

Old Greenwich School Building Committee
Sixth Quarterly Report
January 13, 2024 - April 13, 2024

The Old Greenwich School Building Committee (OGSBC) continues in-depth planning for the renovation of Old Greenwich School (OGS), a treasured community landmark dating to 1902 serving Pre K - 5th grade. The OGSBC held 10 public meetings during this quarter. Standing bi-weekly meetings are Tuesdays at 7:00 am in the Old Greenwich School Media Center and open to the public. Meeting agendas, minutes, reports, designs, and other documents can be accessed on our [website](#). The OGSBC welcomes the public to attend meetings.

The project focuses on bringing the building into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and addresses key areas of accessibility, health, safety, security, and sewage intrusion among other items as outlined in the [Educational Specifications](#) (Ed Specs) approved by the Board of Education (BOE) in October 2021, revised on June 21, 2023, and revised again on March 14, 2024.

All details reference the time period of January 13 - April 13, 2024.

A. Activities

1. Through this quarter, the OGSBC project team - including SPA, owner's representative ([Morganti Group](#)), and construction manager at risk ([Downes Construction](#)) - worked to complete the Design Development (DD) phase of the preconstruction process. This phase takes the BOE-approved Schematic Design and fleshes out details that will ultimately become construction documents. Detailed diligence and planning were conducted through the winter on the sewer lines, building foundation, drainage plan, playground design, technology design, building appraisal, hazardous material abatement design, environmental testing, soil characterization testing, and water characterization testing. This involved repeated site visits, meetings with town officials - to include the Fire Marshal, DPW staff, and GPS staff - and input from neighbors. The findings are being incorporated into the architectural plans and construction phasing plan, as well as the Final Site Plan that will be submitted to P&Z.
2. On January 17, 2024, the OGSBC and project architect [Silver Petrucelli + Associates](#) (SPA) appeared before the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) for the second time (the first meeting was December 6, 2023). After the presentation of updates since the previous meeting, ARC [voted 4-0-1](#) to approve the project's design. The final comments from ARC members were addressed electronically and incorporated following that meeting. ARC approval is required as part of the Final Site Plan submission to the Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z).
3. On January 19, SPA completed its DD drawings, which are commonly referred to as "50% complete Construction Documents". The OGSBC, SPA, Downes, and a 3rd party independent estimator, [PM&C](#) of Massachusetts, then began estimating and value engineering activities.
4. On January 29, 2024, the OGSBC Chair presented at the Old Greenwich Association's annual meeting. The [presentation](#) and [video](#) are posted on the OGSBC website.
5. On March 12, 2024, Downes presented a [revised cost estimate](#), which had been reconciled with PM&C. At this meeting the OGSBC [unanimously approved](#) the recommended project estimate of \$46,346,935 and proposed modifications to the Ed Specs. Construction funds comprised \$44,260,935 of the total, with the balance being \$2,086,000 in A&E funds approved in the FY 2022-2023 and FY 2023-2024 budgets. Downes reported that costs would increase by \$2.2 million if the project start is delayed to Summer 2026.
6. On March 14, 2024, the BOE convened a special meeting to consider the OGSBC's [updated project estimate and proposed revisions to the Ed Specs](#). After thoughtful questions and discussion, the BOE voted 7-0-1 to approve the revised Ed Specs and 7-0-1 to request an additional \$1,260,935 in construction funds (on top of the \$43.0 million previously approved) in the FY 2024-2025 budget.
7. On March 21, 2024, the Board of Estimate & Taxation's (BET) Budget Committee said it would not set up a special meeting to hear about the revised project estimate, saying that members understood the numbers

and did not need a meeting. The BET held a Public Hearing on March 25, 2024, at which the request for \$44.26 million in construction funds was reiterated multiple times.

8. On March 28, 2024, the full BET considered the \$43.0 million in construction funds in the FY 2024-2025 budget. A motion was offered to increase that amount by \$1.26 million to fully fund the project in accordance with the revised cost estimate; that motion failed 6-6. The OGSBC Chair reminded the BET Chair prior to the vote that if the \$1.26 million was not approved, an interim appropriation would be required prior to the start of construction to ensure an appropriate owner contingency for the project. No other motions were offered and the \$43.0 million in construction funds is included in the FY 2024-2025 budget that will be finalized by the BET in April 2024 and considered by the RTM in May 2024.
9. On April 9, 2024, the OGSBC voted to authorize completion of the Design Development process and commence work on Construction Documents. All documents and reports associated with the DD process will be posted to the OGSBC website in the coming weeks.
10. Downes continued working through a detailed phasing plan for the phased, occupied renovation, with general guidelines and a particular focus on protecting the learning environment and ensuring student and staff safety during the project. The draft is expected to be complete in Spring 2024 and will be the subject of an upcoming forum with key stakeholders and parents. As a phased, occupied renovation, the plan is required to undergo an exhaustive review and approval process with the state, and stringent safeguards will be employed to ensure safety. As previously stated, the OGSBC project team collectively has extensive experience throughout Connecticut and elsewhere with this type of school renovation.

B. Budget & Project Estimate

In March 2024, at the completion of the Design Development phase, a [project estimate](#) was produced, estimating total project costs at \$46.35 million for the project's expected start in Summer 2025. This estimate requires \$44.26 million in construction funds, approximately \$1.26 million more than the BOE and First Selectman requested in the FY 2024-2025 capital budget. The increased costs are driven by four distinct items: replacing the playground, an increased allocation for a hygienist during abatement and construction activities to ensure safety, replacing non-LED light fixtures in the building, and replacing a roof section under HVAC equipment. The BOE approved these additional items in March 2024. The OGSBC found \$3.8 million of savings through value engineering efforts.

With the BET's inclusion of \$43.0 million in construction funds in the FY 2024-2025 budget, the owner's contingency on hard costs is partially funded. The OGSBC expects it will need an interim appropriation in FY 2024-2025 to ensure that the town is adequately protected prior to the start of construction.

A final project estimate will be produced at the end of the Construction Documents phase (Summer 2024). All estimates are an "opinion of cost" from construction professionals based on the Ed Specs, design, and recent market data. Actual costs may be higher or lower when the project is taken out to bid prior to the start of construction. As of this writing, estimated state reimbursement is 15.5%.

C. Financial

As of April 13, 2024 the OGSBC has spent or encumbered \$987,133 in A&E funding, with \$1,098,867 remaining from its FY 2022-2023 and FY 2023-2024 budget allocations. To date, despite the extensive planning and diligence conducted, the OGSBC has saved significant costs vs. its projection in February 2023, with the current expectation that the preconstruction process will come in approximately \$570,000 under budget.

The OGSBC has enough funding to complete the pre-construction process by Spring 2025.

D. Project Plan & Timeline

With the conclusion of the Design Development phase, the OGSBC is commencing the Construction Documents phase, which is expected to be completed in Summer 2024. After that, the pre-construction process will be complete and the project will be fully designed with all associated phasing plans finalized.

However, the OGS renovation cannot begin until construction funds and the state application are approved. Full construction funding from the Town (anticipated to be complete May 13, 2024 with the RTM vote) is required to apply for state reimbursement (school construction grant). The state application process typically takes six months to complete and the next deadline is June 30, 2024 for potential inclusion in the 2025 Priority List. The project cannot be taken out to bid until completion of the state process.

When construction starts, the project is estimated to take 30-36 months to complete. As per the BOE Ed Specs, it will be a phased, occupied renovation where the pacing of work will account for keeping students and staff safe and minimizing disruption to learning. Portions of heavier construction will be conducted over the summer months and during school breaks. Phased, occupied renovations of school buildings are standard across the state and nation.

Assuming construction funds are provided in the FY 2024-2025 budget, the OGSBC anticipates the following timeline:

- Project Design*: February 2023 - August 2024
- Local Funding Approvals: March - May 2024
- Final Site Plan Approvals: May 2024
- State Funding Approvals: July - December 2024
- Construction Bidding / Awards: February - June 2025
- Construction: June 2025 - August 2028
- Occupancy: Continuous, consistent with phasing

**Note: design includes Schematic Design, Design Development, and Construction Documents*

E. Next Steps

1. Commence work on Construction Documents, which will include an updated project estimate from Downes Construction. Expected completion in Summer 2024.
2. Host [forum for RTM members](#) on Wednesday, May 1, 2024. At this meeting, a project update will be provided and RTM members will have the opportunity to tour the OGS building.
3. RTM approval of construction funding as part of the FY 2024-2025 Capital Budget on May 13, 2024. In addition, RTM approval of required state resolutions is required.
4. Submission of Final Site Plan to P&Z in May 2024. This site plan will address all items listed in P&Z's [Move to Final Coastal Site Plan letter](#).
5. Completion of the draft phasing plan, to include sessions with OGS parents and staff.
6. Submission of project application to the State of Connecticut's Office of Grants Administration by June 30, 2024 for inclusion in its 2025 Priority List. This is a six-month process that can only be done after approval of construction funding and required state resolutions.
7. Continued outreach to stakeholders to include parents, neighbors, school staff, the townwide community, and local media.
8. Work with BET and RTM to ensure that prudent construction contingency funds are provided prior to starting construction. This will likely come in the form of an interim appropriation during FY 2024-2025 and has already been discussed with the BET.

Respectfully submitted,

Old Greenwich School Building Committee
s/James Waters, Chairman

OGSBC Approved April 9, 2024

OGS Building Committee Members

Voting Members

- James Waters, Chair, james.waters.ogsbc@gmail.com
- Jackie Welsh, Vice Chair, jackieogsbc@gmail.com
- Barbara O’Neill, Secretary, barbaraOneilOGSBC@gmail.com
- Jason Brown, jbrown@jklr6.com
- Cristina Dawson, cristina.dawson.ogsbc@gmail.com
- Leander Krueger, leanderkruegerogsbc@gmail.com
- Leigh Erin Izzo, leigherin.izzo.ogsbc@gmail.com
- Michael-Joseph Mercanti Anthony (BOE), MJ_Mercanti-Anthony@greenwich.k12.ct.us
- Stephen Selbst (BET), Stephen.Selbst@greenwichct.org

Ex-Officio Members

- Jennifer Bencivengo (OGS Principal), Jennifer_Bencivengo@greenwich.k12.ct.us
- Peter Lowe (P&Z), peter.lowe@greenwichct.org
- Molly Saleeby (RTM), msaleebyogsbc@gmail.com
- Janet Stone McGuigan (BOS), janet.stonemcguigan@greenwichct.org
- Peter Robinson (DPW), Peter.Robinson@greenwichct.org

Liaisons

- Alan Gunzburg (First Selectman's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities), 24fado@optonline.net
- Peter Schweinfurth (Energy Management Advisory Committee), peter.schweinfurth@greenwichct.org