Approved by the Cutler School Building Committee on August 5, 2024

HAMILTON-WENHAM
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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HAMILTON-WENHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Virtual Meeting

Zoom Call

Tuesday, June 10, 2024

6:30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Eric Tracy (SBC)
Tom Myers (SBC)
Rebecca Butler (SBC)
Carolyn Shediac (SBC)
Stacy Bucyk (SBC)
Vincent Leone (SBC)
Peter Clay (SBC)
Allison Goodchild (SBC)
Shane Lougee (SBC)
John McGrath (SBC)
Sarah Bilello (SBC)
Joe Domelowicz (SBC)

GUESTS PRESENT:

Kevin Nigro (PMA)
Deborah Shaer (PMA)
Doug Roberts (JCJ)
Alicia Caritano (JCJ)

- **6:32 PM**
  - Open Meeting.

- **6:33 PM**
  - Approve meeting minutes from May 28, 2024.
    - Allison Goodchild motions to approve. Peter Clay seconds the motion.
    - Discussion: none.
    - VOTE: 11 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain, 2 not present

- **6:35 PM**
  - Schedule Update.
    - ET stated that JCJ is compiling all requirements for the Preferred Schematic Report (PSR) Submission to the MSBA scheduled for no later than June 27, 2024. This includes:
      - Evaluating all the project team's previous month's efforts and providing revised/up-to-date documents in the PSR Submission. ET noted that the MSBA will "dig into" this information during their review of the PSR and evaluate it related to other similar projects prior to the project's Facilities Assessment Subcommittee presentation currently scheduled for July 17 or July 31, 2024.
      - Refining all evaluations of the alternatives.
      - ET and his team updating the Educational Plan (completed).
      - Updating Space Summaries: looking at all square footages as they relate to the Educational Plan, identifying "have to have spaces" versus "nice to have spaces".
      - Updating Project Cost Templates.
      - Finalizing Local Actions & Approvals document.
      - Providing Lease Correspondence.
    - It was restated for clarification that the Preferred Option that will be presented in the PSR is Option C3.4: 740 Students, Grades 1 through 5, new construction on the existing Cutler Elementary School site.
    - Over the next two days the project will be holding Schematic Design (next phase after PSR) User Group Meetings with school district teachers, administrators, etc. to further define the rooms/spaces in the new building as these folks would like to see.

- **6:40 PM**
  - School Committee Progress Update.
    - The HWRSD School Committee (SC) voted to engage a professional polling company to gage the communities' preferences on a preferred option. ET noted that the results of the poll reflected that a "no build" option was preferred. The SC had hoped it would identify one of the options in the PDP as the most preferred. It did not do that with any certainty.
    - The SC voted 5 to 2 to support the process undertaken by the SBC and to support option C3.4 as approved by the SBC.
      - It was asked of ET if he knew the rationale of the two dissenting votes. ET reported that one dissenting vote for option C3.4 is because they thought option C3.1 would have a better chance of passing at the polls in April 2025. ET was unsure of the rational for the second dissenting vote.

- The SC voted to approve/execute the "Module 3 Grade Reconfiguration and District Approval Certification".

- **6:50 PM**
  - SBC Vote to Approve Submission of the PSR to the MSBA.
    - A motion was made: After complete review of all PSR required documents, the Hamilton Wenham Elementary School Building Committee votes to approve and authorize the OPM to submit the option C3.4 PSR related materials to the MSBA.
      - Vincent Leone motions to approve. Joseph Domelowicz seconds the motion.
      - Discussion: SB inquired if the committee has seen the updated design after the refining of the Space Summaries. JCJ/PMA stated the refined Space Summaries will be in the PSR, while the new drawings will be included in the next phase's Schematic Design Submission. ET reiterated that his team has updated the Educational Plan as well.
      - VOTE: 11 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain, 2 not present

- **6:55 PM**
  - New Business/Comments
    - Next Phase: Schematic Design (SD) discussed:
      - PMA stated that the Schematic Design (SD) will advance all elements of the PSR submission inclusive of more elaborate descriptions/design of building systems and defined spaces.
      - PMA stated that during the SD Phase, transmitted through the MSBA, the project will make a submission to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for their review simultaneously with the MSBA's review of the SD.
      - Cost estimates will be updated with further breakdown to include potential MSBA contributions, towns' contributions, etc.
    - Importance of Addressing Issues of Greatest Concern from the Communities:
      - JM noted the importance of addressing two specific concerns raised by the communities:
        - 1. Small School Argument.
        - 2. Cost of the project and related tax increases.
      - TM brought up a third item of importance to address:
        - 3. The MBTA 3A Zoning: Some residents are associating this with the new school project. That narrative needs to be clearly explained because as stated by JD and ET the MBTA 3A Zoning precedes this new school project by many years and it is not part of the new school project.
      - JD further noted that the facts are that building this one school now, though with a considerable cost, is less expensive than building a smaller school now and perhaps having the need to build a second school fifteen or so years from now.
      - JD also noted the importance of organizing now some sort of "election committee" (though he himself cannot be a part of that) to address any miss information currently out in the public. This would be best handled by an outside group/packet.

    - PMA stated that the project is bound by Campaign Finance Rules should an outside group/packet be engaged in an "election campaign".
    - SB asked if we have a group organized to disseminate the correct information to the public regarding the project. ET stated that he has a group working on some "mini videos" that can be available to the public which will reflect "neutral/fact-based information".
- JD suggested that the group identify community members who have yet to make up their minds about the project versus trying to change the minds of community members who already have their minds made up. JD noted it is important for the message to include that option C3.4 is the most appropriate alternative at this time as it will create equity in education across both communities and limit the need for short term further school construction.
- AG suggested having a presence at the upcoming Patton Park Free Summer Concrete Series. ET stated he will reach out to see who runs these concerts to get some additional information.
- TM asked if the project investigated renovating each of the three elementary schools. He also inquired about JCJ/PMA providing SF renovation costs for each of the three elementary schools. JCJ/PMA both stated that providing an accurate SF renovation cost for each of the three schools would be difficult at this point and would take the same research/effort made to-date to get to the preferred C3.4 option. JCJ also noted that renovation costs were provided for the Cutler and Winthrop Schools during PSR following MSBA guidelines. But, even following the MSBA guidelines did not limit the "push back" from the public on those renovation cost estimates.

- **7:12 PM**
    - Items Unanticipated by the Chair
        - None.

- **7:13 PM**
    - Vote to Adjourn
        - Joe Domelowicz motions to adjourn. Vincent Leone seconds the motion.
        - VOTE: 11 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain, 2 not present