



Kevin J. Murphy
City Manager
Michael McGovern
Assistant City Manager

School Building Committee MSBA Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Date: Jan 5, 2017
Time: 10:00AM
Location: Mayors Reception Room, City Hall

1. - Attendance

Attendees: Kevin Murphy, Conor Baldwin, Robert Healy, Mike Vaughn, William Samaras, Brian Martin, Lisa DeMeo, Gary Frisch, Rick Underwood, Steve Gendron, David Beati and Jay Mason.

Also in attendance: Mike McGovern, Rodney Conley

From Skanska: Mary Ann Williams, Jim Dowd

From Perkins Eastman: Alicia Caritano, Robert Bell, Joe Drown and Dawn Guarriello

2. - Review of Educational Plan

K. Murphy began the discussion talking about the preliminary concepts. He noted that the key factor that is missing is the financial aspect, which Perkins Eastman is currently working on. K. Murphy also stressed the importance of the financial costs in making a final decision. He continued that he has been impressed with the work thus far.

The program will be completed January 15, 2017. The plan will then be sent to the School Committee for two week review in February, the target meeting dates are February 1 and February 15, 2017. S. Gendron asked if the target date could be the later date to give the committee members time to review. M. Williams pointed out that the OPM is submitting the document to the MSBA February 24, 2017. B. Martin stated that the School Committee will target February 1, 2017. Once the Educational Plan is completed, the SBC would like the City Manager and School Committee to receive it so that a final vote may be taken on February 15, 2017.

It was addressed that the Educational Plan is a narrative on objectives and policies with no final preliminary designs. Mid-January the School Committee will receive the Educational Plan. S. Gendron suggested that the School Facilities Subcommittee may meet by the end of January to begin discussion as soon as possible.

M. Williams noted that the Educational Plan will incorporate the vision of several sessions and that not much of the information should be new. It is a formal report that integrates the community discussions.

K. Murphy stated that other School Committee members may be less involved in the process and would like more time to review. The OPM is trying to keep the SBC on track and move the process along the design time line. M. Williams asked if the SBC would like to issue the document now as a draft to the School Committee, and fine tune it over the next two weeks. S. Gendron asked if the document is completely focused on educational goals. K. Murphy stated that the School Committee plays a key part in the process of approving the Educational Plan. He continued that the School Committee can extend the two week meeting if they feel they need to do so.

3 - Preliminary Design Program Update

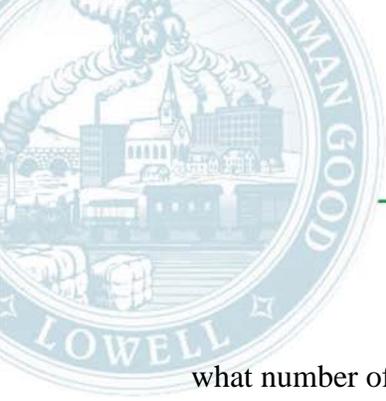
K. Murphy commented on the students being the number one strength and a credit to the City. A FFE consultant commented on being impressed with the wonderful feeling on the campus. Lowell High School was the first coeducational high school in Massachusetts. The SCOG Analysis posed an opportunity for a decision to be made. The building can be brought up to code, accessibility standards and the systems can be replaced, but this would not support the educational and visioning goals. K. Murphy stated that the City Council may ask questions related to the line item costs.

R. Bell stated that the design team is looking for feedback from the SBC, they want to make sure that every rock is turned over.

3.1 Base Repair Option 1

R. Bell discussed the base repair option and how the design team is performing a fit test to see if the program fits on site. He noted that if the goal is to have a standard room size of 900 square feet; a wall would be knocked down to enlarge a 750 square foot room but not a 800 square foot room. He mentioned design problems with this, such as having to leave extra space for an existing window. Restructuring the walls inside the building will help meet educational objectives. This option leaves the freshman off site and limits the green space available. Phased construction is complex with multiple costs associated with it including portable class rooms. Inefficiencies in size of the building as well as inefficient use of space. There are also potential environmental issues, risks and costs associated with base repair.

M. Williams asked what the duration of the renovation is projected. J. Drown stated that all the options include 36-42 month duration. This can be adjusted with the creation of swing space for temporary classrooms off site until the project is complete. M. Williams asked if the students would remain on site if they cannot shift schools, and if this would increase the projected timeline. J. Drown stated that there needs to be temporary space for students to learn. M. Williams noted that this cost close to \$7M in Winchester, which was note reimbursable by the MSBA. The Education Delivery Plan may help decrease costs of classrooms. G. Frisch asked



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what number of students would be displaced by the renovation. M. Williams replied that at least one grade at a time, approximately 900 students.

3.2 Addition/ Reno Option 1

The white image on the slide that sticks out into the street would be a three story building. This option does not work as the buildings do not fit onto the site. The freshman would be moved from the Freshman Academy to the new building in the street. The added extensions to the library and loading dock.

3.2 Addition/ Reno Option 2

The fieldhouse is demolished; three additional building structures are built. One is a two story pool/gymnasium which could possibly house the freshman until their rooms are constructed. S. Gendron inquired if the field house includes a track. R. Bell replied that it does, an oblong 136 meter track. J. Mason asked if this includes a pool. R. Bell noted that it does include a 8,000 square foot pool; which is larger than the current 7,000 square foot pool. It was also noted that pools are not reimbursable by the MSBA. L. DeMeo asked if the bus drop would be relocated. It has not been relocated in the depiction, but can be looked into. G. Frisch asked if the students would need to be relocated. The gymnasium would take about a year to a year and a half, PE would be the only necessary courses moved. K. Murphy stated that an alternative space for PE and sports would be needed. M. Williams proposed temporary modular classrooms; perhaps on top of the Tsongas Arena parking garage. R. Bell stated that this option removed the need for modular classrooms, as the freshman can be moved once their class rooms are built; creating free swing space. The design team stressed that they would like the process to be quick and limit disruptions. They can construct the shell of a building and customize the inside. This option includes pre-engineered structures and can greatly excel construction time. A new face of the building will be visible to the public. A main entry would be created that is secure and safe. The green space can be utilized by ROTC students. Possible modifications to PE would include Ti Chi, yoga and Pilates.

K. Murphy stated it may be better to disrupt PE classes than the core educational courses. B. Martin agreed. He continued that although Lowell has the largest athletic program in MA, the students will be up to the challenge; they are adaptive. B. Martin stated that he would be less inclined to disrupt limited mobility or special education students.

R. Underwood asked if they could construct a building over the canal. K. Murphy noted the city owns rights to the air above the canal only, allowing the foot bridges to be built. L. DeMeo stated the City would need to work with Enel on the issue if this were pursued. M. Williams thought

this may be a consideration, but it is important to take into account the trolley and natural lighting that would be lost. R. Bell said that the design team is willing to explore all options. The suggestion by R. Underwood may displace more students when the buildings are tied in structurally. S. Gendron commented on the cost that may be associated with this concept.

R. Bell stated that the designs all have a two story bridge so that construction never takes away from mobility. An extra bridge will be constructed, so that one may be renovated while minimizing impact on students. M. Vaughn asked if a temporary bubble has been considered, like in Boston. The major vendor for bubbles has been contacted, and Skanska will look into the projected costs. M. Vaughn asked what would happen to the Freshman Academy. R. Bell noted the empty building would be turned over to the City.

3.3 Addition/ Renovation Option 3

This plan returns the Freshman Academy and STEAM plan to the high school. The space below the Lord building is where a fieldhouse would be created. The current field house would be demolished, which allows the designers to build with limited displacement of students. Logistically this option adds more green space and visual appeal.

The site would include an extended property line, increasing the total square acres to approximately 7.4. This option may be less efficient than Option 2 but feasible compared to Option 1. The design team listed the positive and negative aspects of this design.

The Coburn building would also be fully renovated with this option too. S. Gendron asked if the class rooms would be reconfigured. R. Bell replied yes, they would try to incorporate light wells to let more natural light in as well. He continued that the science labs would be 1,440 square feet where as they are currently 700 square feet. S. Gendron asked if the hallways would change during the renovation. R. Bell mentioned that the lockers may be removed from the corridors. The need for physical text books is diminishing as technological environment advances to e-books. J. Mason asked what the cost would be. R. Bell stated that the revnovation would be easier in the older building, as the structure is key. The Lord building would not be as easy since the rooms are not as large. It is highly likely that walls would be moved blocking windows. K. Murphy pointed out that this option afforded little to no disruption to PE and Educational classes, no modular classrooms or alternative sites would be required. G. Frisch asked about the possibility of taking over the business location (dentist office). R. Bell replied that there is a community, political and financial aspect to this option. He stressed the notion that the options are concepts, not definite. K. Murphy stated that the City is duty bound to minimize disruptions and to come up with concepts. J. Drown made a note that modular classrooms are not reimbursed by the MSBA, and that this option would make the City's funding most effective.



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3.4 New School at Existing Site

The option of building a new school on the existing site creates a 6 story building. In a compromise with limited footprint and vertical circulation, the gymnasium and the media center would be located on the top floor. This option would be very disruptive for students. The science labs would also be on the inside with little to no natural light. S. Gendron asked if the additional / renovation option that includes the dentist office, would help extend the foot print. He also asked if there would be access to bus routes on site to limit traffic.

3.5 Wang Site for New High School

The building is projected to be 4 stories, which is more efficient. The site is an ideal property for lighting and energy efficiency according to the design team. There would be no phasing or educational disruption for students. The proximity to the downtown and transportation is limited. The state would only reimburse 8% of the site cost. S. Gendron asked for a rough cost estimate. M. Williams noted it would be irresponsible for the OPM or design team to provide a rough estimate at this time, there are many moving variables.

3.6 Cawley Stadium Site for New High School

The building is projected to be 4 stories, as well. There is also no educational disruption due to phasing. Some fields would be lost in the construction including Martin Softball field and Desmond Freshman Football field. The site cost is projected to exceed the 8% reimbursement. The parking lot behind the school would be over the City line, extending into Tewksbury. S. Gendron expressed his concern with considering traffic in the neighborhood and residential areas. W. Samaras noted that this should also be considered for the Wang site. L. DeMeo noted that Tewksbury has similar paving and parking ordinances to Lowell. She asked the design team to look into the parcel to see if the area is zoned correctly for the parking lot. L. DeMeo also noted that there is a long standing issue with the brook on Clark Road, the project would need to consider the environmental impact of adding water to the brook.

3.7 Discussion

The SBC confirmed one of the options, Add/Reno Option 3, leaves the Freshman Academy free. M. Vaughn suggested that the Freshman Academy, if vacant, was used for a field house during the renovations. R. Underwood stated that the School Department has ideas for the building as well if the City allows. R. Bell stated that the PE Program may not be accommodated in the existing space.

G. Frisch asked if R. Bell would review the suggestions that the design team will look into.

- 1) Building air rights over the canal.
- 2) All new buildings expanded site
- 3) Traffic/ Permitting/ Zoning at Cawley
- 4) Repurposing the Freshman Academy
- 5) Roadway connection from Father Morrisett Blvd. to Merrimack Street.
- 6) New building on the existing location with a renovated 1922 building.

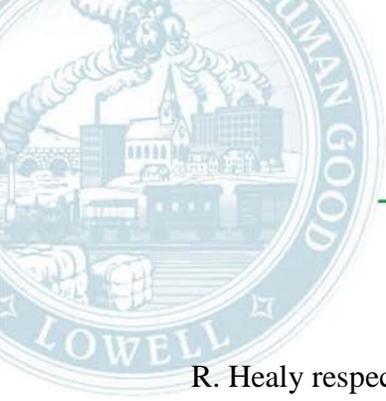
S. Gendron asked if the design team would consider changing the exterior color of the bricks when renovating the buildings. M. McGovern stated it would be more expensive to match the bricks than contrast them. M. Vaughn suggested using the 1922 building for PE and building a new Lord building.

S. Gendron stated that he regrets having eliminated South Common from the list of possible sites. He stated that it is centrally located near transportation and closer to the downtown. M. Williams noted that the OPM has had experience with other communities that involved dealing with Article 97 that delayed the project time line 5 years. L. DeMeo mentioned one dealing with Article 97 that lasted 14 months, and that was unheard of. It is possible if the SBC follows this route that the feasibility study would be extended. S. Gendron asked if the City could speak to State Delegates. M. Williams noted that the MSBA will not let the City proceed without ownership of the preferred site.

S. Gendron motioned that a study for the South Common site be performed, and to inquire with State Delegation of the likelihood of this passing. Seconded by G. Frisch.

J. Mason motioned to amend S. Gendron's motion for South Common, to include the City performing a study on accessing the Dentist site.

Discussion followed including the current grants being used for South Common. The City would need to give back funding for: \$400,000 grant for the Parks Department, \$400,000 grant and \$400,000 that is bonded for Waste Water Utility. This motion would impact the timeline for the PDP submission, which would be into March rather than February. W. Samaras suggested contacting advocates for the park. W. Samaras noted that there are other State Delegates (not just the four from Lowell) and many are strong advocates that helped obtain funding for South Common.



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R. Healy respectfully requested to amend the motions, making S. Gendron's and J. Mason's separate motions. He stated that the city is paying for the architect and OPM to complete the feasibility study; based on the last meeting the SBC voted on the top three sites. Going back to include an additional site will cost additional fees. M. Williams noted that February 24, 2017 is the targeted submission date for the MSBA; the City will need to show ownership of the properties at that time.

3.8 Votes

S. Gendron motioned that a study for the South Common site be performed, and to inquire with State Delegation of the likelihood of this passing. Seconded by G. Frisch. 5 Yes, 6 Opposed; so voted.

J. Mason	Yes
C. Baldwin	No
R. Healy	No
L. DeMeo	No
G. Frisch	Yes
M. Vaughn	No
S. Gendron	Yes
R. Underwood	Yes
D. Beati	Yes
B. Martin	No
W. Samaras	No

B. Martin motioned to refer the motion by J. Mason to the City Manager to inquire into the acquisition of the dentist office and refer back to the SBC. All in favor, so voted.

4 - Next Steps

M. Williams noted that the expanded site, Wang and Cawley have not been eliminated. The three sites will be submitted to the MSBA. The design team and the OPM will continue to investigate and explore each option in depth. M. Williams also noted that the investigation will include residential impact in a report for the next meeting in February. C. Baldwin motioned to adjourn, seconded by W. Samaras.



Heather Varney
HEATHER VARNEY
Notary Public
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
My Commission Expires Oct. 2, 2020