

HERALD-WHIG

QPS picks 48th and Columbus for school



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Posted: Oct. 18, 2016 11:45 am Updated: Oct. 18, 2016 7:14 pm

QUINCY -- The Quincy School Board will move forward with building an elementary school at a 48th Street and Columbus Road site instead of the ADM site.

The board, meeting in special session Tuesday morning, exercised an option to buy the 48th Street site and agreed to sell the donated site at 30th and Locust.

The School District will buy the 35-acre site for \$25,000 per acre, or a total of \$875,000, then divide the property, keeping 17 acres for the K-5 school and selling the remaining acreage along with the ADM site at public auction at a still-to-be-determined date.

The transaction will be cost-neutral for the School District thanks to irrevocable pledges from two community members tied to both property sales. A pledge from Jack Sharkey guarantees the board will receive at least \$400,000 for selling the ADM site, while a similar pledge from Patty McNay, the wife of board member Richard McNay, guarantees the district at least \$475,000 from selling the remaining 48th Street acreage.

Accepting the resolutions on the pledges passed unanimously, with Richard McNay abstaining on the 48th Street one, along with exercising the option to buy the 48th Street site.

"We can build a K-5 elementary school at that site, and we expect that to be under budget even though we're going to include a little over \$100,000 in cost we already incurred on the 30th and Locust site," School Board member Mike Troup said.

Bid packages for the new site should be prepared before the end of the calendar year, with the School Board expected to act on building bids in January and construction to begin as soon as possible when weather permits.

The School District will use the 17 acres of the west half of the 35-acre undeveloped tract owned by Clinard Properties Inc. at the southeast corner of the intersection.

Board members say the 48th Street site offers some advantages compared to the ADM site. It is zoned correctly, has needed utilities, is located in a neighborhood with sidewalks leading to it and has access from both Columbus Road and 48th Street.

The district won't recoup fees already paid to architects and engineers to design the roads and site plan for the ADM property -- a total of \$123,097.62 was shown on a comparison sheet provided at the meeting -- but changing the site might delay construction only by 30 to 45 days -- which means the K-5 building to serve the northeast quadrant of the district still should open on schedule for the 2018-19 year.

ADM Alliance Nutrition donated the 20-acre parcel, north of Locust and extending along the east side of 30th Street nearly to the western edge of the Quincy Post Office's property at 36th Street, in August 2015. With the gift, the district always had the option to sell the property, Richard McNay said, but ADM wanted any proceeds directed toward the building program.

"We're fine with it as long as it's the right thing for the community and the school district," said Mark Stephens, director of strategic initiatives for ADM Alliance Nutrition. "We're happy for them."

The district learned about the 48th Street site the week of Sept. 19. The board shared some details at the Sept. 28 regular meeting and held a special meeting Oct. 4 for what McNay characterized as "very good" additional discussion of the site in a 90-minute closed session.

With the possibility of the alternate site, the Building Committee tabled a second round of bids for the ADM site last month, and on Tuesday morning, the School Board rejected the bids for the ADM site.

The lowest of four bids came from Maas Construction for a construction base bid of \$12,412,657. Adding in an alternate bid for a 30-year roofing system and HVAC screens brought the total base bid to \$12,618,057 -- or "really good numbers" according to the design team for the project.

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