

WILDWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROJECT – Wilmington, MA

SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING #35

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

In-person and Remote

6:30pm

Wilmington High School
 Large Group Instruction Room
 159 Church Street, Wilmington, MA

Zoom Webinar

<https://wpsk12.zoom.us/j/83577025187?pwd=cAMl4Rs4iYaPdH4DoHQTNSnWq5XMom.1>

Committee Members

Diane M. Allan	Gregory B. Bendel	Kate Bissell	Kevin A. Caira
Michael Camoscio	Justin Cusce	Marianne Gallezzo	Nicholas Golden
Christine Holloran	John C. Holloway	Dennis Kelley	Lilia Maselli
Paul J. Melaragni	Craig P. Miner	Christine Murray	Judith L. O'Connell, Chair
Christine Prendergast	David A. Ragsdale	Paul Ruggiero	Stacy Scott
R. Eric Slagle	Dr. David L. Thomson	Stephen Turner	Vivian Varbedian, Vice Chair

Meeting Minutes

A publicly posted meeting of the Wildwood School Building Committee was held at the above listed date, time, and location. Committee members and other participants were:

Voting Members (Quorum = 13)	Present	Notes
Diane M. Allan	X	Permanent Building Committee
Gregory B. Bendel	Partial, Remote	
Kate Bissell	Remote	Wildwood School, Principal
Kevin A. Caira	Remote	Select Board
Michael Camoscio	X	
Justin Cusce	X	
Marianne Gallezzo	Remote	Finance Committee
Nicholas Golden	X	School Committee
Christine Holloran		Wildwood School, Teacher
John C. Holloway		Permanent Building Committee

Dennis Kelley	X	Town of Wilmington, Supt. of Public Buildings, Permanent Building Committee
Lilia Maselli	X	Select Board
Paul J. Melaragni	X	Permanent Building Committee
Craig P. Miner	Remote	
Christine Murray	Partial, Remote	
Judith L. O'Connell, Chair	X	Town of Wilmington, Asst. Town Manager
Christine Prendergast	X	
David A. Ragsdale	Remote	School Committee
Paul Ruggiero		Town of Wilmington, Asst. Superintendent of Administration and Finance
Stacy Scott		Woburn Street School, Principal
R. Eric Slagle	X	Town of Wilmington, Town Manager
Dr. David Thomson	X	Wilmington Public Schools
Stephen Turner		School Committee
Vivian Varbedian, Vice Chair	X	
Other Participants		
Tracy Ingersoll		Wilmington Public Schools
Kenneth Lord	Remote	Wilmington Public Schools
Donald Walter	Remote	Dore + Whittier Architects
Lee P. Dore	Remote	Dore + Whittier Architects
Rani Philip	X	Dore + Whittier Architects
Bryce Taft	Remote	Dore + Whittier Architects
David Fontaine, Jr.		Fontaine Bros.
Rob Day		Fontaine Bros.
Mark Abdella	Remote	Fontaine Bros.
Chelsey Mutrie		Fontaine Bros.
Chad L'Ecuyer		Fontaine Bros.
Jim Rogers	Remote	LeftField
David Saindon	X	LeftField
Craig DiCarlo	X	LeftField

1 – Call to Order

Ms. O'Connell called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

Ms. Varbedian conducted roll call and determined that a quorum was present.

2 – Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from the School Building Committee meeting held on June 3, 2025, was made by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Mr. Golden. There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting Member	Yes	No	Abst.	Not Pres.	Voting Member	Yes	No	Abst.	Not Pres.
Diane M. Allan	X				Paul J. Melaragni	X			
Gregory B. Bendel				X	Craig P. Miner	X			
Kate Bissell	X				Christine Murray				X
Kevin A. Cairra	X				Judith L. O'Connell	X			
Michael Camoscio			X		Christine Prendergast	X			
Justin Cusce			X		David A. Ragsdale	X			
Marianne Gallezzo	X				Paul Ruggiero				X
Nicholas Golden	X				Stacy Scott				X
Christine Holloran				X	R. Eric Slagle	X			
John C. Holloway				X	Dr. David Thomson			X	
Dennis Kelley	X				Stephen Turner				X
Lilia Maselli			X		Vivian Varbedian	X			

The motion carried 13-0-4 (Yes-No-Abstain).

A motion to approve the minutes from the School Building Committee meeting held on June 10, 2025, was made by Mr. Golden and seconded by Ms. Allan. There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting Member	Yes	No	Abst.	Not Pres.	Voting Member	Yes	No	Abst.	Not Pres.
Diane M. Allan	X				Paul J. Melaragni	X			
Gregory B. Bendel				X	Craig P. Miner			X	
Kate Bissell	X				Christine Murray				X
Kevin A. Cairra	X				Judith L. O'Connell	X			
Michael Camoscio			X		Christine Prendergast	X			
Justin Cusce			X		David A. Ragsdale	X			
Marianne Gallezzo	X				Paul Ruggiero				X
Nicholas Golden	X				Stacy Scott				X
Christine Holloran				X	R. Eric Slagle	X			
John C. Holloway				X	Dr. David Thomson			X	
Dennis Kelley	X				Stephen Turner				X
Lilia Maselli			X		Vivian Varbedian	X			

The motion carried 12-0-5 (Yes-No-Abstain).

3 – Administrative Actions

3a – Introduction of Owner's Project Manager (OPM)

LeftField expressed appreciation to the building committee for selecting them for the role of OPM going forward. The OPM team has begun to assist the town prepare for the upcoming public approval vote.

LeftField presented an abbreviated version of the slideshow used at the recent OPM interview. The presentation provided high-level information about LeftField as a firm, the Wildwood project team members, and recent project experience with MSBA school projects.

Ms. O'Connell expressed appreciation for the work LeftField has begun to do on the project.

3b – Invoice Summary & Warrant Approval

Ms. O'Connell presented Warrant #35 which includes the single invoice received from D+W in the month of June for geotechnical work under ASR-3 in the amount of \$3,300.00. The Finance Working Group reviewed the invoice prior to this meeting.

A motion to approve Warrant #25 in the amount of \$3,300.00, was made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Dr. Thomson. There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting Member	Yes	No	Abst.	Not Pres.	Voting Member	Yes	No	Abst.	Not Pres.
Diane M. Allan	X				Paul J. Melaragni	X			
Gregory B. Bendel				X	Craig P. Miner	X			
Kate Bissell	X				Christine Murray				X
Kevin A. Caira	X				Judith L. O'Connell	X			
Michael Camoscio	X				Christine Prendergast	X			
Justin Cusce	X				David A. Ragsdale	X			
Marianne Gallezzo	X				Paul Ruggiero				X
Nicholas Golden	X				Stacy Scott				X
Christine Holloran				X	R. Eric Slagle	X			
John C. Holloway				X	Dr. David Thomson	X			
Dennis Kelley	X				Stephen Turner				X
Lilia Maselli	X				Vivian Varbedian	X			

The motion carried 17-0-0 (Yes-No-Abstain).

3C – Building Committee Membership Changes

LeftField presented a slide showing the recent changes to the Wildwood School Building Committee (SBC). The SBC roster includes 24 voting members, and a quorum is made of 13 members, changes are shown **bold and underlined**:

Diane M. Allan
Gregory B. Bendel
Kate Bissell
Kevin A. Caira
Michael Camoscio
Justin Cusce
Marianne Gallezzo
Nicholas Golden
John C. Holloway

Dennis Kelley
Christine Holloran
Lilia Maselli
Paul J. Melaragni
Craig P. Miner
Christine Murray
Judith L. O'Connell, **Chair**
Christine Prendergast
David A. Ragsdale

Paul Ruggiero
Stacy Scott
R. Eric Slagle
Dr. David L. Thomson
Stephen Turner
Vivian Varbedian,
Committee Vice Chair

4 – Design Update

4a – Physical Model

Ms. O'Connell reported that the physical model of the project, produced by Dore + Whitter, was displayed at the Fun on the Fourth event.

4b – Flyby Video of the 3D Computer Model

Ms. Philip presented the latest flyby video of the project, which was shared at a recent Select Board meeting. The intent of the video is to help people visualize the interior and exterior of the building. Details will be developed in the upcoming Design Development phase.

Ms. Varbedian inquired about doors on the cubbies. Ms. Philip responded that the cubbies configuration varies by grade level. Kindergarten and first grade cubbies will be in the classrooms and upper grades are currently shown to have doors based on conversations with school staff. The design of cubbies will be revisited in the upcoming design phases.

4c – KartoonEDU Video

Ms. Philip presented a video prepared by KartoonEDU to help inform the public of the project. Ms. O'Connell advised that after this SBC meeting, the video will be added to the project website. Ms. Philip noted that the videos are intended to provide the public with an understanding of the MSBA process and progress of the project. Separate videos have been produced to present a number of “pillars”, or important aspects, of the project. The first 5 pillars were previously presented to the community at Town Meeting. The video that was presented at the building committee included a recap of pillar 5 but focused on pillars 6 and 7, covering the cost of the project and what would happen if the local approval vote were to fail.

Ms. O'Connell advised that the project team wanted to present the KartoonEDU video, as well as the new flyby video produced by Dore + Whittier, to the building committee before making them available to the public. Both will be published on the project website.

5 – Working Group Updates

Mr. Slagle reported on the recent “Tri-Board” meeting, which was well attended by the School Committee, Finance Committee, and Select Board. At the meeting, the Town Manager presented a slideshow to the group. Topics that were presented included the MSBA's approval of the Project Scope and Budget Agreement, the tax impacts and tax calculator that is currently available on the project website and town's website, and the project financing plan including the MSBA's and town's shares. Members of the three groups were given an opportunity to ask questions about the project. Feedback from the School Committee and Finance Committee has been positive.

Ms. Prendergast reported on the Fun on the Fourth event, at which building committee members staffed an informational booth to raise awareness of the Wildwood project. The building committee members in attendance found that most of the people they spoke with were familiar with the project and supported the project. Mr. Camoscio noted that the tri-fold flier was well received and helpful in providing quick reference information about the project.

5a – Public Relations Working Group

Ms. O'Connell described the goal of the Public Relations Working Group's efforts is to get factual information to the public in different forms and media. The PR Working Group became aware of the public's questions which appeared on social media. Both town leadership and the PR Working Group endeavor to answer those questions, provide factual and comparative information, and revisit previously presented topics as needed. An important aspect is specific information in the Project Scope and Budget Agreement that will be presented at Town Meeting and included in the ballot vote is fixed and cannot be amended without re-starting the process from the beginning. The implications of a failed local vote are also being addressed and the time to return to the MSBA pipeline. Due to the short time until Town Meeting and the ballot vote, and the fast-paced nature of this process, there will be some decisions that must be made by the Town Managers office without the benefit of putting them before the building committee.

LeftField presented a tax impact comparison to between the Wildwood Elementary School project and other recent projects. Information was compiled from recent LeftField projects, recent Dore + Whittier projects, and readily available on the internet. Wildwood's tax impact for the average home (\$702,889) is projected to be \$422 per year, or \$35 per

month for the term of the borrowing. The average for comparable MSBA projects was \$63 per month.

Using information provided by the MSBA on their website, LeftField compared the cost of the Wildwood building, *excluding* demolition, abatement, sitework, and contractor mark-ups, to other recent MSBA school building projects. Wildwood's estimated cost of \$538 per square foot is slightly lower than the average of \$542 per square foot for the eight (8) comparable projects. The costs of older projects were escalated to current dollar value.

Using information provided by the MSBA on their website, LeftField compared the total construction cost of the Wildwood project, *including* demolition, abatement, sitework, and contractor mark-ups, to other recent MSBA school building projects. Wildwood's estimated cost of \$835 per square foot is lower than the average of \$882 per square foot for the eight (8) comparable projects. The costs of older projects were escalated to current dollar value.

LeftField presented the MSBA's policy towards failed local votes, which states, "a failed local vote likely will result in the school district being required to submit a new Statement of Interest to the MSBA and await an invitation from the MSBA to enter the Eligibility Period phase of the MSBA's process." LeftField presented two tables that were created using public information on the MSBA website which showed that after a failed local approval vote, the average time to get another Project Scope and Budget Agreement is over seven (7) years, and the average time to get to the start of construction is over eight (8) years.

Ms. O'Connell described the ongoing public relations efforts: publishing a water bill insert (date, time, and location of the Town Meeting, September 13, and the ballot vote, September 16); a pending visit and presentation to the Senior Center on August 26; informational boards displayed at upcoming public school Open House events.

The Public Relations Working Group will continue to provide information through the Town Crier, the Wilmington Apple, and the town's Facebook pages.

6 – Discussion/Correspondence/New Items

Ms. O'Connell noted that some questions received by e-mail cannot be answered at this time because the design of the project is still preliminary, at approximately the 30% completion. After Town Meeting and the ballot vote, if the project is approved, the design will continue to be developed and answers to detailed questions and concerns will be available.

An example is that some social media posts have expressed concern with traffic, which will be address as traffic is studied further in the next phase of design. Project leadership

has been communicating with the town engineer who is planning future roadway improvements and traffic mitigation projects that will be funded by the developer of the Amazon project at 800 Salem Street.

7 – Building Committee Questions

Mr. Golden heard from an Arlene Ave resident who expressed concern about Arlene Ave being used as a student drop-off area. Ms. O'Connell responded that the pedestrian way will remain as it is, and Arlene Ave will not become a student drop-off area.

Mr. Golden inquired which portions of the KartooneDU video will be presented at Town Meeting. Mr. Slagle responded that the video will be shown at Town Meeting along with a slideshow presentation to share information from the time of the Preferred Schematic Design vote in October 2024 to now.

Mr. Golden advised that some members of the public inquired about videos of the existing schools being shared to demonstrate the reasons behind the selection of a new school as the preferred option.

Ms. Manselli suggested that whatever information is shown at Town Meeting, the source of the information be noted to lend credibility.

Mr. Melaragni recommended that the project team describe what is included in the estimated \$30 million dollars of repair work that would be needed at North Intermediate if the Wildwood project vote fails. Mr. Slagle responded that information can be articulated in the slideshow presentation at Town Meeting. A discussion was held.

Mr. Cusce suggested describing the educational impacts of a failed vote to the public, from the perspective of students and staff. A discussion was held.

Ms. Gallezzo inquired about modifying the Wildwood project website for easier access to the most important project information. Ms. O'Connell responded that the project team is currently working to highlight the most salient information on the website as Ms. Gallezzo described. Ms. Prendergast responded that she is working with town staff to optimize the website design. Mr. Saindon advised that LeftField will look into assisting with that effort.

Mr. Ragsdale noted the difference in construction duration for repairs compared to new construction, with new construction anticipated to be a 3-year effort versus many more years for piecemeal repairs to the existing schools.

Ms. Allen suggested the project team show the footprint of the existing North Intermediate School on the site plan next to the new school building, to help the public's understanding that the North Intermediate School will remain open until the new school building is complete and occupied. A discussion was held.

8 – Public Comments

Mr. and Ms. Kenney, 24 Ballardvale Street, requested the homes of abutters be shown in the 3D model in the video to demonstrate the distance of the proposed school to the existing homes. A discussion was held.

Mr. Bob Donohue, 12 Ella Avenue, suggested the project be sensitive to the abutters and inquired about traffic impacts, the proposed gymnasium, and the pedestrian walkway on Arlene Avenue. A discussion was held. Mr. Slagle advised that the town and DPW are making plans to implement roadway improvements to mitigate traffic in advance of the new school opening.

Ms. Kenney, 24 Ballardvale Street, expressed concern about the proximity of new drive aisles to their property, inquired who they can speak with about their concerns during construction, and inquired about the process for counting ballot votes. A discussion was held.

Ms. Christina Ensingere, 325 Woburn Street, expressed support of the project and appreciation for the public outreach conducted by the town, suggested highlighting the benefits of the project and to continue to make that information available to the public. A discussion was held.

9 – Upcoming Meetings

The next SBC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at 6:30pm.

10 – Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Melaragni and seconded by Mr. Kelley. There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting Member	Yes	No	Abst.	Not Pres.	Voting Member	Yes	No	Abst.	Not Pres.
Diane M. Allan	X				Paul J. Melaragni	X			
Gregory B. Bendel	X				Craig P. Miner	X			
Kate Bissell	X				Christine Murray				X
Kevin A. Caira	X				Judith L. O'Connell	X			
Michael Camoscio	X				Christine Prendergast	X			
Justin Cusce	X				David A. Ragsdale	X			
Marianne Gallezzo	X				Paul Ruggiero				X
Nicholas Golden	X				Stacy Scott				X
Christine Holloran				X	R. Eric Slagle	X			
John C. Holloway				X	Dr. David Thomson	X			
Dennis Kelley	X				Stephen Turner				X
Lilia Maselli	X				Vivian Varbedian	X			

The motion carried 18-0-0 (Yes-No-Abstain).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41pm.

Documents and Exhibits

- Wildwood Early Childhood Center Project School Building Committee Meeting #35 slideshow presentation, dated July 22, 2025

Attachments

- None