

School Building Committee
Wednesday, February 27, 2019
7:00 p.m., Open Session
Hartwell Multipurpose Room

Present: Chris Fasciano, Chair; Kim Bodnar, Vice Chair; Buck Creel; Jennifer Glass; Michael Haines; Gina Halsted; Sharon Hobbs; Becky McFall; Craig Nicholson; Steven Perlmutter; Peter Sugar; Doug Adams, liaison, Historical Commission; Owen Beenhouwer, liaison, Community Center PPDC; Christine Dugan, liaison, Conservation Commission; Ruth Ann Hendrickson, liaison, Water Commission; Dan Pereira, liaison, Parks & Recreation; Ian Spencer, liaison, Public Safety; Peter Lukacic, SMMA; Jennifer Soucy, SMMA; Shane Nolan, Daedalus; Keith Fallon, EwingCole; Bill Smarzewski, EwingCole.

Absent: Tim Christenfeld; Andrew Glass, liaison, Historical Commission; Ed Lang, liaison, Green Energy Committee; John Ritz, liaison, Disabilities Commission; Gary Taylor, liaison, Planning Board; Peter von Mertens, liaison, Conservation Commission.

Also Present: Ken Bassett; Jim Hutchinson; Judith Lawler; Trisha O'Hagan; Louis Zipes.

Welcome and Opening Comments: Chris Fasciano, Chair, opened the meeting at 7:01pm, commenting that with impending snow, we are going to try to keep the meeting on schedule.

Public Comments: None at this time.

Finance Committee Update on Bonding: Jim Hutchinson, Chair, Lincoln Finance Committee, presented information about the actual bond rate that was locked in on February 20th.

- He noted that the town's finance team had been fairly confident that the town would maintain a AAA rating, but were nevertheless glad to get confirmation from Standard & Poors. We maintained our top rating due to the strength of the town's long term planning, good management policies, liquidity, and budgetary flexibility.
- On advice of bond counsel, and in keeping with marketplace trends, the finance team decided to go with a single bond rating.
- The initial \$80M bond was offered on February 20, 2019, and 8 bids were received. The winning bid was from Citibank, which offered an average rate of 3.38% over the 30 year life of the bond; this is much better than the 4% and 5% percent scenarios that were being used for planning purposes in preparation for the December 1st vote.
- There will be a "clean up" bond two years from now for the remaining cost of the project. As per the December votes, that bond cannot exceed \$8.5M.
- In December, the Finance Committee had projected a 17% to 19% property tax rate increase. With the lower bond rate, that increase will now be in the 14% to 15% range.
- If, at the March 23rd Town Meeting, we approve the FY20 budget as recommended, the increase will be 12.7% next year.
- Mr. Hutchinson showed a graph that compares, on a calendar year basis, the current borrowing scenario to what was shown at the December 1st Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Fasciano and the SBC thanked Mr. Hutchinson, the Finance Committee, and the Town's administrative team for their work.

Design Update: Mr. Fasciano turned the presentation over to Jennifer Soucy, SMMA. Ms. Soucy said that the presentation would provide updates on a number of topics.

- Site Plan: Peter Lukacic, SMMA, presented updated thinking about the site plan. He noted that the topic will be revisited in March. Highlights:
 - Reorientation of the roadway so that there is more room for the playing fields; assures that we have the same sized fields as today, and some flexibility in setting the boundaries.
 - Still provides safe circulation.

- Refinement of the service road to the north and west of the building; introduces a turnaround space at the Smith end for vans.
- Refinements of plazas; looking at the interplay of architecture and the site; provides larger and smaller outdoor areas for different sizes of groups.
- Granite pieces from the town granite dump should be able to be incorporated into the design.
- Floor Plan: Ms. Soucy said that there has been refinement based on conversations with Becky McFall, Buck Creel, and Michael Haines. They are also continuing to look at the details of the kitchen plan
- Exterior Elevations: Ms. Soucy showed an updated set of elevations.
 - The drawings are now showing the PV panels on the Smith end of the school, and are also showing locations of mechanical units.
 - They are proposing a different material for the upper panels of two story volumes (Auditorium, Reed, etc.) This material is lighter weight than the brick used on the lower portion of the school.
 - An accent color brick is being used to highlight the window bays.
 - For the Smith Gym, they are exploring whether brick is tenable from a structural engineering standpoint.
 - Auditorium, west elevation, showing a vertical pattern in the upper panels; also exploring different colors and textures of the material; accent brick color below window sections.
 - Reed Connector, proposing an entrance at each end; opportunity to use the corridor as an art gallery with wood ceilings and walls as an accent.
 - Kim Bodnar asked whether the wood shown in the Reed Connector is part of the budget; it is.
 - Reed Gym: Looked at both a horizontal and vertical pattern for the cement panels; proposing to add windows as there is no natural light currently. Windows would have some kind of screening on the south side, and they will look at the best window placement on the north side of the Reed Gym.
 - There was general agreement from the SBC that the vertical paneling is more attractive than the horizontal pattern.
 - Steven Perlmutter asked about the color of the red brick. Ms. Soucy said that the intent is to match the color on the original Smith building. Mr. Perlmutter noted that he had previously spoken about his opinion about gray, he thinks it is a “downer” color. He wants the building to lift people up, and doesn’t want the accent color to be too gray..
 - Dr. Becky McFall suggested that the gray will help the upper volumes blend into the sky.
 - There was a discussion that the grays could be on the warmer side of the spectrum as opposed to the cooler. There was general consensus among SBC members that warm grays should be considered.
 - Mr. Creel noted that the current white accents are hard to maintain. The contrast is nice, but a warm gray would provide a nice contrast.
 - Bill Smarzeweski, EwingCole, said that the tonal grays will help to conceal dirt.
 - Reed Gym Solar Wall: The Lincoln Green Energy Committee had suggested looking into a product called “solar wall” for the south side of the Reed Gym. It collects solar heat to help heat the building when it is cold, meaning the HVAC system has less work to do, and lessening the electrical load. Consigli is looking at estimates, but it may be on par with the fiber cement that will be on the other sides of the upper level of the Reed Gym. There is additional work that needs to be done to explore this option.
 - RuthAnn Hendrickson asked whether the solar wall needs to be one large panel or can be done in panels. Ms. Soucy said that they will look into this.
 - Mr. Hutchinson asked whether it reduces or eliminates the need for heat. Ms. Soucy said that it would certainly reduce the amount of heat needed from the HVAC system.

Keith Fallon, EwingCole, showed some studies of materials they've done to inform the choice of exterior materials.

- The basic set of materials includes masonry (bricks), accent masonry, and fiber cement panels. In addition to looking at materials, they are looking at the depth of the different elements.
- Screening: Mr. Fallon showed different options for the screening of large glass expanses on the east and west side of the Learning Commons. He showed three options, two of which were of the greatest interest to the SBC: One is a perforated metal panel which can incorporate some kind of design in the perforation. The other is a set of horizontal baffles which are a reference to original design elements in the Smith School.
- Entrance Canopy: Mr. Fallon said they are looking at the length of the canopy in front of the entrance; they want to make sure we tie the Smith and Brooks sides together, and a strong horizontal datum helps to achieve this connection.
- Accent Brick: Could consider recessing the access material to set it off from the rest of the front façade.
- Mr. Fallon showed four versions of the canopy and accent masonry.
 - Peter Sugar asked if there could be more refinement of the windows along the different sections of the façade to create more unity. Mr. Fallon agreed that this is something that requires more thought, and they are continuing to explore different window option. Mr. Smarzewesky noted that the design requires knitting together a number of different styles throughout the building.
- Learning Commons: Mr. Fallon showed three options for the east face.
 - Craig Nicholson asked if the accent could be something other than brick. Mr. Fallon said that there is a lot to consider with durability and maintenance. He said that there is wood look material being proposed for the underside of canopies that might be investigated.
 - Mr. Perlmutter asked if there is a material that simulates stone? Mr. Fallon said that they are looking at the color of the granite pieces that might be used to inform the color and texture of the accent material.
 - Mr. Creel asked whether the door out of the dining commons could be moved one bay to the west? Mr. Fallon said they are looking at this and at the access point from the Learning Commons. Energy performance is a key factor when designing entrances, and they are continuing to develop ideas.
- Mr. Fallon showed some images that bring a number of the above elements together, including the latest iteration of the plaza.
 - Mr. Perlmutter asked about screening on the western side of the Learning Commons. Mr. Fallon said that it would mimic the material on the east, but be appropriate for the western light.
- Mr. Fallon showed a view of the Learning Commons from the west with the plaza area between the library and the 3rd grade hub.

Mr. Fallon asked for feedback from the SBC:

- Mr. Creel asked whether Solar Design Associates (SDA) shows PV panel elements on the canopies. SDA is still looking into a translucent panel.
- There was discussion that the color palette of the weathered gray wood shown in the materials studies slides is appealing because it is a warm gray.
- Ms. Glass suggested that the accent color brick follow the current color pattern in Brooks (accent color goes all the way to the ground), and that it makes sense to use that same pattern on the Smith end.
- There was discussion about the window screening, and general agreement to look at the perforated and the louvered screening for performance and cost.

Mr. Fallon provided some more information about the updated floor plan:

- They are looking at ways to refine the interior of the main entrance sequence.
- Also looking at interior circulation, and making sure that the flow goes through the Learning Commons in a logical location.

- Dr. McFall asked about ways to close off wings of the school for after hours control. This will need further discussion.
- The corridor along administration has the potential for some display areas. They are also looking at transparency into the Media Center.
- Mr. Perlmutter asked if there are elements that could be wood on the inside? Especially at the center entrance or maybe the interior entrance to the Media Center? Mr. Fallon said that the high sloping ceilings are one place to create a wood look.
- The high spaces are bounded by lower ceilings. As they develop the interior, they are looking for good acoustics and texture.
- Learning Commons: Looking to ensure flexibility of use, which means thinking carefully about furniture storage. Might be able to use salvaged wood from the Smith stage for one of the walls. Could be space for a small group room off of the Commons. Should be able to have an entrance with a vestibule out to the courtyard.
 - Kim Bodnar asked how the development of these ideas are kept in line with the pricing set. Mr. Fallon said that the drawings and studies are based on an underpinning of technical drawings; none of what is being shown is a deviation from the Schematic Design drawing set.
 - Shane Nolan said that within the budget there are contingencies and allowances. Each decision provides more information. Coming out of Design Development, then there will be specific decisions and tradeoffs to stay within the budget.

Salvage Materials: Mr. Lukacic walked the SBC through a discussion of materials that might be reused, and asked for feedback about which are most important.

- Exterior bricks might be used in limited areas on interior walls, on benches, or sold as a fundraiser.
- The Smith Gym stage wood floor could be used as an accent on a wall in the Learning Commons.
- There are student art tiles from the 1994 project. We need to decide how to use/reuse them as the project progresses.
- 1994 Butterfly Weathervane could be a garden element, added to the roof of the Commons, or an interior decorative installment in the central commons area. It might be too big for the interior; more thought is needed.
- The bell from bell tower could be used inside or outside.
- There are plaques and student artwork to consider.
- Ms. Bodnar noted there are commemorative bricks in the playground that should be preserved.
- Precast concrete benches from the Smith School. At first it was thought these might be granite, but they are concrete and not in great shape. The SBC agreed that these do not need to be salvaged.
- Mr. Nolan noted that in other projects they have had older students use salvaged wood to create an installation.
- Ken Bassett reminded the SBC that there is a mobile in the current Media Center that should be preserved.
- Ms. Glass suggested that the connector to the Reed Gym might be a place for preserved elements. Dr. McFall noted that in Wellesley, SMMA created a “history room” with preserved elements.

Review Updated Monthly Budget: Mr. Nolan provided the monthly update on project progress and the budget/expenditures. He noted that there is a lot of work being done by the design team to be ready for the March 18th design set.

- The cost estimates will be reviewed in April, and the estimates will be presented on April 10th.
- Modular construction proposals will come in over the next couple of weeks. Consigli and Daedalus are part of this process.
- No significant changes to the budget.
- Ms. Bodnar asked if the known upcoming meetings of all the subgroups could be included in the update.

- Mr. Hutchinson asked if, at some point, there will be more of a breakdown in the “construction” line item. Mr. Nolan said that once the next round of estimates is complete, that number will be more granular.
- Craig Nicholson asked about the work done during February vacation week. Mr. Nolan said that they looked at some hazardous materials. Mr. Haines reported that less testing was required than originally thought.

Outreach Update: Outreach meets tomorrow, Thursday, February 28th, 10am, Hartwell multipurpose room.

Educational Working Group Update: No update.

OPR/MEP/GEC Incentive Working Group Update: Mr. Creel reported that SMMA got input from Green Energy about possible HVAC equipment incentives.

Construction Logistics Working Group Update: The bids for the modulars are coming soon.

Solar Working Group Update: Mr. Creel said that the group is discussing details with a possible developer and are zeroing in on the approach to acquiring a developer.

Site Subcommittee Update: Ms. Bodnar reported that the group is made up of herself, Dr. McFall, Mr. Creel, Mr. Haines, Mr. Bassett, Dan Pereira, Detective Ian Spencer, and Ms. Glass. The group talked through topics such as the playing fields; the delivery road in relation to the wetlands; the pathway around the entire back of the campus for public safety; and how courtyards will be used by the school and the community. There was also a discussion about how to connect the school over to the Hartwell complex. Mr. Lukacic noted that there is a four foot wide area that can be paved to create a preliminary connection.

Minutes: Mr. Haines made a motion to approve the February 13th minutes. Mr. Perlmutter seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Discussion of other Topics: None

Adjournment: Mr. Nicholson made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Ms. Bodnar. The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 9:08pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jennifer Glass