

**Westwood School Committee
Thurston Middle School Cafeteria
Community Forum
Monday March 2, 2020
7:00pm**

Present:

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

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 7:04pm

Meeting was recorded by Westwood Media Center

Discussion Items (7:04-8:21)

Elementary Schools Building Project Update

Mr. Walter from the Dore & Whittier architectural firm presented.

Overview & Process

Between March and June, will work on finalizing and presenting the final preferred option to MSBA which is submitted in June. The MSBA approves the final option in August and then the schematic design begins to be worked on. Spring 2021 will be the MSBA vote on funding and Town Meeting vote on funding the project. Then design development begins. Construction would begin Spring 2022 with the school opening fall of 2023.

Summary of Work to date

- Site & building assessments (Hanlon, Deerfield, Sheehan)
- Educational planning
 - Principal Interviews & Educational Walk-throughs
 - Faculty & Staff Visioning Workshop
 - Principal's Workshops (2)

- School Tours (Needham, Millis, Milford)
- Community Outreach
 - Public Forums (3 sets)
 - Community Visioning (11)
- Options development

Options to review

Hanlon only 315 students -- design options #1, #2, #6

Hanlon & Deerfield 560 students -- design options #3, #7, #8, #9, #10

Hanlon & Sheehan 685 students -- design options #4, #5, #11, #12, #13, #14, #15

Presentation of Design Options Evaluation and Short-list

Evaluation process

Ms. Parks explained. A subcommittee was formed to complete this evaluation process.

Evaluation Criteria

Education, Site, Traffic, Community, Sustainability, Logistics/Constructions Impact, Costs

The objective of this evaluation is to narrow down to a more manageable list. Then, when the short list is completed, can really do a deeper evaluation.

On March 20, 2020 the School Building Committee will vote on the recommended short list of options.

The evaluation criteria matrix was shared. The rating is 1-5, with 5 being the best. The common theme for the higher-rated options were new construction vs. addition/renovation and being built on the Hanlon site.

Education - How well do the options meet the educational goals in Westwood? Retaining a small school feel by keeping grade level clusters or neighborhoods, extended learning spaces, need ample small group break out spaces, purposefully-designed Special Education space, good performance space, art studio, and a design that gives a division between public and private space in the building.

Site - How well does the option maximize parking on site, allow for efficient and safe circulation for pick up and drop off for cars and buses, does it provide access for parking for sports fields?

Traffic - What is the potential impact in the neighborhood and town, traffic impacted by enrollment, where the students attending are coming from, impacted features of the site?

Ms. Plotkin continued.

Community - What is the ability to lock down between public and private spaces from community use, new fields that would benefit community as well as new gym, what would phase out existing fields (negative if this happened). Two conference calls took place, with head of recreation department, high school athletic director, town sports, along with OPM and architects to understand what town is needing.

Sustainability - A high level approach on this category. All new buildings will be rated with a 5. You will have the maximum capability to implement sustainable principles and designs into these buildings.

Logistics and Construction Impact - There is going to be impact on all plans. New build at Hanlon site, the new building would be built further back from the existing school. At the Sheehan site, is close to the existing building so would have more impact. Add/Reno has the most impact, shared walled during construction, etc.

It is required to move forward the Hanlon renovation option as well as Hanlon/Sheehan add/reno option at the Hanlon site per MSBA. There are four Hanlon site options, two with the 560 enrollment scenario and two with 685 students and one Hanlon/Sheehan option at the Sheehan site.

Costs were driven by population.

Approximately \$25M for renovation only at Hanlon.

315 student cost was similar, approximately \$60M. 560 student cost was similar cost of approximately \$78M. 685 student cost was similar cost, approximately \$90M. To reach net-zero capacity in the buildings would be approximately an additional \$5M.

Net zero is geo thermal and triple pane glass.

Options #1, #4, #6, #7, #10, #11, #15, will move forward to the short list.

Question and Comments

Resident thinks there is critical error in trying to renovate any of the buildings. Should operate with 3 school buildings instead of 4 school buildings. Make a bigger building and distribute the other kids to the Martha Jones and Downey schools. Likes the Hanlon site the best for the new building.

Resident had question about the geo tech testing at the Hanlon site and would that affect the construction costs? The preliminary testing found glacial till, small and larger boulders and it is a buildable site. If the site is selected, would do more intensive testing.

Resident had question about sustainability, is the power energy generation included in the \$5M cost? The cost doesn't include install cost, but includes making the building ready for this.

Resident asked how the evaluation criteria was used to narrow down the list to seven options, how do you further evaluate these options to get down to the final suggested option? Will look at this criteria more extensively and there would be additional criteria to be used. Redistricting

would be a consideration, and will be asking the public tonight for input and other criteria thoughts.

Resident asked how tied are we to the actual design? Once the site has been picked will the building design continue? Yes it will be modified and refined. Will bring the building to 3 dimensions, windows, etc. General layout would stay the same, but would evolve.

Resident questioned the MSBA funding might be 40%, so Westwood residents would need to pay the additional cost. Keep in mind that this is a once in a generation to get this done. Could there be an underground parking at the Sheehan site? It is always an option but it is cost prohibited. The MSBA starting point is 34%, that is with caps. Our reimbursement will be less than that. All of the tax implications will be known when presented at Town Meeting. Allocating money for the study of the remaining school and would have options of an add/reno or new construction for that building and move forward with the town with that project. An option to include all three schools is not an option with the MSBA and receiving funding with them. Residents have said they want small schools, it would be a school of 1000 students if all three schools were combined.

Resident had a question about redistricting. Wondered what it would look like with the Hanlon/Sheehan consolidation? It isn't as good as the Deerfield/Hanlon consolidation. At the April School Committee meeting this report will be presented and residents encouraged to attend the meeting.

Resident interested in option #11. How many yards back would that building be from the street? About 150 yards from the street.

Resident asked about building not being included would that information be presented at Town Meeting May 2021? Ask town to fund the design for the other building at the May 2021 meeting. The other building would be 6 months to 1 year behind the MSBA build. The debt on the high school will be paid off in 2023, then new debt for project will then start. It won't be neutral but both won't be at same time.

Resident commented that these schools need to be updated, so it is important to have MSBA funding to be a part of paying for some of the cost.

Next Steps

March 20, 2020 School Building Committee vote: Short List of Options and Submission to MSBA

April-June - Prepare Preferred Schematic Report
Evaluate the Few and Identify the Preferred Option
Consider Redistricting Impact
Consider Nuanced Design Differences
Consider Impact to Building Left Out
Consider More Nuanced Cost Estimates

April 7, 2020 School Committee Meeting - Redistricting

April 17, 2020 School Building Committee meeting - Review Selection Criteria

April 30, 2020 (tentative) Community presentation- Redistricting Discussion

School Committee meeting – March 2, 2020

May 29, 2020 School Building Committee meeting - Review Recommended Option with Cost
June 4, 2020 (tentative) Community Presentation - Preferred Option with Cost
June 11, 2020 School Committee Meeting - Enrollment/Redistricting Vote
June 12, 2020 School Building Committee- Preferred Option Vote

Exit Survey

Anything you want to share about the options, recommended short list is welcomed.

Questions to think about - criteria used to get from many options to few options and then few options to one option?

What information is necessary and what criteria should be used to identify the one preferred option during the net phase of the design process?

Adjournment

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

Official Vote : Unanimous approval

Meeting Adjourned at 8:21pm

List of Documents and Exhibits Used at Meeting:

- Elementary Schools Building Project Update presentation