

Coventry School Repairs: On Time and Under Budget

District's schools fixed up in time for first day

Pair of firms performs work on Coventry schools; finishes despite recent wind, rain

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COVENTRY — Not only were the school improvements completed for all Coventry schools on time but the work also came in under budget.

Members of the Coventry School Building Committee and town officials had the pleasure of taking a tour

with the owners of the construction company and architect to each school in the district on the eve of the district's first day of school Tuesday afternoon to see the end result of all the construction efforts done by Torrado Architects and Ahlberg Construction Corporation.

Every school had at least a portion of, if not the entire roof and air qual-

ity system replaced along with some flooring, ceilings, parking lots and walkways.

Glenn Ahlberg explained for Western Coventry Elementary School where and how the air ducts were all installed to have air circulating into the building and throughout the classrooms where before, the only circulation to the rooms was by fan.

Along with the air quality system, the entire roof was replaced and there is a new walkway and small park area where people may congregate when parents are picking up their children.

Jason Martin, physical plant director, took the few extra steps at both Western Coventry and Black Rock Elementary to add more landscaping and beautify the area as much as possible within the budget.

Ahlberg explained that the duct work, currently unpainted, will get a coat of paint to blend in with the



Kendra Leigh Miller/Daily Times

Coventry Town Manager Tom Hoover, School Building Committee member Steve Lopes, Councilman Ted Jendzejec and School Building Committee Chairman Bill Finnegan look at the material used to construct the new roof.

rooms but that it also has a sound attenuator that is designed to help control the noise of the air ducts.

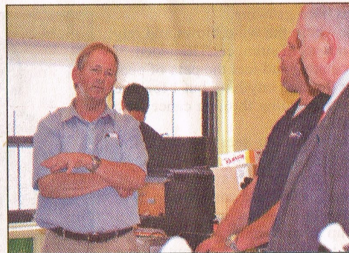
Luis Torrado, of Torrado Architects, said part of the certification process for the Rhode Island Department of

Education was for the work to be acoustically sound.

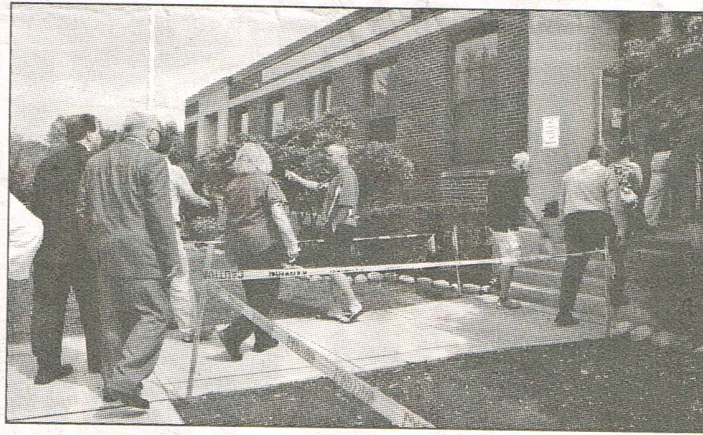
The main issues with Black Rock Elementary School were lack of a handicap accessible area to the door,

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Glenn Ahlberg of Ahlberg Construction explains some of the work done at Western Coventry Elementary to Town Manager Tom Hoover Tuesday afternoon.



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Members of the Coventry School Building Committee enter Blackrock Elementary to see improvements made there.

Schools fixed in time

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air quality, asphalt around the entranceway and in the parking lot, the lack of a walkway or sidewalk and an old roof.

"We totally reconfigured the parking lot and by doing so, added a sidewalk, more spaces and now there's a bus lane," Ahlborg said. "There's five inches of insulation and the roof, like Western Coventry, is mechanically constructed which is a more economical way to do it and has a 20-year warranty and can sustain 80 mph winds."

Tiogue and Hopkins Hill Elementary had similar issues.

Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School had a partial roof replacement and workers were just tying up a few loose ends but the school is ready to go.

"We had an excessive amount of rain days so even though we had a six-week work schedule, we really only had a few weeks to complete the work," Ahlborg said.

Another challenge the construction company faced was dealing with the damage of the music area of the high school after a freak wind and rain storm moved through the area last week.

"We had the last 6,000 square feet of roof to do when the storm came through and ripped off the roof and destroyed the ceiling in the hallway and some of the music rooms," Ahlborg said. "But the crew worked non-stop from Thursday to Monday to get everything fixed."

"It was raining in the hall," said building committee member Tom Hetherman. "I'm absolutely amazed because I didn't think there was a shot at all they'd have this done."

According to Ahlborg, insulation, ceilings and light fixtures were all replaced, at no additional cost at all.

A new ceiling with drop-down lights was installed in the high school's library — gone are the old, dingy skylights.

Building Committee Chairman Bill Finnegan confirmed that the projects came in \$200,000 under budget and another \$350,000 worth of work was able to be done through negotiations with the companies.

The surplus will be used to pay back a portion of the bond the town's voters approved last November for school repairs.

The breakdown is approximately \$800,000 for Western Coventry, about 1.2 million for Black Rock, about \$900,000 at the middle school, about \$2.25 million at the high school, \$1.3 million at Tiogue and just under \$1 million for Hopkins Hill.

"This is not including the sports complex," Finnegan said. "Planning and design of that will begin in the near future."

He credited the crew with Ahlborg and Torrado for doing everything they could to keep the projects on line.

Ten acres of roofing was fixed as well as about a mile of duct work constructed.

"What they were able to do is just amazing," Hetherman said.