

Select Board Reviews Schedule for Andover High School Project, Votes on Town Governance Study Committee Recommendations

In a significant development in the effort to make capital improvements to Andover High School, the Select Board reviewed a schedule to advance the project proposed by the High School Building Committee (SBC) in its first reading on the matter.

In a presentation to the Board during their January 23 meeting, SBC Chair Mark Johnson outlined a roughly one-year timeline during which the Committee will decide whether

to renovate the existing AHS building or construct a new campus, advance a final site option through schematic design, and seek an appropriation to fund the project from Town meeting.

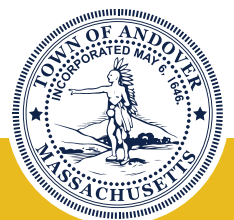
As detailed in Johnson's presentation, throughout the project's the feasibility study phase, the SBC and project architect HMFH have engaged Andover High School staff and students, as well as pertinent Town officials, to assess current conditions and establish goals for project. The Committee has hosted numerous, well-attended public input sessions and solicited community input throughout this process.

HMFH have developed several site approaches for further review, including options to renovate and make additions to the existing building, referred to as "add/reno" options, and several new construction options. Among the remaining new construction concepts, two consider a campus approach, comprised of several detached facilities, and two consider a stand-alone facility. The various site approaches proposed by HMFH can be viewed in the [January 12 presentation made to the SBC](#).

At their meeting on February 9, the SBC will select two final design concepts, one add/reno option and one stand-alone new construction option. The project architects will then develop high-level pricing estimates for both options. This preliminary cost information, which is intended to produce ballpark figures for comparison of the two options, will be presented to the SBC in late March.

According to the timeline presented by Johnson, the SBC will vote to recommend a final preferred option at their April 27 meeting, The recommendation will be submitted to the School Committee and Select Board for approval in May of 2023. The SBC intends to hold community forums at every stage during this process.

- **Select Board reviews project timeline proposed by the Andover High School Building Committee;**
- **Votes to approve Town Governance Study Committee recommendation to lift residency requirement for Town Manager; and**
- **Endorses recommendation for Moderator to ask Town Meeting to affirm that deliberations be honest, open, civil, and efficient.**



The selected option, if approved by the School Committee and Select Board will advance into schematic design, an approximately six-month process during which the project will be designed in sufficient detail to establish the scope, budget, and scheduled for construction.

The SBC has placed an article on the 2023 Annual Town Meeting warrant seeking an appropriation to fund the schematic design phase. Under the proposed timeline, Town Meeting will be asked to appropriated funding for construction of the project based on cost determined during schematic design in early 2024.

To view the full feasibility study and schematic design timeline proposed by the SBC, [click here](#).

The Select Board will review the topic further at its next meeting, scheduled for Monday, February 13 at 7:00 PM, during which the Board will consider whether it accepts the SBC's proposed schedule.

The community-driven process to weigh potential improvements to the facility was initiated in 2016 when a town-sponsored facility assessment identified Andover High School as being among the Town's school facilities with the greatest needs. AHS was built in 1968, and has faced significant limitations in recent years due to overcrowding. The study prompted the creation of the Andover High School Feasibility Study Committee in 2017.

Over a five year span, the Committee led a thorough effort to consider the options for the future of AHS. Considering the costs associated with even minor improvements to the facility, in 2022 the Feasibility Study Committee made a recommendation to the School Committee to form an Andover High School Building Committee, which began its work in the summer of 2022.

For more information and updated about the Andover High School Building Project, visit the [project website](#).

Revisiting an item previously discussed at their January 9, 2023 meeting, the Board considered removing the existing residency requirement for the Town Manager, a proposal brought forward by the Town Governance Study Committee. In its current form, the Town Charter requires the Town Manager to reside in Andover during his/her term in office.

Citing the value of maintaining flexibility in the event of a future Town Manager search, several members spoke in favor of lifting the residency requirement before the Board voted 4-1 to approve the measure.

The measure will be taken up at the Annual Town Meeting on May 1, where voters will be asked to consider approval of special legislation to amend the Town Charter to accommodate this change.

The Select Board then voted unanimously to endorse another proposal of the Town Governance Study Committee recommending that the Town Moderator ask each Town Meeting to affirm values contributing to civility to ensure that deliberations are honest, open, civil, and efficient. recommendations presented in the Town Governance Study Committee's 2021 report.

The Board's approval of these measures marks the continuation of the Town's implementation of the recommendations presented in the [Town Governance Study Committee's 2021 report](#).

The full meeting can be viewed online through [AndoverTV](#).

