

**Westwood Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
Thurston Middle School Cafeteria
Monday November 4, 2019**

Present:

Anthony Mullin, Chairperson
Joseph Jowdy, Vice Chairperson
Carol Lewis, Clerk
Charles Donahue, Committee Member
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
Jason Boone- Dore & Whittier
Michael Pirollo - 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

Introductions and welcome (7:02-7:08)

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

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

The School Building Committee is made up of 15 members including all five School Committee members, members from the community, and members of the town government.

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. She introduced Tim Bonfatti and Chin Lin from Compass Project Management. 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, Jason Boone and Mike Pirolo are Educational Planners.

Overview of current status of building project (7:08-7:15)

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. She explained that on the website you can see the recordings of the school tours to understand how the current buildings are.
- 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 which can be used for community space as well.

MSBA process and timeline (7:15-7:33)

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
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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. Anything can be funded with local funding. MSBA funding is based on these feasibility study options.

Architect presentation (7:33-7:40)

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.

Mr. Chaisson continued the presentation.

Take all the information and transforms it into physical space.

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

Community Engagement Session (Break out groups) (7:40-8:42)

Mr. Pirollo 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?

Mr. Pirollo asked each table to briefly talk about what they discussed:

- There was discussion on how to ensure all the schools get their turn; concern about students' disruption during construction; having a green school; and making sure students with special needs were taken care of.
- There is excitement about kids having the best school experience; concern about disruption of education during the construction; and building logistics: What happens to the property when a school building is no longer in use? Cost and redistricting were also concerns.
- There was consensus about the need for this project, it is overdue. The third building that doesn't get included, what are the financial issues with helping that school? What is the capacity the town has to commit financially? Wanted feedback about the newly constructed building in Needham now that they are up and running. What can we learn from their experience?
- There is competing interests where town funding might go. Buildings are ready for some work, deferred maintenance for too long. The town seems to be divided as to where the schools are located now, and consolidation could be a nice change. Neighborhood schools are important.
- Want the school to be a healthy place to be. Important having outside classroom resources. What is the right size of school? Transportation, traffic, the location are a concern.
- Keeping a curbside appeal, look of the building needs to fit in well with the neighborhood and Westwood in general. What happens for the third school, town dollars to be used? Making sure what happened with the high school construction wouldn't happen for this project. Going from 5 to 4 schools would be good economically and more efficient for class size, maintenance. Excited about educational opportunities.
- Green buildings, need net zero building. Designated spaces for special ed programs. Community input is important and that the input is put to use. Long term cost should be considered. Having options to be able to see when it is being designed. Class size is a concern. Redistricting is a concern and when that would be done. Recommend communicating about that now as it would affect all 5 schools.
- Making sure we don't compromise community, connectedness within the schools. Impact space town wide, use for practices, plays, other groups, etc. If there were fewer buildings, where could these groups meet? Are outdated buildings causing some teachers not to come to teach in Westwood? Having a larger school would help to have full time staff within the building instead of sharing between the schools.

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

Mr. Mullin opened it up for questions.

Resident asked what happens with the vacated sites. It is unknown right now. This is the very beginning of the feasibility study. Part of the study will be how can the building be used: School,

Town; who owns that process to decide what happens. The School Building Committee could be a part of this. It will also be a School Committee - Select Board joint decision.

Resident asked about the money. The site that is no longer in use, would it be sold off to a developer and turned into something the town doesn't want? Who owns the school? The school department cannot sell property, it goes back to the Town and the Select Board can make those choices.

Resident asked when it would be known what the alternate use of the property would be used for. The project submission will have that information and will be available for all residents at the town vote.

Resident asked if the MSBA funding scales to the project or be a flat reimbursement? MSBA enrollment numbers drive the reimbursement funding. 635 students would be the largest number to pay for reimbursement. It scales with the building, getting back a percentage based on the building. The majority of the cost will be made up by the residents of Westwood.

Resident wanted to discuss the future use of property not being used. There is a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee in town. Nothing will be done to the property without hearing from the community.

Resident concerned about climate change and that this school should be a building for the future. Best thing to do is make this building an example of what can be done to cut our CO2 emissions and have a net zero building. This is a requirement that this is discussed in the project. The firm has experience as most sustainable. There are currently no net zero schools in Massachusetts, but looking forward to learning more about this and being able to obtain this. The School Building Committee is also very interested in doing this.

Resident would love to see a net zero school building, and would hope that Westwood could obtain this. When would that become a priority? That discussion would happen immediately, then evaluate all the options on how they achieve those goals, choose an option that is based on those goals.

Resident asked if anyone has looked at the property values and whether having a new school offsets that? No official studies, a new school would be situated close to as many kids as it can and a new school is more desirable.

Resident asked for heating electrical heat pumps instead of fossil fuels. A wide range of mechanical systems are being explored and also around sustainability. A life cycle cost analysis will be conducted on a variety of systems.

The architect explained that the e-mails collected tonight and at the previous forum will be used to invite residents back to continue to be involved during this process.

Summary and Closing Remarks (8:42-8:43)

Ms. Parks requested to please stay connected and explained everything about this project is on the Westwood Public Schools' website. She requested to please fill out the exit ticket before leaving to get all of the questions and concerns listed.

Adjourn (8:44)

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

Official Vote: Unanimous Approval

Meeting adjourned at 8:44pm.

List of Documents and Exhibits Used at the Meeting:

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