

RIVERSIDE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, August 19th, 2026 | 7:30 AM ET

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Attendee	Position	Present	Absent
Officers			
Stephan Pezdek	Chair	Zoom	
Luigi Ghilardi	Vice-Chair	Zoom	
Bryan Finkel	Secretary	Zoom	
Voting Members			
Veronica Chiavaroli	BOE Representative	Zoom	
Ben Chynsky	Regular Member	Zoom	
Louis Contadino	Regular Member	Zoom	
Andy Duus	Regular Member	Zoom	
Doug Fenton	BET Member		Absent
Christina Lyndon	Regular Member	Zoom	
Ex-Officio / Non-Voting Members			
Julian De La Rosa	BOE Facilities		Absent
Christina Downey	RTM Representative	Zoom	
Nicholas Macri	P&Z Representative	Zoom	
Mary Dolan Collette	Riverside School Principal		Absent
Lauren Rabin	BOS Representative	Zoom	
James Michel	DPW Representative	Zoom	
Guests			
Rusty Malik (QA+M Architecture)	Guest	Zoom	
Mike Lane (QA+M Architecture)	Guest	Zoom	
Julia McFadden (QA+M Architecture)	Guest	Zoom	
Eugene Watts (Greenwich Public Schools)	Guest	Zoom	
Ben Branyan (Greenwich Public Schools)	Guest	Zoom	

MEETING MINUTES

Item	Topic	Description
1.00	Call to Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A quorum having been reached, the meeting was called to order at 7:32 AM ET by Mr. Pezdek; the meeting was held virtually via Zoom
2.00	Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As noted above
3.00	Housekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Pezdek reported no housekeeping matters
4.00	Approval of Prior Meeting's Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The August 12th draft minutes had been circulated in advance and no further changes were requested. Motion to approve made by Ms. Chiavaroli, seconded by Mr. Contadino; approved with unanimous consent
5.01	Architect Report-Out – Environmental & Site Investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Malik reported that the QA+M team is reviewing the recently distributed hazardous building materials report and working through its implications for both options—the demolition required under the new-building option and the abatement required under the renovation option—and will confirm certain nuances with Eagle Environmental. He noted that the site survey is scheduled for Thursday; that a water-flow test has been received indicating a fire pump will be required; and that a sanitary-sewer proposal has been received and will be circulated to the committee for review and scheduling
5.02	Architect Report-Out – Enrollment & Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Malik reported that enrollment and capacity were confirmed at the charrette with the Superintendent. The design enrollment projection is 552 students—512 projected enrollment plus 40 Pre-K, with Pre-K designed to 20 students per classroom. The existing building at 100% utilization has a capacity of 443, reflecting current room sizes and the capacity identified by the Board of Education
5.03	Architect Report-Out – Design Charrette Debrief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Decisions: Ms. McFadden and Mr. Malik summarized the charrette outcomes. Consensus items included a single consolidated addition on the south side of the building (enabling swing space and phased construction); a full “renovate-as-new” scope rather than piecemeal alterations; enlarging classrooms to meet the educational specifications; providing daylight to all classrooms; relocating the media center into the addition and repurposing that space for Pre-K; co-locating the administration and nurse’s suites for better supervision; and avoiding portable classrooms, per the Superintendent’s direction Courtyard vs. Atrium: The team is weighing a courtyard against an enclosed atrium as the means of bringing natural light into the interior. Considerations discussed included security, potential classroom distraction, the site area available as the building extends south toward the railroad, maintenance such as snow removal and grounds access, and the goal of creating meaningful, light-filled shared space rather than a “light well.” Mr. Contadino spoke in favor of the courtyard and its instructional potential while deferring to the design team’s judgment Circulation & Massing: Ms. McFadden described schemes organized around a central atrium “main street” linking the community spaces—cafetorium, gymnasium, and media center—and separating them from the academic areas, with simple, supervisable circulation. Mr. Malik added that the massing and the integration of the addition with the existing architecture continue to be studied Cafetorium: The team is proposing a cafetorium and would relocate mechanical systems to the existing gym-stage area for phasing reasons; the future of the existing stage remains under discussion Elevator & ADA Access: In response to Mr. Contadino and Ms. Chiavaroli, the team discussed centrally locating the elevator near the main entrance rather than within the addition. Ms. Chiavaroli, addressing ADA considerations, advocated central placement to serve students with mobility needs and urged that the main entrance itself be made accessible rather than providing a separate accessible entrance. Mr. Malik affirmed the goal of making all access points accessible, and Ms. McFadden reported that the team’s structural and mechanical review found inserting the elevator into the

		<p>existing building feasible at modestly higher cost. Mr. Finkel noted the elevator should serve specific-use cases rather than function as a primary means of movement between floors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Construction vs. Renovation: In response to Mr. Duus, Mr. Malik stated that the team's goal is for the renovation option to meet all program requirements achievable through new construction, and that the ultimate decision would turn on schedule, cost, and disruption; preliminary indications are that the costs of the two options may be relatively close • Phasing: Mr. Malik presented a phasing diagram developed to test constructing the project without portable classrooms. The first phase—new construction together with renovation of portions of the existing building—would run approximately twenty months and would displace certain program spaces during that period, while later phases would displace very few. He recommended working with the Principal and Superintendent on how displaced programs would be accommodated, noting that avoiding portables would yield significant savings • Sustainability: Mr. Pezdek asked that energy efficiency and sustainability be incorporated as the schemes narrow, referencing the Connecticut School Building Design Guidelines' energy standards, LEED principles, and the Envision framework as best practices for site and infrastructure work. Mr. Lane noted the Town's planning and sustainability guidelines referenced in the RFP, and Mr. Malik suggested dedicating a future meeting to sustainability given its cost implications • School Tours: Ms. McFadden offered to arrange tours for interested members: Sandy Hook School, to illustrate security integrated through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, and a QA+M "renovate-as-new" historic school. Mr. Pezdek will gauge interest and coordinate • Next Steps: Mr. Malik indicated the team would return with further massing and phasing options at a subsequent design meeting with the subcommittee or full committee
6.00	Other Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner's Representative RFP: Mr. Pezdek reported that the responses to the Owner's Representative RFP would be publicly opened the following day at 10:00 AM, at which the names of the submitting firms—but not their costs—would be read; Mr. Watts confirmed. Mr. Ghilardi and Mr. Finkel plan to attend • RTM Quarterly Report: Mr. Finkel circulated a first draft of the RTM quarterly report. Ms. Downey advised that the communications team is reviewing it to ensure consistent terminology and would return it for submission the following week, ahead of the Friday deadline. Mr. Finkel will circulate an email-friendly version to the full committee for comment, with any edits routed through Ms. Downey • Architect Contract: Mr. Pezdek reported that the QA+M contract has been delivered to the Town and awaits insurance documentation before execution, concluding the contracting phase; he asked QA+M to prepare for invoicing and to project the anticipated burn rate for the coming months
7.00	Matters for Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the school year beginning and Mr. Pezdek traveling, the committee will confirm by email whether to meet the following Wednesday or defer one week; the meeting would likely remain virtual
8.00	Adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Chiavaroli, seconded by Mr. Contadino; approved with unanimous consent. The committee adjourned at 8:31 AM ET