



Andover School District Meeting 2007 - A full house debated a major construction project proposed for AE/MS.

Photo: Bob Bussey

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turned into new rooms for art and music classes, conferences, and storage. The plan would have cost taxpayers \$3.4 million over 10 years. The local property tax rate would have risen by \$1.58.

Because the plan failed, the school board considered adding \$153,000 to its proposed \$4.19 million budget. The extra money would pay for a fire barrier wall to the cafeteria, roof repairs, an intercom, and classroom security locks. [After the *Monitor's* deadline the meeting voted down the fire barrier wall but approved the roof repairs, the intercom system, and the security locks for a total of \$113,000.]

Most people spoke out against the plan, calling it unnecessary and too ex-

pensive.

Jim Delaney said that of the \$6,000 in property taxes he pays, 90 percent goes to the schools.

"We don't have any commercial property coming in," he said. "You keep dumping the tax rate on the people here."

Dale McLeod, the town's former road agent, said he'd be more than happy to support something the town needed, but he said that the school expansion wasn't it.

"I don't really care to fund anybody's want," he said.

Many said that this was the largest turnout for a school district meeting in recent memory. Last year, only about 45 people attended the meeting, Boisvert said.

Supporters of the plan said the new

building would have improved education opportunities for the town's children.

Percy Hill, a former teacher at the school, pointed to haphazard learning environments for special-needs students as evidence that the town required the

expansion.

"We should never, ever have a special-needs child being tutored in the hallway," he said. "That child needs some dignity."

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Peter Zak addresses the School District Meeting.

Photo: Bob Bussey

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nity sends in.

The layout is incredibly impressive, the coverage is excellent, the price is free – what more could anyone ask for in a local town newspaper? We have it all -- thanks to the *Beacon's* small staff, its many volunteers, and their amazing efforts.

We say the paper is free, but we all know that it takes money to organize, produce, publish, distribute, and edit such an impressive 36-page newspaper. Where else can the citizens of Andover

find out so much about their town? To have an informed citizenry is the first requirement of a democracy, and if we take for granted the gifts, like the *Beacon*, that fall upon us without doing our share, we do not deserve to have the freedoms our democracy gives us.

So let us add our voices to Charlie's and say to the 850 unresponsive households in Andover, please send the *Beacon* a donation, large or small, every year. We must not lose this resource!

Ed and Mary Hiller

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Real Estate Language and Clear Communication

As we started to write this month's column, we thought we were going to explain different words and abbreviations that are frequently used in real estate. CMA, MLS, REO, BPO, FSBO, GLA, GLAAG, and many more are shorthand used in the real estate industry. We use these abbreviations every day with bankers, builders, appraisers, inspectors, attorneys, and other real estate agents. But why use them with customers and the general public?

Is a CMA a Comparable Market Analysis or a Competitive Market Appraisal or a Comprehensive Market Assessment? Are they different? Rather than tell a seller that we are doing a CMA to suggest a selling price for their house isn't a "Right Price for Your Property Study" clearer and more logical and more descriptive of what we are doing?

Aren't you better off if we use clear, precise, straightforward, everyday language? Everyday language is effective in communicating with you, is trustworthy, and helps us to understand your goals and objectives. Clear understanding lets us work harder for you. The highest compliment our clients can give us is the referral of their family, friends, and business associates. Our goal is to build our business on strong, lifelong relationships, one family at a time. We strive to avoid jargon with our clients in order to make buying or selling your home as stress-free as possible and to build those strong relationships.

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