

On September 28, 2007 Kent Beierle of EDI and I visited modular builders Preferred and Karsten as well as PSFA.

Preferred Builders: Met with Randy Hume, President/CEO. Randy showed us several buildings in progress. The first had no wall covering so building method could be seen. Kent and I were most impressed with the quality of work and attention to detail. We also looked at a nearly finished four module classroom being built for Santa Fe Community College. It was very nice. These buildings are of highest quality, and have the cost to go with that.

Their typical cost is \$140 to \$160 per sq. ft. That is likely higher than traditional building costs in Socorro, but most of their buildings go to Santa Fe and Taos where apparently that price is competitive. Their typical building time is also longer than I expected, 180 to 210 days to build, and 6 weeks from delivery to occupancy. Both the cost and build time might be less for the relatively simple structures CVCS requires, but I doubt they would build something for \$80 per sq ft. if for no other reason than that they have plenty of demand for the higher priced buildings.

Preferred is licensed to build commercial buildings, and any type of modifications to materials or style that Kent suggested they saw no problem implementing.

Karsten: Met with Todd Van Berg of Homes Direct. Homes Direct is the sole retailer of Karsten Homes in most of New Mexico. We viewed several completed model homes, and again were impressed with the apparent quality. A major problem is that Karsten does not have a commercial builder's license. In our later talks with PSFA they confirmed that the school must be a commercial building.

The license problem is unfortunate because Karsten could probably build the modules CVCS needs for less than \$80 per sq. ft., and in about 100 days.

Public Schools Facilities Authority (PSFA): Talked with Bill Sprick, Manager of Facilities Master Planning, and his assistant. The principal purpose of this meeting was to learn what waivers CVCS may need in our building plans, and how to gain PSFA approval of our plans. Bill gave me a 10 page draft copy of Statewide Adequacy Standards (expected to be approved and official in the next month or two.). I will make a copy for the school office. Bill gave Kent five documents that EDI will complete and submit at five stages during the project. I didn't see the documents, but will request that Kent get me a copy. The adequacy standards should not present any problems for the classroom pods, and, if there are problems, the standards allow many variances for charter schools. (PSFA "allows variance," rather than "gives waivers.")

Bill also went over the adequacy report for CVCS. The report was the result of a survey of ten New Mexico charter schools, including CVCS, completed last year. The results are preliminary info and subject to change. There were several oddities in PSFA's assessment of CVCS needs. The charter (maybe the original charter?) states that the Socorro Public Library will be used so a library is not needed, Finley Gym will be used

so a gym isn't needed, and Macey Center will be used so a performance space is not needed. In PSFA's opinion we need a place for students to eat, and a place where the entire student body can gather indoors. In looking over the current charter I do not see these alternative arrangements mentioned.

The final topic with PSFA was to discuss our building plans. This was very short because when I mentioned modular buildings Bill informed me he is trying to discourage such things. I explained this was dictated by the 2007 lease-to-purchase bill. Bill was unaware of the bill, and the conversation pretty much came to an end there. I have since asked Lisa Grover to contact Bill and straighten this out.

EDI issues:

Several issues came up as Kent and I drove between meetings. I sent Kent contact information for Comark Modular Buildings. Comark supplied classrooms to the Taos Charter School, and is a New Mexico approved vendor. They can certainly compete with Karsten on cost, and probably on quality. The closest factory is outside of Dallas Texas. Has anyone actually been inside the Taos school?

EDI is licensed to design commercial buildings. There is minimal difference between commercial and residential for our simple class room modules. Kent is thinking that a Karsten shell could be brought to commercial standards after delivered. That is a stretch, because the real hurdle is PSFA approval. They did not seem likely to budge on this.

Several designs for the 'common area' in each pod were discussed. I have never heard a defined use for the common area, and I think the intended use should drive the design. In my opinion the Facilities Committee and the faculty should define the use so that we are ready for designing. Some ideas: Computer stations and reading areas, park like sitting area with plants, etc, small groups meeting space, or simply a small open area where the classrooms converge towards a main entrance.

Kent likes clay-surfaced walls due to their non-toxic nature. The Waldorf School in Colorado used Lazure Coating on the walls, again non-toxic. Either of these might be expensive to specify because they are non-standard. Is a really large painting, or claying, party next summer practical?