

ELHS School Building Committee
School Committee Conference Room and Zoom Meeting
August 25th, 2022 – 2:00 PM
(Meeting #1)

Attendees:

Stephen Chrusciel, School Building Committee Chair
Gordon Smith, Superintendent of Schools
Pamela Blair, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Frank Paige, ELHS Principal
Heather Brown, ELHS Director of Curriculum
Kathleen Hill, Town Council Member (absent)
Stephen Lonergan, Town Accountant and Town Finance Director
Mary McNally, Town Manager (absent)
Elizabeth (Beth) Marsian-Boucher, School Committee Member
Bruce Fenney, Superintendent of East Longmeadow DPW (joined at 2:14 PM)
Dr. Daniela LaBarre, School Psychologist and Faculty Member
Greg Thompson, School Committee Member
Ryan Quimby, Town IT Director

Other Attendees:

Skanska USA Building, Inc.: Ben Murphy, John Benzinger, Victoria Clifford
Design Team (JWA/SMMA): Kristian Whitsett, Dorrie Brooks, Jillian DeCoursey, Brian Black,
Helen Fantini, Phil Poinelli, Samantha Farrell, Molly Clark

Welcome & Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Stephen Chrusciel began the meeting at 2:03 PM.
- Stephen Chrusciel asked for a motion to approve the 7/18/22 ELHSBC Meeting Minutes.
 - Beth Marsian-Boucher made the motion. Ryan Quimby seconded the motion.
 - Gordon Smith called a roll call vote:
 - Stephen Chrusciel - yes
 - Gordon Smith - yes
 - Pamela Blair - yes
 - Frank Paige - yes
 - Heather Brown - yes
 - Kathleen Hill - absent
 - Stephen Lonergan - yes
 - Mary McNally - absent
 - Elizabeth (Beth) Marsian-Boucher - yes
 - Bruce Fenney - absent
 - Dr. Daniela LaBarre - abstain
 - Greg Thompson - yes
 - Ryan Quimby - yes
 - The motion passed.
- Stephen Chrusciel asked for a motion to approve the 6/27/22 ELHSBC Meeting Minutes.
 - Ryan Quimby made the motion. Beth Marsian-Boucher seconded the motion.

- Gordon Smith called a roll call vote:
 - Stephen Chrusciel - yes
 - Gordon Smith - yes
 - Pamela Blair - yes
 - Frank Paige - yes
 - Heather Brown - abstain
 - Kathleen Hill - absent
 - Stephen Loneragan - yes
 - Mary McNally - absent
 - Elizabeth (Beth) Marsian-Boucher - yes
 - Bruce Fenney - absent
 - Dr. Daniela LaBarre - yes
 - Greg Thompson - yes
 - Ryan Quimby - yes
- The motion passed.

Public Participation

- Steve Chrusciel opened the meeting for public comment.
- Andrea Schmidt, 66 Norden Street:
 - Andrea asked if the committee members received a copy of the petition from the Norden/Maple Community Members regarding their objection for using the Norden/Maple neighborhood as access for the new school project.
 - The SBC confirmed they received the petition.
 - Andrea reported that on the walk over for this meeting, three cars were speeding on Norden Street on the way to the School. Andrea expressed concern with including access to Norden Street in the new project.
 - Beth Marsian-Boucher, added that 30 to 40 neighborhood residents attended the recent School Committee meeting and expressed the same concern.
 - Brittany Sasidharan, 26 Marshall Street:
 - Brittany reported to the committee that her 10 year old child was almost hit by a car getting on to a school bus last year. Brittany expressed that the students and parents should feel safe walking in the neighborhood. Brittany expressed concern with including site access through Marshal St./Nordin St.
- John Benzinger, Skanska, suggested adding speed bumps or other speed mitigation measures.
 - Gordon Smith noted he plans to meet with the Town Police to discuss.
- Louis Calabrese, 198 Maple Street:
 - Louis told the Committee that when the current school was built, the school district promised the Maple Street residents that access through the neighborhood would be for deliveries only. Would advocate that Marshall St./Norden St entrance be used for emergencies and deliveries only.

Bruce Fenney joined the meeting at 2:14 PM.

Skanska Update

- Process Update
 - Ben Murphy, Skanska, updated the committee that today, the main objective will be to review the components of the Preliminary Design Program (PDP) submission and authorize the OPM to submit the PDP package to the MSBA.
- Schedule Update
 - Ben Murphy, Skanska, gave an update on the project schedule
 - PDP is due on 8/30, once received, the MSBA will review and submit comments for the project team and committee to respond to.
 - After 8/30, the project team will move directly into the Preferred Schematic Report (PSR) phase of Module 3. PSR is currently targeted to be submitted to the MSBA in January 2023.
 - Assuming that the SBC chooses a new construction option, construction is tentatively scheduled to begin June 2024 with a 60% Construction Documents Early Bid Package for Sitework. Currently assuming 2.5 years for construction in total, with the new ELHS building complete by the summer of 2026.
 - Skanska notified the SBC of a recently proposed schedule change. Members of the project team suggested increasing the PSR phase by 1 month and reducing the Schematic Design phase by 1 month. By lengthening the PSR duration, it will allow for the SBC and the community to build better consensus on the preferred option.
 - Steve Chrusciel asked if the MSBA Board of Directors (BOD) meeting schedule is reflected in this schedule. Ben Murphy responded that MSBA issued their 2023 BOD meeting schedule today and that the schedule would be revised to accurately reflect the known BOD meeting dates.
 - Pam Blair asked what the process is for changing the schedule and is one month enough time to add for building community consensus which she finds to be a very important aspect.
 - Dorrie Brooks added that this schedule change doesn't require MSBA approval.
 - Beth voiced that the committee should look at construction delivery methodologies and asked that it be a topic for future SBC meeting agenda(s).
 - Skanska recommended giving a presentation on the delivery methods at one of the next SBC meetings.
- MSBA Pool Ruling Update
 - Ben Murphy, Skanska pushed for this discussion to take place during the design team's update because the slide containing MSBA's policy falls within.

JWA/SMMA Update

- North Middlesex Tour
 - Dorrie and Helen recapped the SBC tour at North Middlesex.

- Beth Marsian-Boucher, added that she liked how compact the footprint was and was impressed with the art facilities.
- Gordon Smith added that he liked the classroom pods and how they support student collaboration.
- Frank Paige expressed it was eye opening to see a building that could be a possibility for our school.
- Gordon Smith asked if the design team received any feedback from the North Middlesex staff or committee members.
 - Dorrie Brooks answered that a facilities staff member who joined the tour expressed the importance of not cutting too much out of the project.
- Beth Marsian-Boucher, added that the large group instruction rooms were a great use of space and the school finishes have held up very well and school has been open for 6/7 years.
 - Dorrie mentioned that the materials used in this school is what the team has included generally in our current cost estimate.
- Community Survey Results
 - Dorrie Brooks presented survey results from the survey originally intended for National Night Out, but due to low response rate, it was later posted to the Building Committee Project Website. 172 responses have been collected to date.
 - Dorrie Brooks gave an overview of the results:
 - Community desire to include a pool
 - Discomfort in supporting all-gender bathrooms
 - Concerns with traffic
 - Mixed results on current safety
 - Dorrie Brooks reported that a student survey has been provided to the HS staff and will work with Frank Paige for that to be circulated to students when they return.
- MSBA Pool Policy
 - Dorrie Brooks presented the current position of the MSBA on supporting a project with a pool. Dorrie reported that the MSBA's policy states that new construction options cannot include a new pool in the scope of work or associated budget for any project seeking MSBA grant money. If the preferred option is new construction, and the District still wishes to include a new pool; the procurement, design and construction of the new pool must be separate from the MSBA project. Should the preferred option be to renovate the building, the MSBA may consider it acceptable to incorporate scope associated with renovating the existing pool as part of the MSBA project. Dorrie added that a new pool could be in a separate building or if the current pool is renovated, any construction supporting the pool renovation would be ineligible for reimbursement.
 - Steve Lonergan asked how the MSBA would cut off funding if the pool is connected to the new school?
 - Dorrie added that there is a gray zone which is why the MSBA pushes for the pool to be in a separate building.

- Pamela Blair added that a pool building would most likely need to be a separate warrant on the vote.
- Andrea Schmidt, public participant, asked what happens to the swim teams if the pool does not get approved and why the state does not see the pool as an important part of physical education.
 - Gordon and Steve answered that the MSBA is firm in their policy, the District does see the pool as an important part of the educational program, which is why they are continuing to consider including it in the project.
- Eligible Options
 - Option 1 - Code Upgrade
 - MSBA would support a code upgrade but reimbursement is based on space guidelines, and reimbursement wouldn't be as advantageous as an add/reno or new build.
 - Visually the building would not look new, this would be purely a code upgrade.
 - Would lose classroom space because would need to build new walls inward to fit new utilities.
 - Frank Paige asked if modular classrooms are included in the cost estimate?
 - Yes, they are included in the full project cost, modular classrooms (swing-space) are 100% not reimbursed by the MSBA.
 - Beth Marsian-Boucher asked if this \$113M code upgrade would be the amount the community would need to spend on the building regardless if we get the MSBA's support.
 - Dorrie Brooks answered that at the end of the PSR phase, the School Building Committee will need to decide on one option to develop in Schematic Design and the Schematic Design is the project that the MSBA will have the opportunity to partner with the District in funding.
 - Greg Thompson suggested that the project team should coordinate with MSBA to find out an estimated effective reimbursement rate for Option 1.
 - Kristian Whitsett explained that it is very difficult to derive effective reimbursement rates due to the complicated formulas and project cost caps in MSBA's budget formulation.
 - Option 2 - Renovation/Addition
 - 2B: Renovation/Addition with renovated pool
 - Pool is deemed ineligible by MSBA
 - 2C: Renovation/Addition with new community building (not priced)
 - Proposed by District as an alternate for discussion
 - Greg Thompson asked if it is possible to include a code repair with a separate community building.
 - Heather Brown added that it is important to remember that this project is to improve education for our current and future students.

- Gordon Smith noted that the current prediction for MSBA reimbursement is 30%.
- Steve Lonergan added that that is the prediction now, the MSBA's reimbursement commitment is not finalized.
- Bruce Fenney moved to move forward option 2B, 3B and 5 to the PSR phase.
 - The committee asked if Bruce could withdraw his motion until the end of the presentation.
 - Bruce Fenney withdrew his motion so the committee could continue with the design team's presentation.
- Option 3 - New
 - 3A - new construction central to site with new pool
 - 4A - new construction central to site with new pool (independent project)
 - 4B - new construction future south within site with new pool (independent project)
- Option 5 - Split building (pool, locker rooms, concessions, district offices, ELCAT and IT in separate building from the school)
- Cost Update
 - The design team presented a cost overview of all options presented
 - Beth Marsian-Boucher asked why the options with separate buildings are more costly.
 - The design team answered that separate buildings require their own mechanic systems.
 - Kristian Whitsett added that the design team has fears around the base upgrade because of the low floor to ceiling ratio.
 - Andrea Schmidt, 66 Norden Street:
 - If we do the base-upgrade only it won't fix the educational issues in the building. Ultimately this is a 70 year old building and these need to be addressed anyway.
 - Andrea asked why Norden is being considered for access.
 - Dorrie Brooks answered that the design team has met to review traffic with Police and Fire and the group felt that an alternate route should be included for emergency access and school staff has expressed a desire to spread traffic flow. The design team added these options are not final and will be looking into alternate options.
 - Steve Chrusciel asked if there were any other concerns from the SBC before moving forward?
 - Beth Marsian-Boucher voiced concern of moving a project forward that does not include a pool.
 - Bruce Fenney added that we will need to consider adding bathrooms for the field per code.

Preliminary Design Program (PDP) Required Votes

- Steve Chrusciel asked if anyone would like to make a motion.
- Bruce Fenney moved to select options 2B 3B and 5 to move forward to the PSR Phase. Ryan Quimby seconded the motion.
 - Discussion:
 - Greg Thompson and Steve Lonergan supported including option 1.
 - Steve Chrusciel asked if Bruce would like to modify or withdraw his motion.
- Bruce Fenney modified his motion to include 1, 2B, 3B and 5. Ryan Quimby seconded the motion.
- Steve Chrusciel called a roll call vote:
 - Stephen Chrusciel - yes
 - Gordon Smith - yes
 - Pamela Blair - yes
 - Frank Paige - yes
 - Heather Brown - yes
 - Kathleen Hill - absent
 - Stephen Lonergan - yes
 - Mary McNally - absent
 - Elizabeth (Beth) Marsian-Boucher - yes
 - Bruce Fenney - yes
 - Dr. Daniela LaBarre - yes
 - Greg Thompson - yes
 - Ryan Quimby - yes
- The motion passed unanimously.

- Vote to submit Preliminary Design Program (PDP) Report:
 - Steve Chrusciel asked for a motion on the following vote:
 - The East Longmeadow High School Building Committee votes to approve the Preliminary Design Program (PDP) and authorized Skanska USA Building as Owner Project Manager to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority on behalf of the District.
 - Motion by Pamela Blair, seconded by Ryan Quimby.
 - Steve Chrusciel called a roll call vote:
 - Stephen Chrusciel - yes
 - Gordon Smith - yes
 - Pamela Blair - yes
 - Frank Paige - yes
 - Heather Brown - yes
 - Kathleen Hill - absent
 - Stephen Lonergan - yes
 - Mary McNally - absent
 - Elizabeth (Beth) Marsian-Boucher - yes
 - Bruce Fenney - yes
 - Dr. Daniela LaBarre - yes

- Greg Thompson - yes
- Ryan Quimby - yes
- The motion passed unanimously.

Communications Update

- Community Outreach Update
 - Community Forum #2 scheduled for September 21st at the Senior Center.
 - The SBC asked that tonight's presentation be added to the project website.

New Business

- No new business

Motion to adjourn by Beth Marsian-Boucher. Seconded by Pamela Blair.

Steve Chrusciel called a roll call vote:

- Stephen Chrusciel - yes
- Gordon Smith - yes
- Pamela Blair - yes
- Frank Paige - yes
- Heather Brown - yes
- Kathleen Hill - absent
- Stephen Lonergan - yes
- Mary McNally - absent
- Elizabeth (Beth) Marsian-Boucher - yes
- Bruce Fenney - yes
- Dr. Daniela LaBarre - yes
- Greg Thompson - yes
- Ryan Quimby - yes

Motion approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 4:19 PM.

Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted by, Victoria Clifford, Skanska.