



Susana Measelle Hubbs <susana.hubbs@capeelizabeth.org>

[CE SBAC] School Proposals - Thoughts and Clarification

1 message

Brian Harris <briancarlharris@gmail.com>

Sat, Apr 13, 2024 at 6:49 PM

To: cesbac@capeelizabethschools.org

I had a chance to review the three concepts on the back of the Cape Courier and there is repeated reference to "ROM". I couldn't find anywhere on the page where ROM was defined and in my 20 years of experience in Commercial Real Estate and several years in municipal government I've never come across the term. I googled and perhaps it means "Rough Order of Magnitude"? You may want to either define the term in the first instance of its use in these postings, spell it out or use something like "estimate" that everyone will understand. An acronym without a definition probably leans to some confusion. I know it did for me.

Additionally, I implore your committee to get very fine grained when it comes to cost estimates. I recently worked on a proposed day care facility in a rural location and the architectural specifications had the following item in the specifications.



The cost for the whole project was given and everyone just accepted that is what the project will cost. On a whim I looked up this item the cost of this item from the specifications. The item is an outdoor playset by Outlast that costs \$11,400.

<https://www.communityplaythings.com/products/outdoor/outlast-collection/blocks/large-outlast-set?v=W400>

I guarantee if you asked anyone working on this project if they knew what this cost, no one would have guessed correctly. Not the property owner, the lender, the grant funders or even the architect, but it made it into the specifications.

I imagine that Outlast makes it very easy to drag and drop their products into a specification sheet with CAD files, cost sheets, etc so their products are more apt to end up in the specifications for projects. Make the architect's job easy and you end up in the specs.

This sort of absurd pricing can make its way into specifications through plumbing fixtures, finishes, furnishings, etc. I'm sure we can all find examples of two identical bathroom faucets, one is \$150 and one is \$2,000.

Regular white Daltile subway tile is currently \$1.20/sf. It's incredibly durable, attractive and affordable. A similar sized, white 'designer' subway tile runs >\$10/sf.

When you're spec'ing out a few dozen bathrooms with thousands of square feet of tiled walls or floors in the schools this can add up when the cost is 10x for essentially the same product.

There may be opportunities in reviewing the specifications to find areas of improvement or areas where a quick specification placement can result in cost escalations that don't need to be there.

Maybe there aren't many options for different roof choices in terms of cost, but maybe we could look at the flooring choice? What is the cost per square foot? If it's significantly above where flooring costs should be, why is that? Very high wear buildings like veterinary offices use luxury vinyl plank flooring and it lasts for a very long time and it isn't a different product than the +/- \$5/sf product that we may install in our basements. Retail buildings are getting away from installed flooring all together and going with polished concrete floors, that are durable, long lasting and often more attractive than vinyl. Do the specifications for the school indicate cost effective, but appropriate material choices? We won't know until we look at each item and see where they stand. Total cost is important, but it's only the sum of a lot of large and small choices that get to that total.

Sorry for the long winded email. Best of luck in your process.

Brian Harris

--

Under Maine's Freedom of Access law, documents - including e-mail - about town/school department business are classified as public records and may be subject to disclosure.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to cesbac+unsubscribe@capeelizabethschools.org