GREENWICH CONNECTICUT EST.1640

Riverside School

RIVERSIDE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, April 15th, 2026 | 7:30 AM ET

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Attendee	Position	Present	Absent
Officers			
Stephan Pezdek	Chair		Absent
Luigi Ghilardi	Vice-Chair	In Person	
Bryan Finkel	Secretary	In Person	
Voting Members			
Veronica Chiavaroli	BOE Representative	In Person	
Ben Chynsky	Regular Member	Zoom	
Louis Contadino	Regular Member	In Person	
Andy Duus	Regular Member	In Person	
Doug Fenton	BET Member	In Person	
Christina Lyndon	Regular Member	In Person	
Ex-Officio / Non-Voting Members			
Julian De La Rosa	BOE Facilities	Zoom	
Christina Downey	RTM Representative	In Person	
Nicholas Macri	P&Z Representative	Zoom	
Jason Martin	Riverside School Principal		Absent
Lauren Rabin	BOS Representative		Absent
Sheel Spina	DPW Representative		Absent
Guests			
Dan Watson	GPS Director of Facilities	Zoom	
Lisa Yates		Zoom	
Chris Cykley		Zoom	
Chris Mitchell		Zoom	

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MEETING MINUTES

Item	Topic	Description
1.00	Call to Order	• Meeting called to order at 7:31 AM ET by Mr. Ghilardi, presiding in the absence of Mr. Pezdek
2.00	Attendance	• As noted above
3.00	Housekeeping	• Mr. Ghilardi noted that Ms. Chiavaroli has assumed the role of Board of Education Representative and will serve as a voting member going forward. Mr. Cappiali has stepped down from the committee • Mr. Finkel noted that Mr. Cappiali will be removed from the committee distribution list
4.00	Approval of Prior Meeting's Minutes	• Motion to approve the April 1st meeting minutes approved by unanimous consent
5.00	Matters Raised at Prior Meeting	• Executive Session and Owner's Representative RFP ○ These items were carried over from the April 1st meeting and will be addressed at a future meeting

6.00	New Matters	• **Architect RFP — Walkthrough Debrief**
		  ○ Mr. Ghilardi, Mr. Contadino, and Ms. Chiavaroli were present for the walkthrough. Approximately 25–30 representatives from architectural firms attended, exceeding expectations. Karen Tedesco registered all attendees and collected business cards
		  ○ Mr. Fenton asked whether any themes or focus areas emerged from the walkthrough. Mr. Contadino noted that firms appeared to be in a mode of digesting information rather than asking questions
		  ○ Mr. Ghilardi noted that he subsequently visited Julian Curtiss School, which is in Phase 2 of its construction, to gain a sense of the project progression
		• **Architect RFP — Q&A Process and Timeline**
		  ○ Mr. Duus asked about the process for handling questions submitted by architectural firms. Ms. Chiavaroli noted that Karen Tedesco has been forwarding questions to relevant town departments for answers as they arrive. Mr. Watson confirmed that a master Q&A document is being prepared by Karen's office and will be distributed to all firms on April 17th
		• **Architect RFP — Committee Review of Questions**
		  ○ The committee reviewed the Q&A materials distributed to the committee over the course of the week and identified which questions fall within the committee's purview to answer
		  ○ Regarding a question submitted regarding conceptual drawings: The committee discussed whether conceptual drawings and site plans should be required for both renovation and new-build options. The consensus answer to be included in the Q&A document is that while not explicitly required, applicants are encouraged to submit whatever information and designs they believe best reflect their perspectives on the project
		  ○ Regarding hazardous material testing costs: The committee agreed that firms should provide a unit rate per test to ensure a level playing field. The AHERA book will be provided as an addendum to the RFP
		  ○ Regarding the June 2026 grant submission deadline: Ms. Chiavaroli confirmed that this project is not on the accelerated timeline that would require a June 2026 submission
		• **BOE Parallel New-Build Study**
		  ○ The committee discussed the Board of Education's decision to commission a parallel study re-estimating the costs of new construction versus renovation, with results expected in May
		  ○ Ms. Lyndon suggested the committee proceed with its own RFP process and treat the BOE's parallel study as a separate matter. Ms. Chiavaroli noted that the committee's mandate is to build to the

		educational specifications. Ms. Downey noted that a similar dynamic arose during the Old Greenwich School project ○ The committee noted that the current RFP already requires architects to price services for renovation, hybrid, and new-build options, preserving all future choices. The consensus was to proceed with the RFP as written ○ Mr. Contadino noted that the more detail provided by architects, the more accurate the resulting budget will be. Mr. Macri noted that the primary focus at this stage is identifying qualified firms, not selecting a project scope. Ms. Rabin noted that budget discussion is premature at this stage. The committee noted that the $45 million figure in the capital plan serves as a general benchmark ○ Ms. Downey noted a question raised about the potential for a "shortlist" process similar to what was used in Darien, whereby finalist firms could be asked to provide more detailed proposals. The committee noted this could be revisited if needed later in the process
7.00	Open Discussion	• **Riverside Pre-K** ○ Ms. Chiavaroli noted that the addition of Pre-K to the Riverside project is a significant topic on the agenda of the Board of Education meeting on April 16th. She noted that adding two Pre-K classrooms to the project could result in over $5 million in state reimbursement savings, tied to a new state law offering higher reimbursement for projects that include Pre-K ○ The committee discussed the operational implications. Mr. Fenton noted that Pre-K enrollment is entirely needs-based and not tied to fixed enrollment. The annual operating cost for one Pre-K class is approximately $176,000, though it was noted that consolidating classes from other schools such as Parkway could offset net operating costs ○ The committee discussed the feasibility of a single centralized Pre-K facility versus distributing classrooms across elementary schools. It was noted that state law requires all Pre-K classrooms to be on the first floor, and that similar centralized Pre-K facilities in Fairfield, Trumbull, and Norwalk have been shut down due to operational challenges ○ Mr. Duus asked whether building two classrooms but only filling one would require reimbursement to be returned to the state. Ms. Chiavaroli noted this is an open question. Ms. Lyndon asked how the reimbursement rate can be locked in. No decision was made; the matter will be discussed further at the BOE meeting • **Central Middle School Interim Appropriation** ○ Mr. Fenton noted that Central Middle School is seeking a $6 million interim appropriation from the BET, expected to be reviewed in May. The project had a 5% contingency which was exhausted due to unforeseen costs, primarily related to fire suppression system upgrades ○ Mr. Finkel asked whether the Old Greenwich School project faced similar issues. Mr. Fenton noted that OGS cost overruns were more attributable to tariff-related inflation rather than fire marshal requirements ○ The committee noted this as a cautionary example, reiterating the importance of early and ongoing engagement with the fire marshal to avoid similar issues on the Riverside project
8.00	Adjournment	• Motion to adjourn approved by unanimous consent at 8:28 AM ET