

**Westwood School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Thurston Middle School  
Wednesday October 23, 2019**

**Present:**

Anthony Mullin, Chairperson  
Josepha Jowdy, Vice Chairperson  
Carol Lewis, Clerk - Not in attendance  
Charles Donahue, Committee Member - Not in attendance  
Maya Plotkin, Committee Member  
Ayesha Tariq, Student Representative - Not in attendance

Tim Bonfatti - Compass Project Management  
Chin Lin - Compass Project Management  
Donald Walter - Dore & Whittier  
Roberto Fitzgerald - Dore & Whittier  
Glen Gollrad - Dore & Whittier  
Jason Boone - Dore & Whittier  
Michael Pirolo - Dore & Whittier  
Giovanna Chaisson - Dore & Whittier

Emily Parks, Superintendent  
Allison Borchers, Assistant Superintendent  
Lemma Jn-baptiste, Director of Business and Finance  
Abby Hanscom, Director of Student Services

**Meeting called to order 7:02pm**

*Meeting was recorded by Westwood Media Center*

Introductions and welcome (7:02-7:10)

Mr. Mullin, Chair of the School Committee, welcomed all for coming to the meeting. He explained the order of the night. He introduced Ms. Parks, the Superintendent and Ms. Plotkin, the Chair of the School Building Committee.

Ms. Parks explained that the moment has arrived to work on this project over the next eight months. She also explained the order of the meeting.

Ms. Plotkin introduced the design team. The OPM, Owner Project Manager, is Compass Project Management. They have worked on several MSBA projects. The OPM will work with us for the entire project. They will help us navigate the MSBA process, they will help with community outreach, and the design/construction phase. The architect was selected by the MSBA Design Review Committee, which is a 15 member committee in which Westwood had three representatives. Dore & Whittier will be the architect. They have worked on many MSBA projects. Ms. Plotkin introduced Don Walter of Dore & Whittier.

Mr. Walter explained the firm has been working in public school design for 30 years. The firm has worked with the MSBA over the past 10 years and completed 15 MSBA projects, with 8 of those projects being elementary schools. He introduced his team. He is the Principal in Charge. Rob Fitzgerald is the Project

Manager, Giovanna Chaisson is the Interior Designer, Glen Gollrad is the Project Architect, Jason Boone and Mike Pirolo are Education Planners.

Overview of current status of building project (7:10-7:15)

Ms. Plotkin explained how we got here.

- The Hanlon school was built in 1951, the Deerfield school was built in 1953, and the Sheehan school was built in 1948.
- All three schools experience space deficiencies in their educational programs, particularly special education, art and music.
- Each school needs significant upgrades, including HVAC, plumbing, electrical, exterior windows, accessibility.
- Hanlon and Deerfield have temporary modular classrooms.
- Hanlon needs a roof replacement.
- Hanlon was determined to be in the most need of the three schools.

Some slides were shown that showed what is current and what can be. A picture of the current library at Hanlon school compared to a school library designed by Dore & Whittier located in Needham. A picture of the Deerfield school hallway where students meet for small groups compared to a breakout space for small groups located at a school in Needham. A picture of the Hanlon cafeteria compared to a newly designed cafeteria.

MSBA process and timeline (7:15-7:25)

Ms. Parks explained the timeline on how we got here.

- March 2015, the School Committee commissions Master Plan & Capital Needs study.
  - From that report, it was determined there were issues that needed to be addressed in these buildings. There is a gap in the next step as it was realized it was important to slow down and learn more about the MSBA process.
- Spring 2017, WPS applies to MSBA program.
- December 2017, WPS is accepted into MSBA program.
- December 2017 through May 2018, Community Input Meetings are held.
- May 2018, Town Meeting approves funding for Phase 2 (feasibility study).
- July 2018, School Building Committee formed.
- February 2019, MSBA votes WPS into Feasibility Study.
- June 2019, School Building Committee selects Owners Project Manager.
- October 2019, MSBA Design Review Panel selects Architect/Designer.

Ms. Parks explained the timeline for where we are going.

- October 2019-March 2020, community input and visioning.
- March 2020, School Building Committee approves short list of options.
- March 2020-June 2020, community input about the short list of options.
- June 2020, School Building Committee submits final option to MSBA.
- August 2020, MSBA approves final option. Then the design team can get going on the schematic design which gets the project designed about 30% out.
- Spring 2021, MSBA vote on MSBA funding: Town meeting vote on funding for project.
- February 2022, Construction begins February 2022.

- Fall 2023, School opens.

Our next steps.

October 2019-March 2020, Community Input and Visioning Begins

The design team looks at existing sites and buildings.

- Playgrounds, site circulation
- Traffic
- Structure
- Roofs, windows, walls, floors
- HVAC, electrical, plumbing
- Code, accessibility, security
- Sustainability
- 

Space Function- Education

- How are spaces used?
- Are spaces sized and located appropriate to function?
  - Listening sessions
  - Visioning sessions
  - Principal's workshops
  - Meet with faculty, parents, and students
  - Community feedback

Mar 2020-June 2020 Preferred Schematic Report

Facilities and education

- Narrow focus
- Compare each option
- Review cost estimates
- Analyze shortlist of options
- Submit final option to MSBA
- Meet with faculty, parents, and students
- Community input and feedback

August 2020-Febr 2021 Schematic Design

Facilities and education

- Develop design on selected option
- More analysis of site, building, costs, schedule and phasing
- Agree on reimbursement with MSBA
- Meet with faculty, parents, and students
- Community input and feedback

Spring 2021, Funding Votes

- MSBA vote on funding

- Town Meeting vote on funding

#### Scenarios to be studied

There are three major options to be considered to be studied in the feasibility study.

- Hanlon only
  - 315 students
  - Reno, Add/Reno, New
- Hanlon and Deerfield
  - 560 students
  - Add/Reno, New
- Hanlon & Sheehan
  - 685 students
  - Add/Reno New

It was explained that Hanlon has to be a part of this project because it was submitted to the MSBA with the Hanlon School. It is not an option to combine all three schools, Hanlon, Deerfield, Sheehan. It needs to include Hanlon but not necessarily at the current Hanlon site.

Architect presentation (7:29-7:37)

Mr. Fitzgerald presented.

Evaluating options How do we decide?

- Does it support education goals, including student health and wellness?
- What is the best location on site (approach, circulation, access to field, etc.)?
- Which best supports community use?
- Which is the least disruptive to students during construction?
- What is the impact on bussing, traffic school programs, environment, etc.?
- What are the costs vs. value added to students and community?

Looking at the big picture: How does consolidation and each design enrollment impact:

- Remaining District Schools
- Students and Community
- Logistics

Remaining District Schools

- Distribution of students
- Distribution of District programs
- Future use of existing school buildings

Students and Community

- Sense of security and belonging
- Identity
- Finances

Logistics

- Staffing
- Resources
- Transportation
- Schedule
- Extended Day Program

Mr. Pirollo presented.

How do we integrate your vision and educational program into the design process?

Education drives design. What is education now and what is education in the future?

Look at current educational program, some goals and objectives that the district has for the future and that frames the project for us. It develops guiding principles and these guiding principles are what all these options are weighed on.

Ms. Chaisson presented.

Take all the information and transform it into physical space.

- coding and makerspaces
- student-centered learning
- student-centered play
- breakout spaces near classrooms
- flexibility in lesson implementation

Community Engagement Session (Break out groups) (7:38-8:27)

Mr. Boone explained how the break out session will work.

Community members broke into small groups to generate some thinking and provide input for the School Committee and the design team. Questions to consider, discuss, and report out:

- What are you most excited about?
- How would you define a successful process?
- What features should this project consider?
- What questions or concerns do you have?

After the break out session, it was opened up for any other questions.

A resident asked the team to provide some context as to the contribution or reimbursement that would be received from the MSBA. It was explained that we will not know the reimbursement at this time. Is working with the MSBA on only these three possible scenarios hindering what other options there might be to make sure that all three elementary schools are taken care of? During this process, all three schools will be looked at and when the decision is made on what scenario to pick, whatever school is not included, we would have cost information for updating that space. The MSBA funding would be for the picked scenario, the town could decide to fund the other space.

A resident asked if this project can include a longer range plan that would include all of the elementary schools, including Downey and Martha Jones. The vision is for the entire district.

A resident asked if we can consolidate from 5 neighborhood schools to 3 neighborhood schools? There would only be reimbursement for a certain portion of this if considered and the town would need to fund the rest. Ms. Parks explained that during community engagement sessions, an underlying theme was the community really liked neighborhood schools and didn't like the idea of having a very large school.

A resident asked who picks out the option that goes to the MSBA? There will be many options within these three scenarios. Then it gets narrowed down to the small list. It is the School Building Committee that will vote to determine what to submit as the project.

Summary and Closing Remarks (8:27-8:29)

Ms. Parks requested that residents please stay connected and explained everything about this project is on the Westwood Public Schools' website.

Adjourn (8:30)

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Ms. Jowdy. Seconded by Mr. Mullin.

Official Vote: Unanimous Approval

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

List of Documents and Exhibits Used at Meeting:

- Public Forum Presentation by Compass Project Management, Westwood Public Schools, and Dore & Whittier
- Exit Survey