

West Elementary School Building Committee Minutes

Thursday, April 30, 2020 – 7:30AM

Participating via Webex remote

Access Voting Members: Chair-Paula Colby-Clements, Shelley Berman, Rick Almeida, Heather Eigen, Jennifer Hunt, Susan McCready, Janet Nicosia, Siggy Pfendler, Paul Rollins, Elizabeth Roos, Donna Walsh

Non-Voting Members: Mark Johnson, Esq., Tracey Spruce, Esq.,

PMA Consultants (remote): Kevin Weeks, Brian DeFilippis, Steve Rusteika

SMMA Architects (remote): Lorraine Finnegan, Phil Poinelli

West Elementary School Building Committee Chair (SBC), Paula Colby Clements, opened the meeting at 7:33AM. Because of the emergency state of government due to Covid-19, all SBC members are participating via Webex. All votes will be taken by roll call at this meeting.

Approval of Minutes; Vote expected

On a Motion made by Shelley Berman and seconded by Liz Roos, the West Elementary School Building Committee approved the April 16, 2020 meeting minutes. On a roll call vote, the motion for the April 16, 2020 meeting minutes was approved on a 11-0 vote.

Discussion of Flexitorium and Potential Design Options

Phil Poinelli began the flexitorium presentation. It is a simple but rectangular room but the height allows for acoustical performance. It is intended to have 2 different types of seating, electrically operated retractable bleacher seating = nicer than a gymnasium that may have cushioned seats and collapsible backs and loose chairs that can be arranged within the room. Performance area can be flexible on flat floor or platforms can be taken of storage depending on the event. It is very much a performance stage, lighting would be hung from the ceiling, performance quality sound system, floor could be a sprung wood floor. The global portal could be set up here rather than in the maker space, but that is up to the school. The seating is about for 400 at this point. This type of set up is very flexible and as explained in the educational plan would be used 3-5x/day rather than just being used once/week. A diagram showed the specifications explained here.

Questions on how long it would take to set up, the response was that the bleachers could be set up within 5 min and the platforms would need 2 people to set up and should take in less than an hour. Also could any of this be reimbursed as it would be used as stated in the ed plan, but Ms. Finnegan stated the MSBA would not reimburse any costs associated with the flexitorium.

Ms. McCready pointed that we need to talk about how this could be used by the Community. She was concerned about the equity across the other schools. There are issues with the cafeatorium at Bancroft but she can't recall what those are. She brings this up since the full costs associated with this would be on the town. Liz said that dance recitals are held there, in the summer program the Dept of Community Services use it weekly, plus other town organizations have also used the auditorium. Ms. Nicosia stated that the district must have a commitment with sharing space with other schools. She also thought speaking to Andrea Zaines, Events Coordinator or Scott Worthley at the Collins Center would be a good idea on how to schedule these types of events.

Ms. Spruce wonders if Andrea would have data showing the events rentals and whether demand exceeds the supply to back up the request to sell to the Community on costs. We may also have to ask the Community to pay for the high school renovation outside of MSBA involvement. A thought on what if we put a cafeatorium instead of a flexitorium with retractable bleacher or any other bleacher type could that be reimbursed by MSBA. Ms. Finnegan stated that cafeatorium which would have a stage

and a cafeteria and gym w/bleachers would be reimbursable. But some of the space for the gymnasium would be smaller even with retractable bleachers because that would take up space. However, it is something to look at as a possibility. Ms. Nicosia said there were not any major problems with cafeteria, time is the biggest problem and set up for different events. One other thought is how do you lock off the rest of the building if you're renting the flexitorium during off times. Ms. Finnegan said that you would use roll down grills that are used for multiple usages (i.e. shelter in place).

The Chair will speak with Andrea about the revenue that is generated from the various events. Ms. McCready also wants to talk further about equity among other schools in follow-up discussions. Ms. Roos stated that West Elementary does have a sizeable student and staff population and agrees equity is something that should be considered going forward. Dr. Berman will also speak to the Bancroft principal about the cafeteria and pointed out that an equity policy is now in draft form. That should be reviewed in the upcoming weeks as well.

Review of PSR and Final Approval for submission to MSBA. Vote expected

Lorraine Finnegan stated there weren't any major edits to the PSR. Section 4 was the only area where there seemed to be changes. Lorraine will also add the West Elem school projects have been discussed at various meetings such as in the Economic Development Council, Finance Committee, Select Board. The Committee has also received feedback from the public thru emails. The Committee believes that more public open forums may need to be presented once the pandemic is over, and meetings restrictions are lifted.

Continuing, Ms. Finnegan had a conversation with MSBA and they plan to meet with MA Dept of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to go over the PreK and Special Ed space. In whole about 2000 square feet was reduced from the PDP original submission. The deadline to submit the PSR is Wed., May 6th in order to be on the MSBA June 24, 2020 meeting. MSBA will give us their comments on the PSR and then the Committee will be able to give their feedback w/in 14 days. Typically, they asked the Superintendent and the Principal to the May 20 or June 3rd meeting that consists of a 20 min presentation with a slideshow after the Committee's feedback on the PSR.

Brian D stated they met with PMC, the costs estimators and displayed what they have figured out: Option 1 is the base repair, costs when up slightly \$48,793,767, Option 2 – Add/Reno -7 phases, adds a year of construction \$164,325,852; Option 3 – favorite of Committee, costs came down slightly \$154,482,183, includes 10 modulars, turn over 2024; Option 3B, slightly more expensive, demo both pods, 20 modulars \$155,840,939. Estimates doesn't include modular, modular in total project cost only. These costs are not fixed; the numbers will change.

On a Motion made by Shelley Berman and seconded by Liz Roos, the West Elementary School Building Committee approved the submission of the PSR as presented with Option 3 as the SBC's preferred option and with the inclusion of the PreK program. On a roll call vote, the motion was approved on a 11-0 vote.

Discussion of Social Distancing Consideration in Building Design

Because of the times of the pandemic, the Committee wanted to discuss any options they need to consider for this new building. Ms. Finnegan stated that on April 23, they raised these concerns with MSBA about increasing square footage because of social distancing or medical issues. At this time with respect to space, the MSBA is not changing their formula for reimbursable space. Ms. Finnegan did point out that all elementary classrooms now have 2 sinks and the MSBA does reimburse for this – prior to this it was only 1 sink. Also, many schools are putting in large smart TVs for distance learning and not smart boards -- another sign of the times. Districts are starting to understand where facilities are failing them, but sometimes it also becomes a technology issue with more broadband needed in the communities. She advises to have more in the budget per square foot for technology. It's important to

have it and if it's not spent, then it can be reused in the future. With the new commons area in the proposed school, social distancing will be able to be done in this school. Entry commons doorways haven't been enlarged, but they are close to the front doors which provides flexibility with any medical testing. Paula Colby Clements requests that Paul Puzzanghera, the COO, should attend one of the upcoming meetings to talk about where the infrastructure is at in the town buildings and how it can be built into the new building.

Public Comments may be heard by the SBC Chair

Selection of next SBC Meeting date(s) and main subject

The Committee will continue to meet every 2 weeks as per the schedule outline by SMMA. Final comments by members were to make sure the public had a chance to attend a forum via remote access or keep updated more frequently. Liz Roos and Jennifer Hunt both stressed that this was very important for both the West Elementary families and also in general for townwide purposes. Ms. Finnegan stated that PMA had created content for a Face Book page in other projects as a way for people to check in on updates. They would then ask for the town/school personnel to host the platform and keep the page updated. It should be set up as a place for information and not a page for questions –similar to the SC FB page. The Chair stated she would speak with the Superintendent about this idea and whether someone like the Communication Director could help out with this page.

On a Motion made by Liz Roos and seconded by Heather Eigen, the West Elementary SBC voted to adjourn the meeting of April 30, 2020 at 9:20am. On a roll call vote, the Committee voted 11-0 to adjourn.

Respectfully,
Alison Phelan, Recorder

CERTIFICATION

Town Clerk and Chief Strategy Officer
Austin Simko

Date:

Town Stamp: