

## High School Building Committee Meeting Minutes

**Meeting date & place:** 6:33 pm, March 22, 2018 Pentucket High School Media Center

**Members Present:** Glenn Kemper, Joel Breen, Jonathan Seymour, Bill O'Neil, Mark Tocci, Greg Labrecque, Wayne Adams, Denise Dembkoski, Joseph Torrisi, Michael Stevens, Bill Daley, Kim Jackson, Greg Hadden, Dena Trotta, Elisa Grammer. **Members not present:** Stephanie Seeley, Laura Costigan, Carol McLeod, Emily Dwyer, Andy Murphy, Jeff Mulqueen.

**Owner's Project Manager:** Jon Lemieux, Vertex.

**Designer:** Brad Dore, Jon Richardson, Jason Boone, Dore & Whittier.

**Public present:** Tom Flaherty, West Newbury Citizen & Ashley Davis, Page School Parent.

### Minutes

Committee Chairman Seymour presented draft minutes of the School Building Committee's February 12, 2018 and February 13, 2018 meetings. *The Committee approved the draft minutes unanimously.*

### Working Group Update

Mr. Richardson reported that the PDP (Preliminary Design Plan) was submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) on March 12, 2018. MSBA feedback is expected around March 26.

The consultants are now meeting with the West Newbury Conservation Committee (ConCom) to determine permissions/limitations required for wetlands on the Pentucket site. A meeting on April 2, 2018 will address the status of the water-filled storm water containment area. Mr. Dore stated that ideally this feature will be determined to be non-jurisdictional in terms of ConCom preservation requirements. Such a determination will allow that area to be used for other purposes, such as a parking, with a modern infiltration system for storm water management likely placed underneath.

Next steps include

1) Geotech borings, which entail 8" holes and later test pits to evaluate the soils, potential ledge and water table levels at the site. When the ground is frozen, the test borings will be completely noninvasive. It was noted that these tests cannot capture conditions at locations between the test points, but will give a good idea of what to expect in terms of foundation requirements and other issues.

2) Course mapping, which more finely reviews the new building's spaces and the curriculum courses. This will confirm that everybody understands what is in the project will allow for adjustments as needed.

3) Continued review and refinement to the options.

### **Project Schedule**

Mr. Dore explained that work is currently on schedule. However, the key date of an October 31, 2018 MSBA vote to approve the project may not be realistic because of technical issues concerning town meetings and the desire to provide more information/education to townspeople. The date of the MSBA board vote to approve is crucial because it drives the schedule going forward.

It is highly advantageous to schedule the three town meetings simultaneously and to have the MSBA board approval before the towns' votes (both a town meeting vote and a ballot vote). MSBA procedures call for the town votes to take place within 120 days of the MSBA board vote. It had been expected that the October 31 MSBA vote would put the town votes in November.

A number of problems have arisen with the November date. Groveland was planning for such a meeting, but Merrimack has a bylaw specifying fall town meeting in October and West Newbury is concerned about timing and the budget process. Mr. Kemper pointed out that there is a mandated 14-day prior notice requirement for town meetings and it may not be feasible to have meeting materials to educate townspeople in the time between the October 31 MSBA vote and a November vote by the towns. Citizens' interest in further discussion and education about this project would be very difficult to accommodate with a November date. Also, other major state and federal elections are occurring in November.

Mr. Dore suggested as an alternative moving the key MSBA board vote from October 31 to the December 12, 2018 MSBA board meeting. Then, after further outreach and education with voters, the towns' votes could be scheduled for a day in February, right before the school vacation. The advantages of a February voting date include less delay than spring town meeting and thus less increased costs due to escalations, sole focus on the school building issue, a good outcome in terms of feeding design items to contractors (including early steel and foundation work). Disadvantages of a February voting date include the fact that it is in the winter, which may depress turnout, and that snowbirds may receive absentee ballots with little opportunity to be informed about the project.

April town meetings are another option, but they would lack the advantages of a February date and would push construction into winter. April could also take the vote beyond the 120-day deadline (which may be somewhat adjustable).

The revised schedule based on a December 12 MSBA vote would allow time for two additional public meetings, one in April and one June, to further engage townspeople. It would also permit the consultants to move other deadlines, providing more time to refine design. So, for instance, the

Preferred Schematic Report (PSR) submission (which immutably sets square footage) could be moved from May 9 to June 21, the MSBA deadline for the end of the feasibility phase.

*The Committee voted unanimously to adjust the schedule as Dore & Whittier have proposed, using the December 12 MSBA meeting as the anchor for the upcoming schedule, with a February date for the towns' meetings. The Committee further generally agreed that the intervening schedule would be further reviewed and that the individual town Selectmen and others would get together to work on a date in February.*

### **Preferred Schematic Report**

Mr. Richardson explained that work on the PSR is underway. The team is interviewing representatives of athletics, public safety, maintenance and custodial, and other interests. Through March they will be working on the selected options and in April will develop hardline options. In May attention turns to refining the preferred option (pre schematic), and then in June the Committees would approve the PSR. The team will work on the schematic design through summer. Mr. Boone noted that there will be a good idea of spaces, but at the PSR stage we will not know what the building looks like aesthetically.

### **Two vs. Three Storey Options**

Mr. Richardson reported that discussions with the landscape architect revealed that the footprint of the building will need to be slightly smaller than initially thought. Among other things, there is a five-foot grade change, greater buffer space for the river, and requisite emergency vehicle access around the building. This means that a 2-storey option would not be feasible without extensive phasing: the two-storey footprint would overlap with the existing school's boiler room.

This makes the three-storey option highly preferable. Pros and cons attend both options. The three-storey building is a better fit and provides better traffic flow. It is equally as expandable as the two-storey building. The two-storey building offers better daylighting and scale. *In response to Mr. Dore's query, the Committee expressed no strong preference for the two-storey option.*

### **Adjournment**

The Committee voted to adjourn at 7:46 p.m.

### **Meeting Documents**

Dore & Whittier PowerPoint presentation

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer  
School Building Committee Secretary