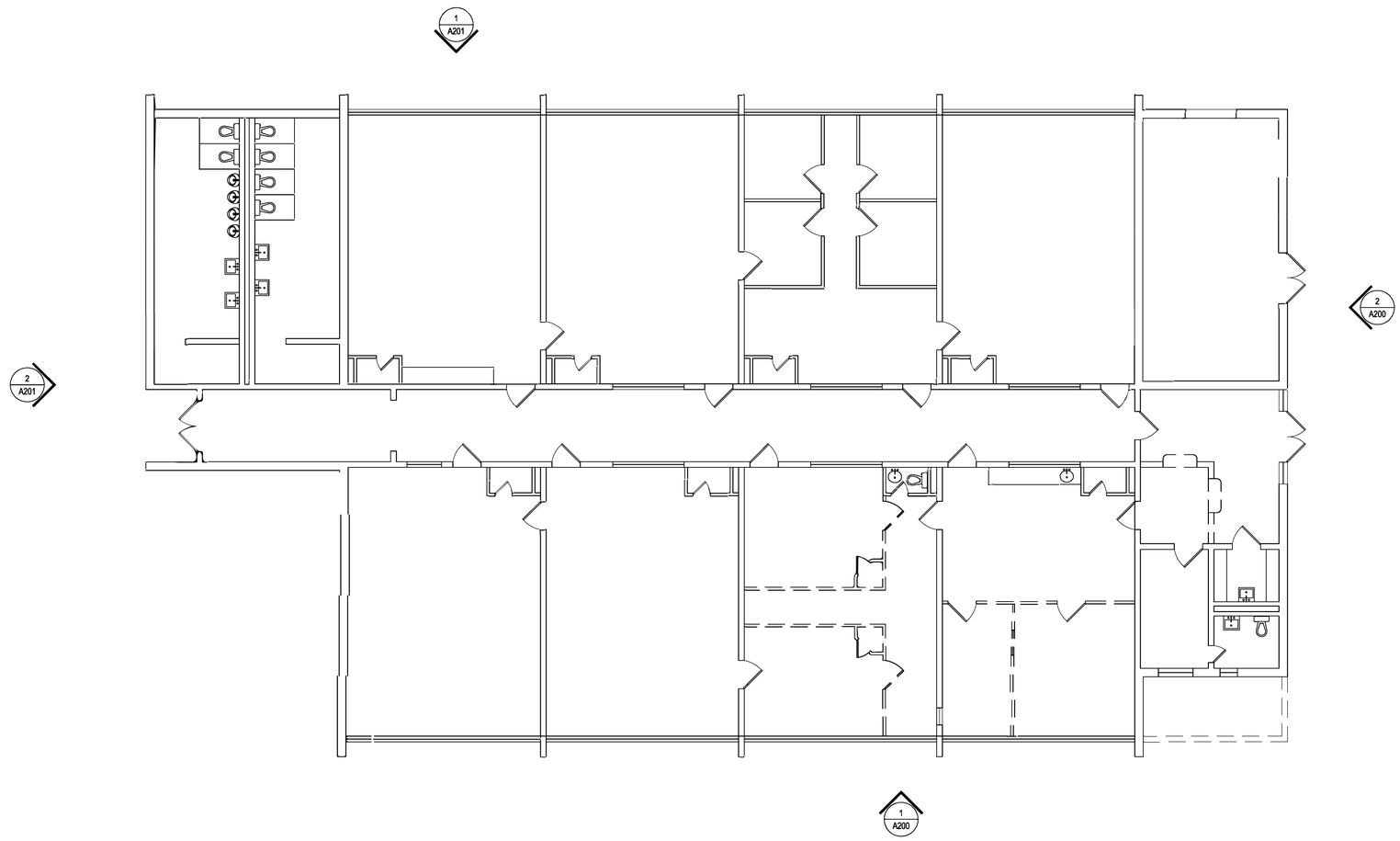
Jean M. Timbes, Council Member

Larry A. White, Council Member

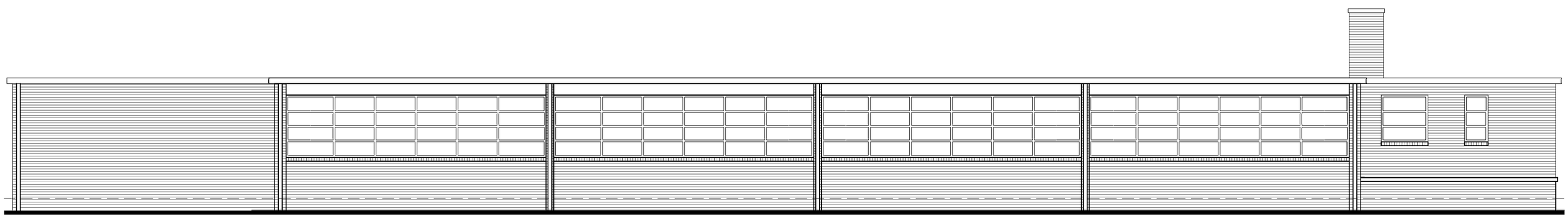
ATTEST: Debbie Smith, City Clerk

ORIGINAL PHOTO OF WES ANNEX BUILDING - 2018

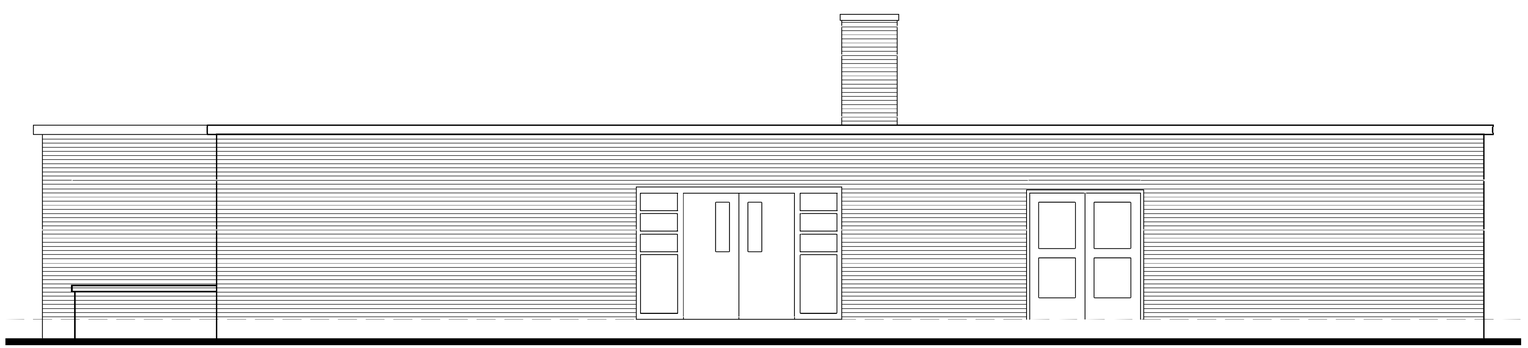
STAFF RENDERING OF RENOVATIONS TO WES ANNEX - 2018



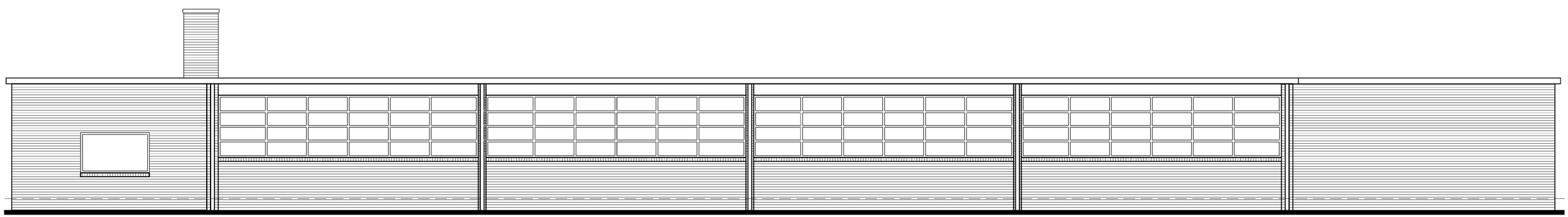
1 A100 FIRST FLOOR PLAN
1/8" = 1'-0"



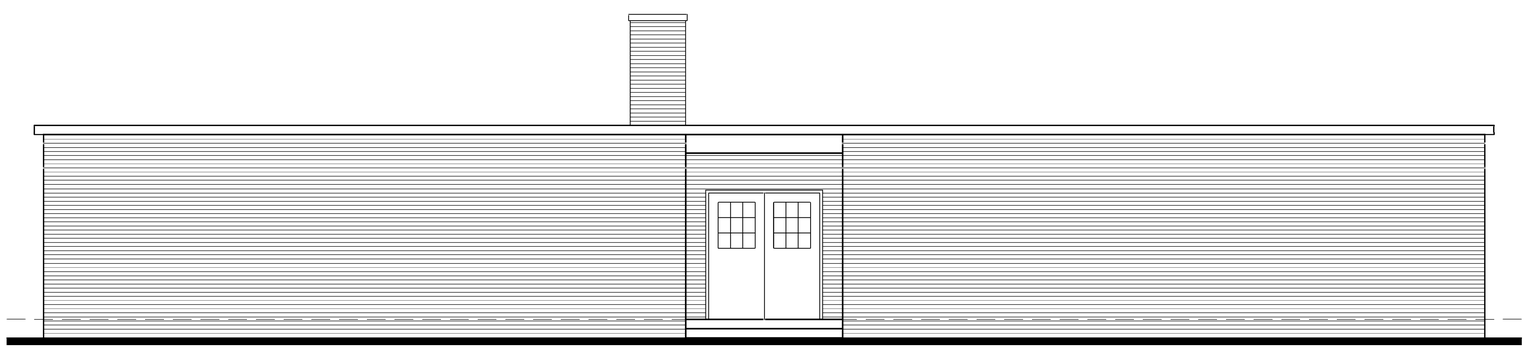
1 A200 EAST ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



2 A200 NORTH ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



1 A201 WEST ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"



2 A201 SOUTH ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"

MAYOR
Barbara Blain-Bellamy

MAYOR PRO TEM
Jean M. Timbes

City of CONWAY
SOUTH CAROLINA
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

COUNCIL MEMBERS
Randle L. Alford
Thomas J. "Tom" Anderson II
William M. Goldfinch IV
Ashley Smith
Larry A. White

NOTICE TO PROCEED

Environmental Services for Whittemore Park Community Center with Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Funding

To: ECS Southeast, LLP **Date: March 26, 2018**

You are hereby notified to commence WORK in accordance with the PROPOSAL, ECS Proposal No. 49: 8925 & 8926-P, dated March 15, 2018, on or before March 29, 2018, and you are to complete all of the work within ninety (90) consecutive calendar days thereafter. The date of completion of all WORK is therefore June 29, 2018.

CITY OF CONWAY, OWNER

By: Mary Catherine Kynon

Title: Planning Director

ACCEPTANCE OF NOTICE

Receipt of the above NOTICE TO PROCEED is hereby acknowledged by ECS Southeast, LLP this 26th day of March, 2018.

By: [illegible]

Title: Principal

206 Laurel Street ◊ Post Office Box 1075
Conway, South Carolina 29528-1075
Telephone (843) 488-9888 ◊ Fax (843) 488-9890
www.cityofconway.com

City of Conway
Whittemore School Project
Community Input Meeting
June 14, 2018
June 25, 2018

Individual Survey

Please select what you believe are the **six (6)** most important goals of the Whittemore School Project.

If you wholly disagree with any of the potential goals, please strike through it.

- ☐ It provides a service not available anywhere else in Conway
- ☐ It represents the values of Conway
- ☐ It provides a place for people to experience new things
- ☐ It is something anyone can use
- ☐ It is experimental
- ☐ It helps reduce crime
- ☐ It does not use local tax dollars
- ☐ It is something the community can be proud of
- ☐ It preserves and protects the history of the building
- ☐ It provides community outreach
- ☐ It provides a safe, secure space
- ☐ It provides an open, outdoor space
- ☐ It offers things usually found in bigger cities
- ☐ It provides a cultural experience
- ☐ It is a place where ideas can be shared
- ☐ Programs are low-cost or free
- ☐ It will help spur neighborhood revitalization
- ☐ It doesn't make traffic worse

Of the goals listed above, which is your MOST IMPORTANT? _____

In **50 words or fewer**, describe what you would like to see once the project is complete:

ITEM FOR INFORMATION: Presentation on results of input received at public meetings for the Whittemore School Project. Rogers reviewed a summary of input on the Whittemore School Project that was received at two recent public meetings hosted by the City. The outcome of the survey showed that participants were interested in educational and enrichment opportunities for adolescents after school and during the summer. There was also interest in adult enrichment after 6:00 p.m. There was desire for the facility to be free of charge, to have topics for the average or special needs children. Specific activities mentioned were art and culinary classes, sports, a museum and health care facility. Rogers estimated that a total of 85 members of the public participated in the surveys. The City is seeking memorabilia, especially of the elementary school, that will be used to remember the history of the school and the Mayor invited the public to contact the City if they have items from the school they would like to be preserved.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

- The Tier 3 Application for the FEMA Buyout Program has been approved. The City's consultant is contacting all applicants to determine participation. A total of 16 applicants have requested appraisals.
- As approved by Council, the City recently purchased nine automatic AEDs which will provide one AED for each City building. Each City department will ensure that someone is trained on CPR/AED over the next few weeks.
- New water valve caps were needed when all of the water meters were replaced in the downtown area. Some of the new valve caps incorporate the City's logo (at a slightly higher cost) and are being placed in high pedestrian areas.
- Conway rail crossings did not qualify for improvement based on SCDOT's ranking system; however, improvements being made to the rail will increase the speed of the train. SCDOT anticipates that City rail crossing will move up in rankings in the Spring 2019 reprioritization.
- The Waccamaw River is currently at 9.47′. The water level is not expected to rise much higher but a large storm could cause concern.

COUNCIL INPUT:

Timbes

- Inquired about the timing on the FEMA buyout.
- Inquired about spraying for mosquitoes.
- Suggested the spring cars purchased for Sherwood Park be assembled indoors and be ready to install when weather/soil conditions permit.

Smith thanked Barbara Streeter her efforts in staging the recent Indie Market. He also inquired about the status of the payroll/compensation study for City employees.

Anderson commented on the recent accident on the Main Street Bridge and suggested that a committee be formed to approach SCDOT about replacing the bridge.

Hubbard commented on the success of the recent Indie Market event.

Mayor Blain-Bellamy commented that the portion of fence at Sherwood Forest Park that was reported missing at an early Council meeting has not yet been installed. The Mayor commended Chief Long for representing the City in the Marine Raider Memorial March.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

For

ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES

For

PHASE I

WHITTEMORE COMMUNITY CENTER

RFQ DUE DATE/TIME:	**September 19, 2018** **2:00 p.m., Local time**
RFQ NUMBER:	**2018-18-001**
POINT OF RECEIPT:	**City of Conway** **c/o Ken Senn** **PO Drawer 1075** **Conway, SC 29526** **Physical Address:** **City of Conway - City Shop** **2940 Jerry Barnhill Blvd.** **Conway, SC 29527**

Requests for information regarding RFQ should be directed in writing by either letter or e-mail to Ken Senn (ksenn@cityofconway.com).

CHANGE ORDER REQUEST

October 29, 2018

Ms. Mary Catherine Hyman, AIA
Planning Director
City of Conway
206 Laurel Street
Conway, South Carolina 29526

REFERENCE: Whittemore Park Site
Horry Street and Maple Avenue
Conway, Horry County, South Carolina
49-6579

Dear Ms. Hyman:

ECS Southeast, LLP (ECS) is pleased to provide this Change Order Request for the above referenced project. A summary of the change order request is included below.

SCOPE OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES:

ECS was originally authorized to complete a Phase I – Environmental Site Assessment and a Environmental Assessment Review for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). As part of the review process, ECS reached out to several state and federal agencies for comment and review of the proposed project. Based on comments from the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SCSHPO), it became apparent that the Former Whittemore Schools could be considered eligible for the National Register Historic Places (NRHP) as Equalization Schools. Pursuant to comments from the SCHPO, ECS has proposed to contract a specialized firm to make a NRHP Evaluation and Assessment of Effect determination for the site. The additional services include the following:

Task 1 - National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Evaluation & Assessment of Effect

The scope of work includes determining if the site is officially eligible for listing on the National Register by the SHPO. Prior to visiting the school, the firm will complete some background research and a historical review of the site. Historians and project managers will visit the school to document the building's structural integrity, including alterations, additions, and the overall condition of the original structure and exterior design elements. Also, photographs will be taken of the building and information recorded in an effort to complete the necessary survey forms and to assess its historical significance. Following the background research and site visit, the report will be prepared documenting the structural integrity of the building, its significance within the historic context, make a National Register eligibility recommendation for the building, and then, if needed, make an assessment of effect.

Upon review and approval, the report, forms, and other documentation will be submitted to the SHPO for review. If the building is determined not eligible for the NRHP, no further work would be necessary. If the building is determined eligible for the National Register, then avoidance and minimization of project plans may be necessary for the building. If an adverse effect is unavoidable, then other means to devise a strategy to mitigate the effects will be necessary.

Additional meetings or coordination exceeding the estimated fee will be billed, upon permission from the client, at hourly rates (See ECS's attached fee schedule).

SCHEDULE: We can begin these projects within approximately one week of receipt of written authorization to proceed. The necessary surveys will be provided as soon as possible based on the availability of a qualified historian and project managers to perform the field work and complete the necessary report and paperwork. The change order is for a sub task of the original authorized proposal for a HUD – Environmental Assessment. The Environmental Assessment report can be submitted within three weeks following the agencies completion for review of the site.

AMOUNT OF ORIGINAL CONTRACT **$6,500.00**

COST OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- NRHP Evaluation and Assessment of Effect Report **$5,234.00**

Total Cost for Additional Services **$5,234.00**

REVISED CONTRACT AMOUNT AFTER ADDITIONAL SERVICES **$11,734.00**

Please take time to review, execute and return the attached Change Order Request Form. ECS will proceed with the change in scope upon receipt of your written authorization to proceed. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please call Paul Stephens at (843) 284-7823.

Sincerely,

ECS SOUTHEAST, LLP

Paul M. Stephens IV

Paul M. Stephens IV, E.I.
Environmental Project Manager
pstephens@ecslimited.com
(843) 284 – 7823

W. Brandon Fulton

W. Brandon Fulton, LSS, PSC, PWS
Environmental Principal
bfulton@ecslimited.com
(704) 525 – 5152

CLIENT AUTHORIZATION

THE WORK COVERED BY THIS CHANGE ORDER WILL BE PERFORMED UNDER THE FEE SCHEDULE AND GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE ORIGINAL CONTRACT.

City of Conway

APPROVED BY: Mary Catherine Hyman

NAME: Mary Catherine Hyman

TITLE: City of Conway Planning Director

DATE: 10/29/2018

CHANGE ORDER REQUEST

October 29, 2018

Ms. Mary Catherine Hyman, AIA
Planning Director
City of Conway
206 Laurel Street
Conway, South Carolina 29526

REFERENCE: Whittemore Park Site
Horry Street and Maple Avenue
Conway, Horry County, South Carolina
49-6579

Dear Ms. Hyman:

ECS Southeast, LLP (ECS) is pleased to provide this Change Order Request #2 for the above referenced project. A summary of the change order request is included below.

SCOPE OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES:

ECS was originally authorized to complete a Phase I – Environmental Site Assessment and a Environmental Assessment Review for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). ECS recently completed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) of the site (ECS Project No. 49-6579-A, dated April 18, 2018). Based on the findings of our Phase I ESA, ECS identified the following Recognized Environmental Condition (REC):

- While on-site, ECS observed a fill port and vent pipe associated with a heating oil underground storage tank (UST). ECS considers this UST and associated underground piping to represent a REC.

ECS understands that you would like to remove the UST. However, due to the limited information known about the UST, ECS has recommended that a Geophysical Assessment be performed in an effort to determine the size of the UST and orientation of the UST with respect to the surrounding structures and their associated foundations.

Based on our understanding of the project information, ECS proposes the following scope of services:

- ECS proposes to perform a geophysical assessment in the vicinity of the existing UST. The geophysical survey will include both electromagnetic (EM) and ground penetrating radar (GPR) in an effort to determine size and limits of the UST with respecting to the surrounding structures.
- ECS will provide a Project Professional to observe and document the field activities associated with the Geophysical Assessment.
- ECS will prepare a letter report which will document our field activities, the results obtained and our conclusions and recommendations.
- Additional meetings or coordination exceeding the estimated fee will be billed, upon permission from the client, at hourly rates (See ECS's attached fee schedule).

SCHEDULE: Based on our present schedule, ECS can begin the field activities within approximately five business days after receiving your written authorization to proceed. It is estimated that the field activities will require one day to complete. The change order is for a sub task of the original authorized proposal for a HUD – Environmental Assessment. The Environmental Assessment report can be submitted within three weeks following the agencies completion for review of the site.

ASSUMPTIONS:

- Prices presented herein are valid for 30 days from the date of this proposal.
- Prices are based on performing work on a non-holiday weekday during normal business hours (7:00am – 5:00pm, Monday – Friday).
- This proposal assumes unrestricted access to the site.
- ECS understands that these assessment activities are not being conducted for regulatory purposes and are for general assessment purposes as part of a potential property transaction only. Should assessment activities be requested for regulatory purposes, ECS can provide these services; however, additional activities, borings, samples, and increase in fees may be required.
- Additional project work not specifically addressed by this proposal shall be charged at a time and materials rate in accordance with the units rates in this proposal. Additional work, if required, shall be authorized by the client prior to initiation.

AMOUNT OF ORIGINAL CONTRACT **$6,500.00**

COST OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- NRHP Evaluation and Assessment of Effect Report **$5,234.00**
- Geophysical Assessment **$1,950.00**

Total Cost for Additional Services **$7,184.00**

REVISED CONTRACT AMOUNT AFTER ADDITIONAL SERVICES **$13,684.00**

Please take time to review, execute and return the attached Change Order Request Form. ECS will proceed with the change in scope upon receipt of your written authorization to proceed. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please call Paul Stephens at (843) 284-7823.

Sincerely,

ECS SOUTHEAST, LLP

Paul M. Stephens IV, E.I.
Environmental Project Manager
pstephens@ecslimited.com
(843) 284 – 7823

Justin A. Roth, CHMM
Environmental Principal
Jroth@ecslimited.com
(843) 749 – 2754

CLIENT AUTHORIZATION

THE WORK COVERED BY THIS CHANGE ORDER WILL BE PERFORMED UNDER THE FEE SCHEDULE AND GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE ORIGINAL CONTRACT.

City of Conway

APPROVED BY: Mary Catherine Hyman

NAME: Mary Catherine Hyman

TITLE: City of Conway Planning Director

DATE: 10/30/2018

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation for

Whittemore Elementary School

Horry County,
South Carolina

Report submitted to:
ECS Southeast, LLP
3820 Faber Place • Suite 200
Charleston, South Carolina 29405

Report prepared by:
New South Associates
6150 East Ponce de Leon Avenue
Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Mary Beth Reed – Principal Investigator

Katie Dykens Quinn – Historian and Co-Author

December 31, 2018 • Draft Report
New South Associates Technical Report 2923

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

February 4, 2019

Paul M. Stephens
ECS Southeast, LLP
pstephens@ecslimited.com

Re: Whittemore Park Community Center Acquisition and Rehabilitation, Additional Information, National Register Evaluation Report
Conway, Horry County, South Carolina
SHPO Project No. 18-JS0140

Dear Mr. Stephens:

Thank you for providing the draft report, *National Register of Historic Places Evaluation for Whittemore Elementary School, Horry County, South Carolina* (December 31, 2018), which we received electronically on January 14, 2019, regarding the above referenced proposed undertaking. Our office previously commented and requested additional information on the proposed undertaking on May 4 and July 9, 2018.

The State Historic Preservation Office is providing comments to the City of Conway and to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR 800. Consultation with the SHPO is not a substitution for consultation with Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, other Native American tribes, local governments, or the public.

The report recommends the Whittemore Elementary School eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criteria A and C as a contributing resource to the NRHP Multiple Property Listing "Equalization Schools in South Carolina, 1951-1960" (Dobrasko 2008). The proposed NRHP boundary includes 10.19 acres and corresponds with the legal parcel. Our office concurs with these recommendations.

Our office accepts the draft report as final. To complete the reporting process, please provide at least two (2) hard copies of a final report.

We look forward to receiving additional description and documentation of the proposed rehabilitation work, including photographs of the exterior and interior of the building where work is planned, existing vs proposed drawings, and/or a detailed description.

Please refer to SHPO Project Number 18-JS0140 in any future correspondence regarding this project. If you have any questions, please contact me at (803) 896-6129 or jsylvest@scdah.sc.gov.

Sincerely,

John D. Sylvest

John D. Sylvest
Project Review Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office

cc: Adam Emrick, City of Conway

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Request for Statements of Interest and Qualifications of Design Professionals for Renovation of the former Whittemore Elementary School into the Whittemore Community Center

RFQ DUE DATE/TIME:	**March 22, 2019** **2:00 p.m., local time**
POINT OF RECEIPT:	**City of Conway** **c/o Ken Senn** **PO Drawer 1075** **Conway, SC 29526** **Physical Address:** **City of Conway – City Shop** **2940 Jerry Barnhill Blvd.** **Conway, SC 29527**

liollio
architecture

October 2nd, 2019

Mary Catherine Hyman
Planning Director
City of Conway
206 Laurel Street
Conway, SC 29526

RE: **Whittemore Community Center: Predesign Services Proposal, revised 10.02.19**

Dear Mary Catherine,

Our team is delighted to have been selected for this important and exciting project and we are honored to be working with The City of Conway on the future of the Whittemore School. Based on our conversations and email correspondence, we understand that a preliminary phase of programmatic and site masterplanning will support our collective discussions related to project goals and delineating the project scope of future phases. This initial predesign phase is designed to set the project up for success. We anticipate that our interaction during this phase will be limited to city staff and the key stakeholders you may identify; since community input was solicited recently, we think that further public input should probably wait until the property's potential is better defined.

To facilitate this process, we propose a 4-8-week research phase, beginning with a half-day on-site kickoff workshop with key city staff. Subsequent workshops might focus upon the site and the nature of the surrounding community, the condition of the building, program and activity overviews, and broad discussions of budgets and fundraising. We have avoided defining the exact number of workshops and meetings in this proposal; in our experience, that is fluid, and we don't want to inhibit the process by artificially limiting the design team's interaction with you. The information we gather through the process will then be studied and compiled during a 4-8-week assessment & documentation phase. The members of our team that will participate in this initial phase are Liollio Architecture, Russell Design Office (landscape architecture), 4SE (structural engineering), Castles (civil engineering), and Aiken Cost Consultants.

As this scope proceeds, we will meet with city staff to review and refine the scope, schedule, and budget for the project, hard construction costs, and phasing opportunities. The drawings, sketches, and renderings we generate during the predesign process will be crafted to communicate the project's potential to the community, and many of our clients have used these drawings and renderings for fundraising or grant writing purposes. Below is a brief description of each item in this predesign phase, and we are happy to discuss further as needed. We also summarize, at bottom, what we expect of the scopes of work during subsequent phases.

PHASE 1 - PREDESIGN

PHASE 1 TASK 1 - CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE DESIGN

SITE STUDY / WORKSHOPS: This phase of the work will include a comprehensive site inventory, analysis, and community input workshops. The site inventory and analysis will enable the design team to better understand the various existing conditions, context and opportunities from a variety of scales and points of view. We aim to ensure transparency and consensus between the design team, stakeholders, and community members through

community workshop sessions paired with a sustained and meaningful dialogue. We find these aspects of the design process essential to achieving a unified and achievable long-term vision. **We anticipate one or two public meetings, depending upon the course of the predesign phase.**

CONCEPT DESIGN / SITE VISIONING: This phase will be based on criteria established during the site inventory, analysis and input workshops. The Conceptual Design phase will include the development of a series of design studies for the project area including proposed spatial organization, potential program opportunities, circulation, planting and management strategies. Conceptual illustrative plans, precedent studies and diagrammatic imagery will be included to support the schematic design strategies. This effort will conclude with the development and refining of a preferred scheme, developed into a presentation package suitable for review by the City of Conway Leadership and Whittemore Community.

PHASE 1 TASK 2 - CONDITION ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this study is to assess the structural condition of the existing buildings and to assess the potential for reconfiguring the buildings to serve as a new community center, using the requirements of the 2018 International Existing Building Code, which is set to be adopted throughout South Carolina at the new year.

Sometimes an ASCE 41 Tier 1 analysis is utilized to evaluate a building's ability to resist earthquakes. In the case of this study, we are assuming that you do not want a Tier 1 analysis included, as we anticipate that it would be very difficult to seismically retrofit this building.

This task is also a preservation-oriented predesign activity: an architectural evaluation to develop an understanding of the historic building through research and field documentation; identification of deficiencies in the building envelope; documenting the architectural and historical integrity of both exterior and interior features; preservation recommendations to inform the scope of work. This task will be critical to our collaboration with SHPO regarding the historic structures' future uses and preservation. We will apply the 2018 edition of the International Existing Building Code, which is set to be adopted throughout South Carolina at the new year.

PHASE 1 TASK 3 - CONCEPTUAL COST ESTIMATE

A third-party cost estimating consultancy will use the predesign report and drawings to generate an opinion of probable construction cost. This document will become the basis of future discussions regarding potential scope changes or phasing.

PHASE 1 TASK 4 - LAND SURVEY

The Land Survey will document the entire 10.2-acre site, include as-built conditions, boundaries, topography at one foot intervals, trees, and existing public utilities. Utility marking will be coordinated through and provided by PUPS; no private utilities will be located.

PHASE 1 TASK 5 - PROGRAMMING

This task will define, and then refine, the opportunities of the historic site and buildings. We envision several workshop-style conversations with city staff to discuss topics such as:

1. Previous community input.
2. Discussions of civics, culture, and especially oral histories previously gathered from the community.
3. Potential visits to other reference or benchmarking locations in the region.
4. Meetings with city leadership and staff, review of programmatic opportunities and new vehicles for service.
5. Collective review of draft masterplan, funded elements, and priorities. The team will work together to set foundational touchstones and overall financial parameters for the project elements.

This research and documentation will result in a series of narratives and drawings depicting how Whittemore School might continue its service to the community. The process will help us all understand the "what and where" of any potential new services or amenities, but more importantly, it will help us understand the "why" behind the addition of new amenities or the subtraction of others.

Predesign Services Fees:

Phase 1 Task 1 - Conceptual Landscape Design:	$11,000
Phase 1 Task 2 - Condition Assessment:	$18,000
Phase 1 Task 3 - Conceptual Cost Estimate:	$3,000
Phase 1 Task 4 - Land Survey:	$9,775
Phase 1 Task 5 - Programming:	$7,500
Phase 1 Task 6 – Reimbursables	$6,000
TOTAL PREDESIGN SERVICES:	**$55,275**

PHASE 2 - DESIGN

Phase 2 Cost Estimate: To be determined after completion of Phase 1.

Preparation of the final design, construction documents, and all project specifications/requirements necessary for the public bid advertisement for the construction of the project. Preparation of all required bid documents, provide responses to bidder's questions, clarifications to plans, bid analysis, recommendation of contract award, and other tasks as required to award and execute contract. Submit permit applications to local, state, and federal regulatory agencies, and advise the City on permitting and compliance issues.

PHASE 3 – CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

Phase 3 Cost Estimate: To be determined after completion of Phase 1.

Provide construction management services to include: inspect construction progress, review payment requests by contractor, provide recommendations for acceptance of sections and payments to contractor, organize records and documents of the construction, and verify contractor compliance with all permit and reporting requirements. After construction, the selected firm will determine the final conditions by comparing with preconstruction conditions, provide recommendation for project acceptance and for post project maintenance/monitoring, and complete any close out documents required by permitting agencies.

Please let me know if you have any questions concerning the information above. Thank you for your support and confidence, and we are so excited to begin work on this great project.

Sincerely,

LIOLLIO ARCHITECTURE

Jay White, AIA, LEED AP
Principal

CITY OF CONWAY

Mary Catherine Hyman, AIA
Deputy City Administrator

liollio
architecture

January 28, 2020

Mary Catherine Hyman
Deputy City Administrator / Planning and Development Director
City of Conway
229 Main St.
Conway, SC 29526

Dear Mary Catherine,

Per your recent request, here are some brief opinions of scope and probable cost, when undertaking a renovation of the Whittemore School.

There is little practical difference between "restoring" the building to its historic appearance versus "renovating" the building without regard to history. In either case, a great deal of the construction budget will be spent on structural remediation. The Whittemore School dates from an era when load-bearing masonry walls were either unreinforced or only lightly reinforced; this structural condition should be improved if the building is put back into use. In such a case, we would focus much upon how the building might perform in an earthquake or hurricane. While the code would not require the city to completely upgrade the structure to meet current code, and while it's entirely possible to upgrade these buildings, it does affect cost.

In our recent experience, the renovation of an existing masonry structure, while improving its seismic and wind performance, typically costs somewhere between $325 and $450 per square foot. This would yield a building that is safe and useful, but not fully code-compliant. A new building on this site might not cost any less, however it would be designed to fully comply with the building code. The compromise of spending just as much for a less code compliance only makes sense when a building owner, or a community, places enough historic value in the existing building to make it all worthwhile.

This is only a rough summary of the issues involved. Please feel free to contact us if you would like to review in greater detail.

Many thanks,

Jay White, AIA
Principal

ISSUE:

Whittemore Community Center

BACKGROUND:

The City acquired the property from Horry County Schools in June 2018 with plans to renovate the facility into a Community Center. Community workshop meetings were held that same month.

CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds were allocated to the project. HUD requires an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Phase 1 ESA on all CDBG funded projects. Phase 1 ESA was completed in April 2018. As part of the EA process, the environmental consultant sent information to the State Historic Preservation Office for review in March 2018. SHPO asked for more information and an eligibility evaluation for the National Register of Historic Places. New South Associates, a consulting firm, completed a "National Register of Historic Places Evaluation" in January 2019. This report recommended the building as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C as a contributing resources to the NRHP Multiple Listing "Equalization Schools in South Carolina, 1951-1960". The report was sent to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). On February 4, SHPO sent a letter stating that they concur with the report's recommendations that the Whittemore Elementary School.

After consultation with the environmental consultant and CDBG, it was recommended that the City contract with an architect with historic preservation experience to help with the renovation process, and coordination with SHPO. Liollio Architecture was hired to work with SHPO to help the City determine what portions of the buildings need to remain, and what portions need to be demolished.

The building suffered major damage during Hurricane Matthew in 2016. Throughout the EA process, the building has continued to deteriorate. In January 2020, the building was condemned due to repeated damage by trespassers. Furthermore, staff and police have repeatedly found evidence of criminal activity at the site.

To avoid additional hurdles through SHPO, an option is to de-federalize the project. This would require a return of CDBG funds previously incurred for the Whittemore Community Center ($17,291.79) with local funds in order to remove the federal identity from the project. The remaining Whittemore funds can then be moved to another project ($334,240.00).

Subsequent "refederalization" of the project would likely not be possible due to the environmental review requirements of the project. This would preclude the project from eligibility for other sources of federal funding. Specifically, federal guidelines declare that an action with physical impacts taken prior to "refederalization" may result in a choice limiting action. However, this limitation will be placed only on the rehab of the physical structure and should not prevent future federal funding for programming at the site.

- The estimate for the asbestos inspection, plan, and air monitoring for both buildings is $17,150.
- The estimate for the asbestos abatement of the main building is $175,000.
- The estimate for asbestos abatement of the back building is $70,000.
- The estimate for demolition of the main building is $162,500.

Liollio Architecture provided the attached letter in reference to renovations. They stated that the renovation would cost between $325-$450 per square foot. This would create a safe and useful building, although it wouldn't be code compliant. A new building might cost the same, or less, however it would be designed to fully comply with building codes.

RECOMMENDATION:

De-federalize the project and repay with local funds. Budget for in-house abatement, demolition, and new construction.

Horry County Government

Community Development

www.horrycounty.org

Horry County
Committed to Excellence

Community Development/Voters Registration Building
1515 Fourth Avenue
Conway, South Carolina 29526
Phone 843.915.7033 || Fax 843.915.6184

Memorandum

To: Mary Catherine Hyman, Deputy City Administrator - Conway

From: Courtney Frappaolo, Community Development Director CF

Date: March 11, 2020

RE: Whittemore Park Community Center Defederalization

This technical assistance guidance is being provided at the request of the City of Conway as to what steps are necessary to defederalize the Whittemore Park Community Center project, in order to remove federal identity from the project. Previous staff research of applicable programmatic regulations indicated that the project may be defederalized through repayment of CDBG funds utilized for the project.

Local, non-federal funds from the City of Conway will need to be remitted to Horry County so that a wire transfer may be initiated to return previously utilized CDBG funds to HUD. A total of $17,291.79 has been drawn against the Whittemore Park Community Center project for start-up and environmental costs. A check in the amount of $17,291.79 will need to be issued to Horry County. Community Development staff will coordinate the wire transfer to HUD through the County Treasurer's office and apply the returned funds to the appropriate activities in HUD's IDIS system upon posting.

As the Whittemore Park Community Center project will be defederalized, new CDBG-eligible projects will need to be identified in order to reprogram the remaining City of Conway CDBG funding allocation. The new projects will require substantial amendments in each of the affected funding years, including 2016-2017 (Year 9), 2017-2018 (Year 10), and 2018-2019 (Year 11). Upon identification of new projects, please coordinate with the Horry County Community Development office for specific guidance on environmental review requirements, substantial amendment scheduling, and other compliance requirements.

ISSUE:

Resolution to amend projects for the City of Conway HUD/CDBG Entitlement Grant for Year 9 (2016-2017), Year 10 (2017-18), and Year 11 (2018-2019).

YEAR 9, 10, and 11 PROPOSALS:

The Community Center planned for the former Whittemore School property was approved for Years 9, 10, and 11. After many delays due to hurdles with the federal grant process which led to the further deterioration of the building, City Council directed staff to move forward with the de-federalization of Whittemore. This includes are return of money spent on the project to date ($17,291.79).

With this defederalization of Whittemore, a new CDBG-eligible project is required to be identified to reprogram the remaining City of Conway CDBG funding allocation. To support Conway's small businesses experiencing hardship related to COVID-19, a proposed CDBG-eligible project is a Small Business Support Program. This program could act as an emergency fund that provides day-to-day operating assistance up to $10,000 to qualifying small businesses. Remaining funds from other completed CDBG projects could also be allocated to this program.

YEAR 9 (2016-2017) - $10,596.04 Total Available Balance:

- Magnolia Maple Drainage - ~~**$4,856.20**~~
- Property Acquisition for Housing- ~~**$1364.84**~~
- Whittemore Community Center (returned funds) **-** ~~**$4,375.00**~~
- **Small Business Support Program - $10,596.04**

YEAR 10 (2017-2018) - $140,305.47 Total Available Balance:

- CORE Program **-** ~~**$35,781.67**~~
- Housing Rehabilitation ~~**- $14,736.80**~~
- Whittemore Community Center - ~~**$76,870.21**~~
- Whittemore Community Center (returned funds) ~~**- $12,916.79**~~
- **Small Business Support Program - $140,305.47**

YEAR 11 (2018-2019) - $240,078.00 Total Available Balance:

- Whittemore Community Center - ~~**$240,078.00**~~
- **Small Business Support Program - $240,078.00**

Total Available Balance: $390,979.51

RECOMMENDATION:

Staffs recommends amending the projects listed above for Years 9, 10, and 11 of the HUD / CDBG Entitlement Grant and allocating $390,979.51 to the Small Business Support Program.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF HORRY) **R E S O L U T I O N**
CITY OF CONWAY)

RESOLUTION TO AMEND PROJECTS FOR THE CITY OF CONWAY HUD / CDBG ENTITLEMENT GRANT FOR YEAR 9 (2-16-2017), YEAR 10 (2017-2018), AND YEAR 11 (2018-2019)

WHEREAS, the **City of Conway**, along with Horry County and the City of Myrtle Beach are part of a designated entitlement community in accordance with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program; and

WHEREAS, due to changes in circumstances, the original allocated funding for Year 9 (2016-2017), Year 10 (2017-18), and Year 11 (2018-2019) must be amended.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The **Conway City Council** hereby adopts the budget listed below for inclusion in the Horry County Urban CDBG Program for Year 9 (2016-2017), Year 10 (2017-18), and Year 11 (2018-2019)

HUD / CDBG Entitlement Grant Year 9 (2016-2017) Budget	
Project	**Amount**
Small Business Support Program	$10,596.04
HUD / CDBG Entitlement Grant Year 10 (2017-2018) Budget	
Project	**Amount**
Small Business Support Program	$140,305.47
HUD / CDBG Entitlement Grant Year 11 (2018-2019) Budget	
Project	**Amount**
Small Business Support Program	$240,078.00

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Resolution is hereby adopted and made a part of the City Records this ____ day of _____, 2020.

_____	_____
Barbara Jo Blain-Bellamy, Mayor	Shane Hubbard, Mayor Pro Tem
_____	_____
William M. Goldfinch IV, Council Member	B. Alex Hyman, Council Member
_____	_____
Justin Jordan, Council Member	Jean M. Timbes, Council Member
_____	_____
Larry A. White, Council Member	ATTEST: Barbara A. Tessier, City Clerk

DATE: JUNE 1, 2020
ITEM: V.A

ISSUE:

Discussion of potential affordable housing project in partnership with ECHO at the Whittemore School property

BACKGROUND:

At the Budget Retreat in March, Council instructed staff to look at options for partnering with a group to build affordable housing at the Whittemore School property, with a hope that the partner would consider demolishing the existing building(s) and constructing a community center on the site.

Staff met with Joey Smoak from ECHO on site at the Whittemore property, along with ECHO's consultant. Mr. Smoak will be present at the June 1st, Council Workshop.

After meeting with ECHO, staff believes the best option for this project will be to master plan the entire site for development of affordable housing, a community center and public amenities, such as sidewalks, trails, community gardens, and playgrounds. The affordable housing component can be broken out into pods or phases, that can used for private development, partnered with the City to improve the affordable housing stock of the City and improve the amenities in this community.

Staff also recommends removing the asbestos in the existing buildings and demolishing the buildings in house as time permits, thereby saving a large portion of the costs of demolition.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends working with the existing architect on this project, Liollio, and master planning the development of the site as a Planned District.

Cedric Blain Spain spoke to Council regarding his opposition for the use of the funds from the American Rescue Plan to demolish Whittemore Elementary School. There were approximately 20 people in attendance in opposition.

Emrick gave Council a timeline of events regarding Whittemore Elementary School. He said that Horry County Schools gave the property to the City in 2017. At that time, the School District had done an assessment of the school and determined that the only path forward was demolition. They provided the City with the demolition report and estimate of the cost for demolition with the gifted property. After initial assessments, it was determined that the larger portion of the school would certainly require demolition. It was severely damaged in Hurricane Matthew in 2016. The hope was that the smaller building could be preserved and renovated using CDBG funds. Two community meetings were held in early 2018 to gauge the community's interest in this idea. The takeaways that we heard from the community was that it was not so much the building that is important, but that the story is told. The building was condemned by the City in late 2019.

CDBG is a federal funding source, and requires review from all governing authorities including SC Archives and History. SCDAH determined that we could not use federal funds to demolish any portion of the school buildings and if we did demolish any portion, we could not use federal funds to renovate any part of the remaining buildings. This process took many months to uncover and the City spent close to $20,000 to get to this conclusion.

In March of 2020 at the Budget Retreat, Mary Catherine Hyman presented these issues. At this meeting, Staff asked Council to consider de-federalization of Whittemore and demolition of the site. Our architects determined that restoring the school could cost upwards of $14 million. At this meeting, Council agreed to defederalize Whittemore, repay CDBG funds already expended and work toward demolition, however, funding was not included in the 2020 budget.

At the Budget Retreat of 2021, Whittemore was again discussed. Staff presented a timeline for proceeding with a public private partnership including a community center and housing with design guidelines, as a possible planned development district. We also discussed having additional public meetings and Council determined that the will of the community was clear and additional public meetings would not likely be productive or fair to the community members. However, no funds were allocated for demolition, despite that still being the identified path forward.

Today, the roof will need to be completely removed, every window is broken, there is no central heat or air in the building, the building is riddled with mold and asbestos.
There is no option but for demolition. And we have the ability now, to find the funding to remove the hazard and begin working toward something that the community can be proud of.

Blain-Bellamy asked if a Community Meeting was necessary. Blain Spain said yes.

There was no further public input. **Motion:** Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Hyman, to close public input. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

I. Introduction of Staff present
   a. Adam Emrick – City Administrator
   b. John Rogers – Deputy City Administrator, former Grants Coordinator
   c. Mary Catherine Hyman – Deputy City Administrator, former Planning Director
   d. June Wood – Public Information Officer
   e. Ashley Smith – Recreation Director

II. Description of work and consultants done to date
   a. In December of 2017, Horry County Schools gave this property to the City
   b. With it, they delivered a report detailing the asbestos and other contaminants on the site that would need to be removed along with an estimate for the demolition of the buildings.
   c. To date, we hired and paid for numerous consultants and professionals to assist the City on this project, which have all led us to the conclusion that was discussed with City Council. In order to hire any professionals, the City must follow strict procurement guidelines. All professionals must go through this process, which is expensive, time consuming and thoroughly vetting. The process is followed to assure that vendors and professionals are hired by the City fairly and honestly. These are the professionals we have hired thus far:
      i. In 2018, the City hired ECS to conduct the required Environmental Review of the Whittemore Elementary School Buildings. ($6,500)
      ii. In 2018, At the requirement of SCDAH, we hired New South Associates to be our independent Architectural Historians. ($5,234)
      iii. In 2019, the City procured Owens and Associates as Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing Engineers for the Whittemore renovation ($27,000)
      iv. In 2019, the City hired Liollio Architecture from Charleston, South Carolina to be the principle architect for the project. ($55,275)
      v. In 2020, the building and parcel was surveyed by Spartina Land Surveying ($9,775)

III. History of building and National Register Eligibility Discussion

a. Whittemore School was one of the first African American schools in Horry County and was founded in 1870. This is not the site of that 1870 school. The first school was on Race Path Avenue and after a fire, classes moved to the Conwayborough Academy on 5th Avenue.
b. This property was conveyed to Horry County Schools in 1953. In 1954, Whittemore High School and Whittemore Elementary School were constructed as equalization schools.
c. The school desegregated in 1970 and operated until 1977. In approximated 2002, Horry County Schools used the building as district offices.
d. In October of 2016, the building was badly damaged by Hurricane Matthew and abandoned.
e. The building is unquestionably historic. It is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

IV. Original intent of project

V. Condition of buildings and Federal Requirements

VI. Construction estimates

VII. Discussion of future of the site, absent buildings

VIII. Question and Answer Period

CITY OF CONWAY
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
CONWAY CITY HALL
229 MAIN STREET, CONWAY
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022 - 6:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Barbara Blain-Bellamy, Alex Hyman, Mayor Pro Tem
Council Members**:** Amanda Butler, William Goldfinch, Beth Helms, Justin Jordan, Larry White

STAFF: Adam Emrick, City Administrator; John Rogers, Deputy Administrator; Mary Catherine Hyman, Deputy Administrator; Jeff Leveille, Technology Services Director; June Wood, Public Information Officer; Wayne Calhoun, Police; Steven Pearce, Police; and Alicia Shelley, City Clerk (watched via YouTube).

OTHERS: Approximately 20 people in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Blain-Bellamy called the meeting to order. She gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The requirements for posting notice of this meeting under South Carolina's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) were met.

DISCUSSION OF WHITTEMORE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

Cheryl Moore Adamson of the Whittemore Racepath Historical Society made opening remarks regarding the saving of the Whittemore Elementary School. She spoke about the Gullah Geechee Conference, solutions for lowering the cost estimate and the National Historical Registry. She said that the WRHS had partnered with an Architect. She stated that a community center would be an economic development generator that will allow for personal development, skills development, and work force development and provide on-site childcare. She said that the gains would outweigh the costs. She hopes to meet the mutual goals of the City of Conway. She then introduced others to speak.

Michael Allen, CEO of MOA Architecture from Greenville, SC who has worked on multiple historic projects presented several case studies, which included St. George Rosenwald School, Great Branch Teacherage, Old School High Springs, Perryville Elementary School, and Horse Spring Elementary School. He also stated that he came up with a cost estimate from the information that was presented to him of $11 Million.

Blain-Bellamy asked if his cost estimate including the remediation for the asbestos and mold. Allen said no and that the unknowns may affect his estimate.

Carolyn Dillian, Professor of Archeology at CCU offered her expertise on this project as she said she would find it interesting and rewarding to have a community center to highlight the history of the African American culture. She said that she looked forward to a partnership between CCU and the community.

Victoria Smalls, Executive Director of Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission informed council that she also could help with this project.

In closing remarks, Moore Adamson said that using these resources this project can be achieved by utilizing financial resources through the municipalities, County, State, and Federal grants, private sponsorships, and tax incentives. She encourages the City of Conway and community to make this a doable project. She stated that we are smart enough to figure this out because the community values it. She asked for a continuation of discussion and that the City of Conway consider arguing this matter from their place and on their behalf and then tell them what to do.

Carlisle Dawsey, Vice President of the Horry County Historical Society asked Council to take from both perspectives and do the right thing. He said that he worked to try to save Whittemore High School. He said that the right thing was done at the Main Street School but not at Conway High School, as it is no longer there. Blain-Bellamy said that she did not know if the City of Conway had anything to do with the taking down of Conway High School.

Blain-Bellamy asked staff to explain how the basis for the sum of monies was determined.

M. Hyman stated that a public bid through the RFQ process was awarded to Liollio Architecture out of Charleston, SC. She said that the cost estimate is not broken down line by line but the main costs in bringing up to code was in reinforcing the walls of the existing masonry construction. It also included a new roof, new windows, electrical upgrades, plumbing upgrades, mechanical upgrades, asbestos removal, underground tank removal, fire alarm system, and sprinkler system. This cost did come from similar projects that they had done across the state.

Blain-Bellamy asked if these costs could be divided in any sort of way. Hyman said that estimate of the costs was per square foot.

Emrick stated that it could lose its eligibility for the National Registry if done in phases.

Allen said that since this cost estimate was not broken down to understand all expenses, the wall structure was not known to him.

Liz Gilland said that there are three points of view: 1. Cost, does it make sense. 2. Heart, lots of community folks have vested interests in that school. 3. Vision for the future, once it is all done will it make a difference. She recommended the city taking care of the asbestos and challenging the community to work towards raising the funds.

Larry Biddle said that Tom Herron, Founder of Up With America worked in the brick industry for 6 years and he would be able to tell where and when the brick on the WES was built. He recommended continuing discussions. He then gave the information to Allen.

White asked about getting with the state representatives and local delegation for funding. Emrick said that we could do that but that we needed a plan in place.

Blain-Bellamy asked for a timeline to be put in place. Emrick said that staff was on hold, waiting for direction from Council.

Blain-Bellamy stated that the asbestos and mold abatement had to take place whether it was renovated or not. Emrick said yes, but that we would have to remove the roof and then the building would be uncovered without the next plan.

There was more discussion about the roof.

Butler said that the examples of Rosenwald that were shown had been slightly altered and it was on the National Historic Register. Emrick stated that the more you change, the harder it is to get on the registry.

Butler asked about federal funds. Emrick said none were available at this time as the property has been defederalized.

Adamson said that they met with SHPO last Thursday. SHPO said that the building as is is a historical site. They do not have an application to be on the registry but can apply now. She said it is not often that buildings are taken off the registry. They are given specifications to meet code or standards without losing their place on the registry.

Blain-Bellamy said it would be beneficial to hear the same messages at the same time. Adamson said we should establish a work team to do feasibility studies.

Dillian said she could help to comply with the National Historical Registry and that this site is eligible through a. important events or c. type, period or method of construction. She said that if it is listed on the National Register that federal grants can be applied for and there are tax benefits available. She then said that renovation costs are higher if on the National Register.

Goldfinch asked if the City of Conway would be operating this site as a community center or would another group be operating.

Helms asked for total square feet. Emrick said just under 45,000.

Adamson asked if the whole site is eligible.

Butler asked how long the process would take to be listed on National Register. Emrick said approximately 1 year.

Goldfinch asked who would be running the community center. Blain-Bellamy stated possibly partnering agencies could staff.

There was more discussion about the asbestos and mold removal.

Emrick said we needed to have a comprehensive plan.

Butler asked what the next steps should be.

Blain-Bellamy asked about issuing an RFP. She stated that complications are many and this looks to be a beginning of a long discussion.

Priscilla Fuller stated that she wants a subcommittee between the City and the Racepath Whittemore Historical Society.

Goldfinch asked staff to elaborate on the proposed RFP.

Rogers stated that the RFP gives a background on the site and then asks for an objective and a purpose. Submissions will be accepted until Tuesday, December 31, 2024. Proposals will be opened in an open council session at the second regularly scheduled council meeting following receipt of the submission package by the City. At the next scheduled meeting, a workshop will be held to openly discuss the applications and give direction to staff for future negotiations with any of the proposal submitters.

Rogers said also prior to submission of any proposal, submitters must complete a site visit.

Adamson stated that she thinks the RFP is too short of window and needs a MOU or other agreement for funding.

There was more discussion regarding the RFP.

Hyman recommended issuing the RFP.

Jordan asked if the RFP would preclude conversations. Rogers stated that the language in the RFP encourages conversations.

Emrick said the RFP could be extended after December 31, 2024, changed or a proposal could be accepted. Nothing would preclude the City from hearing ideas in the interim. It would be at Council's discretion on qualified bidders.

Fuller asked if anyone could submit a proposal to the RFP. The Mayor stated would it matter if the results were the same.

Allen said that the RFP lays out what is on the site and outlines the project to bid on.

Emrick said that even private partnership/developers could bid as they have the biggest tax benefit. The City has no tax benefit.

Emrick then explained that the RFP would be placed on an agenda so proper notice would be given to the community. The RFP would be open at that Council meeting and no discussion. The proposal would be put on the City's website and then discussed at the next Council meeting.

Adamson stated that she would like the community to still claim agency of ownership.

Biddle recommended using Technical Colleges as partners.

Ballery Skipper said that she is happy with the progress.

Blain-Bellamy asked for any more questions or comments before the City's plan to move forward with the RFP.

ADJOURNMENT: **Motion:** Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by White, to adjourn the meeting. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes approved by City Council this 7 day of February 2022.

Alicia Shelley

Alicia Shelley, City Clerk

Horry County Single Family Residential (SF10) to City of Conway Low/Medium Density Residential District (R-1).

E. **Final Reading of Ordinance #ZA2022-11-21 (E) to annex approximately 0.50 acres of property located at 570 Dunn Shortcut Rd (PIN 337-08-02-0023) and rezone from Horry County Commercial Forest Agriculture (CFA) to City of Conway Low/Medium Density Residential District (R-1).**

F. **Acceptance of Bid for Playground Equipment**

G. **Resolution to Accept Letter of Credit for Midtown Oaks Subdivision**

H. **Approval of November 7, 2022 City Council Minutes**

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: **Motion:** Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by White to approve the November 21, 2022 consent agenda. **Vote**: Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT:

There was no public input. **Motion:** Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Hyman, to close public input. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

A. **Presentation of National Community Foundation Week Proclamation –** Mayor Blain-Bellamy presented Mike Mancuso of the Waccamaw Community Foundation with the National Community Week Proclamation.

B. **Presentation of Small Business Saturday Proclamation –** Mayor Blain-Bellamy presented Brooke Holden of the Conway Chamber of Commerce with the Small Business Saturday Proclamation.

C. **Opening of Sealed Proposal for Whittemore Elementary School Site –** Rogers presented Council with the sealed proposal for the Whittemore Elementary School Site and stated that at first glance it appeared that the basic requirements were enclosed. Rogers stated that staff would bring this item back to Council as a workshop item at the December 5, 2022 City Council meeting.

White asked if this was the only bid received. Rogers said yes, at this time, but the closing bid is December 31, 2024; however, Council has the authority to close the bid at any time.

D. **Discussion of a proposal to annex approximately 1.42 acres located off Hwy 501, between Sioux Swamp Road and Highway 548 and rezone from Horry County Commercial Forest Agriculture (CFA) to City of Conway Highway Commercial (HC) (PIN 326-15-04-0002).** Hucks stated that this parcel is located on Highway 501 just before Highway 548 and is currently zoned Commercial Forest Agriculture. The applicants are seeking to annex and rezone to City of Conway Highway Commercial. The parcel has frontage directly on Highway 501 and is currently vacant. The future land use map

Hyman congratulated the under 10 and 15 soccer players. He then thanked staff for the wonderful tree lighting and said that he saw some drone footage and it looked like the biggest crowd ever.

White said that Highway 378, Highway 501 and Fourth Avenue all need work, as there are lots of potholes. White then said that the grass on the 2 lots on Highway 378 needs cutting.

Goldfinch congratulated the Police Department for being fully staffed for the first time in 3 decades. He then congratulated the new EMT's in the City and said that this would allow the fire truck to get there long before the ambulance. Goldfinch encouraged the city to do a Resolution to encourage the state delegation to allow new hires of the City the optional retirement plan, as right now it is not allowed under state law.

Jordan echoed Hyman and said that the tree lighting was incredible and he said no one was more deserving than Mike to light the tree. He also commended Chief Long as he saw a picture where Long was running the Reindeer Run in full uniform.

Butler thanked the staff for the great tree lighting celebration but would like to see in the future more accessibility for the handicapped and elderly. She also gave a shout out to all the teachers for their hard work and Ms. Spearman for being awarded the Conway High School teacher of the year.

Blain-Bellamy said that she spoke to a hearing-impaired group at the tree lighting and they were very happy that we had an interpreter present; however, logistically to few of them were able to stand in such a way that they could see the sign language that was being offered but we will figure out the best option for them to see next year. Blain-Bellamy said this was the best tree lighting ever and heard no word of dissatisfaction. She stated that she was the choice spot for the snow and was so covered that she could not see. A lot of work and coordination went into making the event possible and thanked everyone that had anything to do with it.

Blain-Bellamy called for a break.

WORKSHOP:

Whittemore Elementary School Site Proposal – Rogers gave a brief overview on the Whittemore Elementary School Site background.

Cheryl Moore Adamson introduced the Whittemore Racepath Historical Society's proposal and stated that the society is partnering with Marvin Greer & Associates, a real estate development firm and Michael Allen, of MOA Architecture. Adamson said the society is asking the City of Conway to donate the building.

Greer further explained the proposal and stated that in order to finance the development, the group would design and develop an estimated $15.9 million apartment complex using Low Income Housing Tax Credits, GAP financing from governmental sources, and will ask the City to donate the land.

Allen also spoke regarding the proposal.

Council had concerns with how the proposal would be funded and who would be responsible for maintaining the property.

Larry Biddle asked that Horry Georgetown Technical College be added to the list of partnerships.

After much discussion, everyone agreed that from this proposal the main goal was to save the building and structural engineers from both the City and the Historical Society would need to look at the site to determine next steps for the property, which would be brought back to City Council at their next meeting.

Collins Jollie Development Agreement – Emrick stated that the developers of this development are close to getting plat approval for the first Phase. One of the issues with Conservation Subdivisions is that they are protecting the wetlands and other sensitive areas and our ordinance requires them to plat out all of the wetlands separately from the rest of the development and then deed those to a wetland conservation entity. Due to the size of this tract, it is becoming problematic in that they are doing it in phases so they cannot anticipate where that property line needs to be for phase 8 while they are subdividing out phase 1. Emrick said they are counting part of phase 8 wetlands for open space for phase 1, which is what we want them to do, but because of the length of time it will take for them to develop, it is becoming a problem. City staff met with the developers and the solution is not one we normally would do, so that is why it is before Council. A Development Agreement is typically a time capsule sort of agreement that says you have created a development agreement on this development and the ordinance that is in place at the time the development agreement is signed is the ordinance that is in place for a period of 10 years, 15 years, or 20 years depending on the size and perimeters. That is not the intent of this development agreement. The intent of this development agreement is simply to say the wetlands piece will be broken out in a manner that meets the intent of the ordinance over the life of the development up to 10 years. Sometime during that 10 years, it will be deeded to an entity.

Emrick said that he would send the draft development agreement to the legal team and then bring back to Council for final approval. It also requires 2 public hearings, one of which can be done at Planning Commission and 3 readings by council.

Use of High School Tennis Courts – Smith stated that staff has come to an agreement with Conway High School to use the tennis courts at the school which will save the City lots of money. We can use the courts anytime of the year, except March 1 – April 21 and July 29 – October 17. This will give the city 11 total courts. It is a $15,000 donation.

Helms asked about restrooms. Smith said that there are 2 located at the baseball field.

Emrick stated that once the agreement is ready, it will be placed on the Council agenda.

Height Limit in R3 – Emrick stated that the height limit in R3 along the Highway 501 corridor has come up recently, with all the development that is coming. City staff was approached by a developer for a big commercial project that may be coming into the city limits with a multi-family development behind it. The density that they need for this project would require them to go higher, up to 65 feet.

HAYNSWORTH SINKLER BOYD

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March 10, 2023

John M. Rogers
Deputy City Administrator
City of Conway
229 Main Street
Conway, SC 29528

Re: Public Health Concern from Asbestos

Dear John:

We understand there was a catastrophic fire at the building located at 1808 Rhue Street in Conway (the "Site") on or around March 7, 2023 and the Fire Marshal and the City of Conway Building Code Inspector have determined the remaining building to be unsafe. An asbestos survey of the building dated February 7, 2017 confirmed the building contains regulated asbestos containing material ("RACM"). It is our understanding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency contacted the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control ("DHEC") regarding the fire and the concern for the potential release of RACM at the Site. DHEC personnel visited the Site and requested a copy of the asbestos survey from City. Asbestos, in friable form, poses a known risk to human health and the environment and is a regulated Hazardous Substance under the federal superfund statute otherwise known as the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act.

Even if the asbestos at the Site were at one time in stable condition, it could now be unstable and friable due to the degradation of the building. In its current state, this Site represents a public health hazard and should be secured as quickly as possible. If the remaining structure and the rubble from the portions of the building that have been damaged can be accessed by the public there is potential for exposure to friable asbestos. Until this Site is secured, it represents an imminent threat to human health and the environment and the City, as owner, could be liable for injuries. If the remaining structure cannot be secured from a structural stand-point then the safest option is to demolish the remaining structure and safely dispose of all materials in a landfill licensed and permitted to accept RACM. This should be done as soon as practical given the potential threat to human health posed by the current condition of the Site.

Sincerely,

John P. Boyd

March 12, 2023

The Honorable Mayor Barbara Blain Bellamy
Councilperson Amanda Butler
Councilperson William Goldfinch
Councilperson Beth Helms
Councilperson Alex Hyman
Councilperson Justin Jordan
Councilperson Larry White

Dear Mayor and Council of the City of Conway:

I am writing on behalf of the Whittemore Racepath Historical Society, Incorporated to express our sorrow and dismay due to the devastation of the historic Whittemore Elementary School by fire and demolition which occurred on Tuesday, March 7, 2023. It is apparent to the community that this did not have to happen. They are very hurt and angry that such wanton destruction was allowed to occur.

Despite these events, the WRHS is moving forward with its plans to salvage and restore what remains of our history and to develop this site into a place of remembrance as described in our response to the City's RFP. We are asking the following:

- That the RFP be closed and the WRHS, as the sole respondent, be awarded the Whittemore Elementary School along with the 10-acre site upon which it sits today. Negotiations should begin with all deliberate speed and be finalized as soon as possible.
- That the burn site is not demolished prior to inspection by our structural engineer to see what is salvageable.
- That the city delivers a clean site with bricks salvaged for the creation of a memorial.

Sincerely,

Reverend Cheryl Moore Adamson, M.Div.
President
Whittemore Racepath Historical Society, Inc.

www.whittemorehistorical.com Post Office Box 1096 Conway, SC 29528 843-333-1911

Alicia Shelley

From: Brenda Jones <brenda.jones22@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2023 10:25 PM
To: Alicia Shelley
Subject: save Whittemore Elementary School

CAUTION-External Email: This email originated from outside of the City of Conway. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Please repair and remodel Whittemore Elementary School. Please do not tear down, You will be destroying our black heritage. I attended Whittemore Elementary and I am proud to be a part of Conway. Let consider others, and God will bless the land.

Alicia Shelley

From: genar faulk <genarffaulk@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2023 10:38 PM
To: Alicia Shelley
Subject: Urgent letter to the Mayor and Council Members

CAUTION-External Email: This email originated from outside of the City of Conway. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor Blain-Bellamy and City Council Members,
I am again appealing to you for your support in saving and preserving the remaining portions of the historic Whittemore Elementary School properties. This school stood as a landmark to thousands of students who attended and received a solid educational foundation. Many of the students went on to become doctors, lawyers, teachers, college professors, etc. and one even became the Mayor of the City of Conway. We are so proud of the many accomplishments!

After integration, the school served the community as West Conway Elementary, Conway Middle Annex, West Conway Middle and as the District Office Building for Horry County Schools. The smaller building to the left of the main building served as the Center for Exceptional Children. It also served as the District Office Building for Horry County Schools for over ten years until a new facility was built on Four Mile Road in Conway. This property truly has a unique history. The African American Community and Community members at-large deserve to have this landmark preserved. As a former graduate of Whittemore Elementary and High School, employee at West Conway Elementary, Whittemore Park and retired Conway Middle School Principal, I am appealing to you to help Save and preserve a landmark that is cherished by thousands. Your support will be greatly appreciated. Genar F. Faulk

Alicia Shelley

From: Carolyn Hickman-Williams <ms.akaccu@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2023 11:15 PM
To: Alicia Shelley
Subject: HISTORIC Whittemore Elementary School

CAUTION-External Email: This email originated from outside of the City of Conway. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Ms. Shelley,
Please forward this email to the Mayor and all City Council Members.
Thank you

To the Honorable Mayor Blain-Bellamy and Honorable City Council Members:

As elected officials, your position is to serve ALL citizens of Conway, not just a certain portion or side of the city. Why have an urgent meeting to demolish the WES building due to the fire on Tuesday, March 7th without Public Input? What underlined motive was there to call a special meeting two days after the fire? It looks very suspicious for the city to move to demolish WES so quickly knowing that WRHS had already submitted a RFP to acquire the property prior to the suspicious fire.

What is more suspicious is the way the fire situation was handled Tuesday. There were several other fire deterrent methods that could have been implemented other than destroying the building using heavy equipment. Why destroy evidence prior to a full investigation from SLED? You have now allowed the evidence to be tampered with.

My next concern is the air quality now that a portion of the building was knocked down by the fire department. All before, the City was concerned about the asbestos in the building being disturbed and getting into the air and the effect it would have on the citizens in the surrounding community. The media is now reporting per the City that the air quality is safe. What is the true status of the air quality after the fire department attempted to demolish the building.

Please explain why the City Council members and Mayor do not have a voice when it comes to the Black Community needs and concerns? It appears that the roles of the City Council and City Administrator are reversed. It appears that the council is taking orders from the City Administrator instead of listening to the concerns of the community, at least when it comes to the Black Community.

As Mayor and City Council Members please listen to what John Lewis said: "We need someone who is going to stand up, speak up, and speak out for the people who need help, for the people who have been discriminated against".

Why can't WE preserve this Historic Whittemore Elementary School building/site? It's a part of Conway history and should be preserved as such. I don't have to share the history of this school, you already know the history of this school, one of two historic buildings remaining in the Black Community.

May the Lord bless you to do RIGHT by all people regardless of what part of this city they reside.

Carolyn Hickman-Williams
Former WES Student

Alicia Shelley

From: Edna Dewitt <edwil@sccoast.net>
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2023 11:58 PM
To: Alicia Shelley
Subject: Demolition of Whittemore Elementary School

CAUTION-External Email: This email originated from outside of the City of Conway. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor and City Council,

I'm writing to ask that Whittemore Elementary School not be demolished. I attended this school from 1960 to 1966. This is where I received a very solid educational foundation. Whittemore was named in honor of Mr. B. F. Whittemore, a carpetbagger from Boston Massachusetts. His objective was to educate the children of the Negro slaves. This alone is historical. I can imagine his family, hearing what is being discussed about this school building that was named in his honor, because of his love for education for all people, leaving them very, very emotional, as it is for me. I ask of you to please, please DO NOT demolish this historical building of our community. Please allow this building to continue to stand, that when Mr. Whittemore's family come to visit they will have a building to visit and not where it WAS.

Respectfully yours,

Edna Bellamy DeWitt

Alicia Shelley

From: Suzanne Sasser <suzanne.sasser67@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2023 10:13 PM
To: Alicia Shelley
Subject: Whittemore Park School

CAUTION-External Email: This email originated from outside of the City of Conway. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor & City Council Members,

I am at a loss for words. I am so proud of Conway. I love our town and brag on it whenever I get the chance. But I have to say, the fire at the Whittemore School this week really calls me to question if it's really the town that I hope it is. I don't need to tell you that the timing of this fire is entirely suspicious. You are literally the only individuals who can make this right. Please do not miss this opportunity to make an impact in your town and in your state. Be fearless leaders. Imagine the precedent you'd set!

I beg you to allow the leadership of the Whittemore Racepath Historical Society to move forward without further obstacle and to offer them your utmost support. What they add in value to that property will add exponentially to our town. My grandfather Dr. Archie Sasser, MD was an integral part in starting Conway Hospital and was also the founder of the only Black Clinic in Conway on Racepath. I attended Whittemore when it was Conway Middle Annex. We all have something at stake here. Each and every person from Conway benefits by preserving its history. A town that includes everyone is a true home town. Anything less is counterfeit. This is your defining moment. Thanks for all you do to make Conway a better place to live. Please know that it makes a difference.

Blessings,

Suzanne Sasser

--
Suzanne Sasser
843-340-1228

Alicia Shelley

From: Annis Alston Staley <annisalston@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2023 9:47 PM
To: Alicia Shelley
Subject: Whittemore Elementary

CAUTION-External Email: This email originated from outside of the City of Conway. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Ms Shelley
Please help us keep this School as a place we can have for our History.
This show me the this City Counsel wants to take us back here the city made all the decisions without any reasons are concerns for the citizens

Thanks for your time

Annis Alston Staley

Alicia Shelley

From: Marie Mitchell Lanier <mhdmitchell@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2023 10:47 PM
To: Alicia Shelley
Subject: Whittemore Elementary

CAUTION-External Email: This email originated from outside of the City of Conway. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor and Council Members,
This missive is being sent to ask that Whittemore Elementary School not be demolished. The school is part of my heritage. My mother, her siblings, and many other family members attended this school. I also attended this school in the sixth grade when it was the annex before going to the old Conway High School which became Conway Middle. Destroying this landmark will be more than material damage to many people. Please don't destroy a sense of identity for members of the African American community.
Thank you in advance for your compassion and understanding.
Sincerely,
Marie Mitchell Lanier

Alicia Shelley

From: Carol Frischmann <cfrischma@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2023 10:56 PM
To: Alicia Shelley
Cc: ms.akaccu@gmail.com; Cheryl Moore Adamson
Subject: Regarding Demolition of Whittemore Elementary School

CAUTION-External Email: This email originated from outside of the City of Conway. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

For the Mayor and City Council of Conway:

I learned this evening that the Whittemore Elementary School demolition is being discussed by the City Council at Monday's meeting without the opportunity for public comment at the meeting.

As a resident of Conway from 1953-1973, I was able to see the importance of the school to members of the community who were denied admission to Conway's public schools other than Whittemore. As a member of the Whittemore Racepath Historical Society (WRHS), I feel the time has finally come to find a way to preserve our collective heritage.

I'm surprised and disappointed to learn that members of the City Council are discussing demolition and not discussing ways in which a building important to generations of townspeople could remain whole and available as a memorial of the history experienced by all Conway's citizens.

I hope the City Council and Mayor will open their problem-solving toolkits and find a way to move forward towards preservation. At the very least, an extended period of public comment should be opened. Working together, people who care about the legacy of history can often find solutions to problems that otherwise seem intractable.

Best regards,

Carol Frischmann
cfrischma@gmail.com

Alicia Shelley

From: Craig Sasser <sasser.craig@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2023 8:16 AM
To: Alicia Shelley
Subject: Whittemore Park Preservation

CAUTION-External Email: This email originated from outside of the City of Conway. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: Mayor Blain Bellamy and the Conway City Council,

I have recently learned about the tragic fire that has compromised plans for restoring the Whittemore School. This would have been a unique opportunity to develop a community center similar to the work that is being done on Sandy Island to repurpose the school house into a community center. Projects like these are very important to the community and offer unique opportunities to preserve history and build community good while also providing opportunities for educating future generations to difficult periods of history that need to be told. Please consider allowing the preservation group to examine the damages before any decisions are made to completely demolish this historic structure.

Best regards,

Craig Sasser