

WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Westwood, Massachusetts

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 14, 2020**

**Attendance and Call to Order**

The meeting, held remotely<sup>1</sup>, was called to order at 6:00pm by Chair Carol Lewis. Also present were: Maya Plotkin, Vice Chairperson; Anthony Mullin; and Amanda Phillips. Superintendent Emily Parks and Director of Business and Finance Lemma Jn-baptiste were present on behalf of the District. Charles Donahue, Clerk, arrived at 6:05pm. John Cianciarulo recorded the minutes.

Mrs. Lewis welcomed the Town's Select Board and Finance and Warrant Commission to the meeting.

In attendance on behalf of the Town's Select Board: John Hickey, Chair; Nancy Hyde, Clerk; and Michael Walsh. Town Administrator Christopher Coleman, Assistant Town Administrator and Finance Director Pam Dukeman, Town Counsel Pat Ahearn, and Executive Assistant Tish Healey were also present.

In attendance on behalf of the Finance and Warrant Commission: Peter Lentz, Chair; George Hertz, Vice Chair; William Bruce; Jim Ferraro; Craig Foscaldo; Angeila Hughes; Peter Ittig; Tom Kilgarriff; George Laham; Dianne McCarthy; Chris Poreda; and Kate Wynne. The Commission's Administrator, Jane O'Donnell, was also present.

Mrs. Lewis also recognized the live stream of the meeting, which was provided for real-time, public access to the activities of the School Committee. Members of the public were able to view a live stream of the meeting via the Internet at [www.westwood.k12.ma.us/live](http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/live). Westwood Media Center also recorded the meeting for later broadcast on its platforms.

**Discussion Item**

**Elementary Schools Building Project**

Mrs. Lewis introduced Tim Bonfatti and Chin Lin of Compass Project Management; and Don Walter, Rob Fitzgerald, and Jason Boone of Dore and Whittier.

Mrs. Lewis recognized Mrs. Plotkin who facilitated discussion. She introduced Mr. Fitzgerald, who presented.

The proposed building will be built behind the existing Hanlon School site. The proposed site is approximately 9 acres, encompassing a small section of land on the Shuttleworth property. Surrounding it is conservation land.

The woods served as an inspiration for the design, coining the "school in the woods" phrase.

The site plan, a 113,141 square foot building with 17.5 acres (+/-1), was reviewed. After meeting with the Police and Fire Chiefs, the access road extension was integrated into the design.

Mr. Fitzgerald then proceed by showcasing renderings:

- View from Gay Street
- View from Gay Street at northern entrance
- View from Gay Street at pedestrian walkway
- View from pedestrian walkway / fields

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<sup>1</sup> Remote meeting held in accordance with Executive Order of Massachusetts Governor, March 12, 2020

- View from bus dropoff
- View from entry canopy at bus loop
- View of main entry and visitor parking
- View of southern classroom wing
- View of STEAM porch/outdoor classroom area
- Birdseye overall view of building, looking northwest

Renderings of the proposed building's floor plans were then reviewed.

Mr. Fitzgerald then reviewed the sustainability aspects of the project.

#### Net-Zero Energy Ready

- Low energy building: Tracking 21 EUI
- Fossil fuel-free; Geothermal
- PV infrastructure and REC's
- High performance ventilation
- Improved envelope design

#### LEED Checklist

- Targeting LEED-Sv4 silver certification

The projected project schedule was then outlined.

#### Votes and Bid Document Preparation: Spring 2021-Spring 2022

- February 2021: Submit Schematic Design Package to MSBA
- April 2021: MSBA Schematic Design vote
- May/June 2021: Town votes
- June-October 2021: Four months of design development
- October 2021-May 2022: Seven months of construction documents

#### Construction: Spring 2022-Summer 2024

- February-June 2022: Four months to bid and complete site prep
- May-June 2022: Two months to bid remaining project
- July 2022-February 2024: Nineteen months of building construction
- March 2024: Move into new school
- April-August 2024: Demolition of existing building; complete remaining site work

#### Construction Phasing Plan and Schedule

- Phase 1: 2 months
  - Construct fencing; separation from existing school
  - Clear, grub, and prep site
  - Construct new trail
- Phase 2: 19 months
  - Construct new school
- Phase 3: 1 month
  - Move students into new building
- Phase 4: 5 months
  - Abate and demolish existing school
  - Complete remaining fields, landscaping, and roads

The existing school will remain in continuous operation throughout construction.

Mr. Fitzgerald then provided an overview of construction cost versus project cost and alternates.

Construction Cost: Costs associated with construction of site and building

- Drawings and specifications issued to a contractor to bid
- Includes elements integrated into infrastructure of the building/site
- Does not include loose furniture and technology

Soft Cost: Remaining Costs Associated with Project

- Consultant costs (i.e., architect, engineers, OPM, Cx Agent)
- Permitting and testing
- Owner contingencies
- Loose furniture and technology (computers, AV equipment)

Project Cost: Sum of Both of Those Combined

- Amount presented to the public for authorization to bond

Alternate: An item desired to be included in project if bids are favorable

- Delineated within the drawings and specifications

The construction cost estimates were then reviewed.

Target construction cost--\$70,381,157

Target soft costs--\$17,800,000

Target project cost--\$88,181,157

Cost estimates from two professional cost estimators were reconciled to form one agreed upon cost estimate

Reconciled construction cost estimate--\$71,068,130

Potential savings (three buckets)--\$(2,422,928)

Potential revised base construction cost--\$68,645,202

Possible AC revisions: Future review--TBD

Alternate: Add UV-C System--\$187,274

Items included in the reconciled cost estimate:

- Natural gas emergency generator vs. Bio-diesel
- Radon mitigation
- Project schedule extended
- Possible access road connection
- Ledge removal

\$686,973 above target

Three buckets:

- Accept
- Make into alternate
- Not accepted

A comparison of construction costs for similar projects was reviewed.

- Westwood (Hanlon Elementary School)
  - Construction start: 2022

- \$621/sf
  - New; Net-Zero ready; Geothermal; No PV panels
- Medfield (Dale Elementary School)
  - Construction start: 2022
  - \$614/sf
  - New; Geothermal alternate; No PV panels
- Westborough (Fales Elementary School)
  - Construction start: 2020
  - \$652/sf
  - New; Net-Zero ready; Geothermal with PV panels
- Wellesley (Hunnewell Elementary School)
  - Construction start: 2022
  - \$604/sf
  - New; Net-Zero ready; No Geothermal with PV panels
- Ashland (Mindess Elementary School)
  - Construction start: 2021
  - \$645/sf
  - New; Net-Zero ready; Geothermal with PV panels

Mrs. Plotkin then reviewed the next steps of the project.

December 15: Community forum  
 January 22: School Building Committee meeting  
 February 5: School Building Committee vote on Schematic Design submission to MSBA with budget  
 February 24: Design Team submits Schematic Design package to MSBA  
 April 2021: MSBA Board meetings  
 May/June 2021: Town meeting and ballot vote

Future community forums will be held in February and March. Exact dates will be determined.

Mrs. Plotkin indicated that the School Committee and the School Building Committee will be coordinating with the Finance and Warrant Commission's meeting schedule to sponsor the Town Meeting warrant article.

Mr. Hickey had questions related to value engineering. Mr. Fitzgerald responded that part of the process will be to review items that are easy to modify, such as swapping materials. Some of these decisions can be made early in the process.

Ms. McCarthy questioned what would be reimbursable. Mr. Bonfatti responded that the MSBA will reimburse a certain amount of the costs and will not fund spaces that exceed their guidelines. In Westwood's project, the proposed gymnasium exceeds guidelines. The MSBA will fund up to the guideline; costs beyond that are not reimbursable.

Mr. Hertz asked when the final recommendation on cost and State reimbursement would be known. Mrs. Plotkin responded that the warrant article should be ready by February 5. The reimbursement rate should be known by the end of February.

The Committee then discussed design aspects related to security and public health.

Mr. Laham asked about the impact to other elementary schools. Ms. Parks responded that some specialized programs would be moved to the new building. This allows for purpose-built

spaces. Mrs. Plotkin responded that once the proposed building is built and occupied, the School Committee will evaluate the situation with the Deerfield School and determine whether a school purpose is present. If not, it will revert back to the Town which will then decide what to do.

Ms. McCarthy asked about the Sheehan School. Mrs. Plotkin responded that the School Committee allocated funds for the design of the remainder school in February 2020. Work on that study began over the summer. The MSBA only allows one project to take place at one time. Therefore, the Hanlon project could not overlap with the potential Sheehan project.

Ms. Wynne asked about PV panels. Mrs. Plotkin responded that the roof will be “PV-ready” if that is something that the Town would like to move forward with. It is not included in the budget, however.

Mr. Poreda asked if there is a cap on the cost per square feet relative to the MSBA. Mr. Bonfatti responded that it is \$333/sf.

Mr. Ittig asked how much land would be needed for Geothermal. Mrs. Plotkin responded that it is all contained within the area on the site plan, nothing will be outside of that property line.

Mr. Ittig also asked why the project is going before the Town for funding this year and not waiting for next year. Mrs. Plotkin responded that there are three factors:

1. MSBA: There is a timetable with the State and extensions would need to be granted. While they would likely grant a short extension, anything longer would be problematic.
2. Cost: It is estimated that a six month delay would increase costs \$1M-\$3M.
3. Impact to schedule: The building opening would be delayed until Fall 2024.

Mrs. Hyde asked whether escalation costs were built into the construction costs, as it will take a year to bid following the vote. Mrs. Plotkin responded that they had.

Mr. Kilgarriff asked if the MSBA would allow for a second time to go before the Town for funding if it does not pass initially. Mr. Bonfatti stated that the MSBA does give time; generally three to four months for a re-vote.

Mrs. Plotkin asked for, and received, feedback on the design from the group.

### **New Business**

There was no new business.

### **Adjournment**

**Mr. Mullin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Plotkin seconded.**

Roll-call vote:

Mrs. Lewis	Yes
Mrs. Plotkin	Yes
Mr. Donahue	Yes
Mr. Mullin	Yes
Mrs. Phillips	Yes

The meeting adjourned at 7:19pm.

Documents/Exhibits Used at Meeting

- Presentation slides drafted by Dore and Whittier, dated December 14, 2020