

**School Building Committee Coordination Meeting**  
**Monday, September 23, 2024, from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.**  
**Remote Meeting**

School Building Committee Members: Andrew Baker; Mark Barrett; Michael Cronin, Vice-Chair; Rick DeAngelis, Liaison (absent); Charles Favazzo Jr.; Julie Hackett; Jonathan A. Himmel; Carolyn Kosnoff; Charles W. Lamb, Liaison; Kathleen M. Lenihan (absent); Alan Mayer Levine, Liaison; James Malloy (absent); Hsing Min Sha (absent); Joseph N. Pato; Claire Sheth, Liaison (attending on behalf of Rick DeAngelis); Kseniya Slavsky; Dan Voss

The minutes were taken by Sara Jorge, Office Manager, to the Lexington Superintendent and School Committee.

The Superintendent of Schools, Julie Hackett, began the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

**New Business:**

*Communications Updates*

Joe Pato gave a communications update. The website has been updated, and we are looking for feedback that will be sent offline. It is a work in progress. We will meet as a group on Wednesday to discuss the comments from the community forum from the SBC as a whole.

*Town Summit Debrief (9-19-24)*

Julie Hackett explained that six different committees met on September 19th. The pool conversation was pretty straightforward and would not be moving forward. We did have some communications about the field house, and it sounded like some committees were willing to entertain a small new field house or a renovated field house, and then some talked about an ad/reno.

Carolyn Kosnoff explained that some community members have advocated for a larger field house and a 200-meter track. After all of the discussions that we've heard from athletics, the Recreation Department, and the community, I think a really important comment that I heard at the Summit was that even in a renovation scenario, that would really bring the existing field house to a newer standard. This would also be intended to be a 75-year life-building, just like everything else. The fact that MSBA will allow us to do that, along with building the 18,000 square foot gymnasium, I feel like that is keeping the program that we have and improving the program to a certain extent, maybe not from the field house, but certainly from the gymnasium standpoint, and that really would meet the educational program and the existing program that's going on in the field house now. After hearing all this, I feel a little better about going into the 12th knowing those things.

Andrew Baker echoes some of what Carolyn Kosnoff said but was sensing some confusion on the part of the committee members of other financial committees that the lifespan of a fully renovated field house would be 75 years. But it sounded like some of the other financial committee members were laboring under the impression that it would be a reduced lifespan, so I think that's a place where clarity could help.

Lorraine Finnegan: The renovation project intends to replace everything because the exterior needs to be brought up to code, the roof would need to be changed, and all new inside including all new mechanicals. The intent is it would be the same as an addition at the high school level, you would expect that to last you 75 years. I think the clarification is that even within 75 years, some systems don't last 75 years. So it's not like it's 75 years, and we don't have to do anything. You must still plan for systems that only last 15 to 25 years. A roof, for

example, typically has a 20-year warranty. So I think that's where Mike Cronin was trying to explain that even within that time frame, there are capital expenditures that need to happen.

Mike Cronin stated that we all know that as soon as the building is built, we will put the high school on the capital plan for the 20-year outlook. That's just part of the building's life. Systems have a certain expiration date. We will maintain them to get to that shelf life, and then we will put in the capital request to replace those systems as they expire. I think that the new field house will be exactly the same.

Claire Sheth: The field house already is a tight space for kids, and given the size of the indoor track program, I would be in favor of a small new build, provided that doing so wouldn't jeopardize our ability to get the bigger gymnasium. That's my concern. I wouldn't want any decision that we make about the field house to jeopardize the 18,000-square-foot gymnasium.

Kseniya Slavsky: We heard in the Summit that there was an option for the Town to use funds outside this project to advance the design of a new standalone field house. But it seems to me, like a lot of the scope of what would be getting figured out there would be not that different from what would be getting figured out under an ad/reno scenario, but I could be wrong. Also, I found the detailed discussion and clarifications that Mike Cronin provided around what's required in order to resupply the existing Field House with MEP systems, given that it currently relies on the existing school for those systems very helpful. I would like to ask that we pull out the costs of doing the work because all of the schemes right now assume keeping the existing field house, which means they must assume either reconnecting it to the new school mechanical systems, which I guess in some cases, would be a tricky business since there's some distance to go between the two buildings, the field house, and the school, or providing new mechanical systems in the field house. So when we're looking at field house versus no field house, it's not cost versus no cost, it's cost A versus cost B. I think that would be a really useful data point. Also, if we were to keep the existing field house because no other options were voted on or selected, and we replaced its mechanical systems, would this trigger further code upgrades in the field house the way we know it would do in the high school? So the need to switch out mechanical systems in the high school, even if nothing else gets done, even the first of this project doesn't move forward, becomes a very pricey project, partially because the value of mechanical systems is more than I believe 30% of the school value. What are the field house mechanical systems versus the value of the field house, and if we did the bare minimum, what else would it trigger? What are those costs and the delta to an ad/reno or a new?

Lorraine Finnegan: We are getting a price for a standalone HVAC system should the field house stay. So, because there's been a conversation about keeping the field house, there are two paths we're looking at. It must be brought up to code if it's part of the larger project. So that means the energy code as well. Part of what we were considering was while the Town debated what to do with the field house, is there an option to have a conversation with the town building inspector and everybody else to say this is a temporary fix until we come up with a permanent solution? So if the field house has to stay on its own and run on its own, it needs some power, some utilities, and some HVAC and we're getting a price for that. But we were not saying, let's take everything up to code in that scenario as well. Because as the Town continues the discussion and decides yes, we want to do something new, we don't want to invest in that, if that's the goal. We're getting a complete bringing it-up-to-code priced as part of this PSR. Also, we have asked the estimators to bring the five different field house scenarios up to current pricing. We've done revised layouts that show no straightaway in the middle, so we're trying to get better pricing, even in the PSR phase. So we'll have that information soon.

Kseniya Slavsky: Does that mean that the current cost estimates for the school do not include the needs that the school would trigger in the field house?

Lorraine Finnegan: All the PDP options never included the field house, and we were really clear that they never did. So now we're rolling it back into the project. So yes, that is correct. The PDP options did not even include renovating the field house. Those were the discussions we had.

Kseniya Slavsky: I think we need to be clear that we shouldn't leave this project in a state that can't stand alone without additional investment. That would essentially be forced later on, vote or no vote, which would be unfortunate.

Julie Hackett asked Lorraine Finnegan to explain why the costs would change since the PDP never included the field house options.

Lorraine Finnegan: The Committee has directed us to include the renovation of the existing field house in the options moving forward. The PSR pricing that we will receive and present to you in a few short weeks will include an up-to-code renovated field house.

Carolyn Kosnoff explained that before we make a final decision, we must understand what the timing looks like for the field house coming offline for some period of time and whether the new gymnasium would be open by then to meet the educational program's needs.

Alan Levine: It seems that the existing field house heat runs off the boilers in the main high school, and if a new high school is built on the fields, the existing high school will remain until that building's complete. So the boilers will be there and be able to heat the field house until the new high school is completed. Roughly speaking, it is four years after the beginning of construction. If it's a phased-in-place construction, sort of a similar consideration happens, which is that parts of the existing building are going to remain in use for quite a number of years until the last part is demolished, so it will be four or five years before the boilers are decommissioned in the existing high school. So in either case, my conclusion is it seems like the boilers will be able to keep heating the existing field house for roughly four years from the beginning of construction. So I'd like to know if that's that's a reasonable line of argument.

Lorraine Finnegan said that is reasonable. If it's new on the fields, it will stay operational until the school comes down, and you will do a temporary boiler plant or a short-term HVAC plant before the school comes down. If it's an addition/renovation or a phased-in-place, it would be treated as any appendage to the building as that wing comes around, you either have to make temporary accommodations to keep those services up and running, or it gets connected to the permanent system.

Mike Cronin explained that we would need to decide whether to have the field house come offline during the construction of the high school, which would leave only the 9,000-square-foot gym in the high school for PE, or wait until the very end when the 18,000-square-foot gym is in the new building. I don't know that we have decided at this point, but that field house will be offline for quite some time.

Alan Levine: If you do the \$30 million renovation of the existing field house, I believe that precludes any new building for 50 years. Nobody will want it after investments are put in that building. There isn't going to be a 200-meter track or a bigger field house built. I believe the comments at the Summit don't reflect the desire for a bigger field house while we're doing the high school project, and I don't think it would make sense to do a big field house project overlapping with the big high school project. I think it would have to last 10 or 15 years before the Town would have the appetite to do another big project on the high school site. So, the question is whether the temporary thing could last 10 or 15 years, and if not, then I think that's out the window, and you really have to do the renovation, or you have to build something new right now, which I think is too expensive.

Mike Cronin asked Lorraine Finnegan what the length of time temporary means in her world.

Lorraine Finnegan explains that it is about 3-5 years. It would be hard to say that something is temporary for ten years, and per the building code, I think we would be challenged for that.

Alan Levine: My conclusion is that \$51 million for an ad/reno is too much to add to the cost of the high school project for the debt exclusion vote at the end of 2025. It would really hurt the chances that it would be approved. Then you're down to the renovation, and then you preclude any bigger field house for 50 years.

Joe Pato: The PSR cost will include the field house, which we are expecting. I would like to get the differential between the field house portion so we can compare against what the PDP costs were and then on the field house. I agree with most of the comments that have been made. I did not hear much support for going beyond renovation or ad/reno. The question in my mind about going new or rero is largely only a question of whether we should go with the revised bloom massing study. When we talked about the revised bloom, we discussed that the configuration of parking and fields on the Waltham Street side wasn't completely set. They could be adjusted to move the football field away, move parking, etc., and if a new field house makes it easier to lay things out, placing a new field house closer to Waltham Street rather than in the footprints we've been considering, then that might tip my mind to say, yes, go with a new one rather than a rero. Otherwise, I'm pretty sure that we're boxed into just one of the renovation options.

Jon Himmel: I think the cost estimates will give us a better idea of the options. We, for some reason, seem to be thinking the new equal size field house and the rero would both take the use of the field house offline. Given the fact that we are going to have to do construction manager on the job, we don't have to take care of the field house all at once. There are things about the renovation that are exterior, there are things interior, there are things that are disruptive, and things that are not, and I think if we were to look at the schedule, we might find that we could deal with a roof, we could deal with the exterior, we could deal with packages to get this done over periods of time. In the warmer months, we have recreation outside; in the colder months, we would want to use it. All I'm saying is I think the renovation could be scheduled differently so it really doesn't come offline for two years. Also, if we have a new one, and it's not on the current footprint, then there would not be a loss of use. The last thing is that there was a discussion about the larger of the field house options, and there was no interest in it whatsoever. I think along the lines of what Alan was talking about, the Town probably would not want it to be part of the debt exclusion vote next year. But there was also a conversation about whether we would have a larger field house then we would route the utilities differently. I think if we think there ever will be a desire to have a larger field house, we will be doing ourselves a service if we create what I would call an exclusion zone or a utility corridor, which I don't think either of those would cost a significant amount of dollars. We want to plan in advance so that we can include something in the future should we want to.

Chuck Favazzo: From the timing standpoint, 18 to 24 months may be enough time to do the work, but I don't think it needs to be completely shut down. How are you pricing the MEP systems for the PDP? Will it be just a square foot cost, and instead of an HVAC system for the 500,000 square feet, it'll be 500,000 plus another 30,000 for the field house? Is that correct?

Lorraine Finnegan: We have a narrative for each of the systems in the PDP document, so we updated that for the PSR document for the school building, and it describes the different types of equipment that we'll be using for the field house. Our mechanical engineer wrote a separate narrative for both the temporary condition as well as what might be in the future. We're assuming that any true renovation of that field house would include the need for geothermal, the need for solar, and so it would include all the same requirements that the high school will have for the project.

Chuck Favazzo: That is my point. If it's looked at as a percentage of the overall, geothermal for the high school is X, and geothermal for the field house is X plus 5%, so it's really insignificant, adding to the whole system.

Lorraine Finnegan: To Joe Pato's point, he would like that pulled out, so I will make sure that we do have that pulled out.

Chuck Favazzo: Does our decision on the field house preclude any of the six options at this point? You could incorporate no-fly zones into any of the six upgrades.

Lorraine Finnegan: I will raise the Article 97 comment again because, at some point, you run out of land. We need to keep that under consideration as we're designing it, as you think about keeping that existing field house, it may be a case that you have to go for a different Article 97 to swap land again in the future if you're going to do that. But I just want to ensure people realize that the utilities and the cost are not the only driving factors on the site, we're balancing that acreage that has to be swapped.

Chuck Favazzo: We could build a new high school on the fields and still have an option for a renovation, ad/reno, and a new field house, or we could build the high school in place and still have an option for a renovation, ad/reno, and a new field house.

Lorraine Finnegan: Again, planning is really important in terms of the internal planning of how the school is laid out. We really want to know whether that will happen or be there in the future because it could change adjacencies, such as where the doors are or where the bathrooms are.

Chuck Favazzo: To keep everything on the table, we could direct you to plan for any future field house.

Kseniya Slavsky would like the School Building Committee to discuss renovated versus ad/reno for the field house.

Jon Himmel asked how Article 97 boundaries are drawn. Can they be offset from the building by five feet? How do you go about calculating what is in and what is out?

Lorraine Finnegan explained that it is an acreage one to one swap. If we have 16.9 acres, we need to maintain 16.9 acres.

### **Public Comment:**

Nora Finch—73 Webb Street—I was disappointed that it sounds like people are leaning away from either the medium or large new field house and, therefore, the 200-meter track. So I wanted to ask you to make two comments along those lines. The first is Alan Levine had asked about how long temporary was, and I believe Lorraine had said that temporary was typically in the range of three to five years, but if I understood all of that conversation correctly, the field house would remain online. The current field house would remain online for four to six years, depending on what new high school construction got done. Then theoretically, depending on how the pricing goes, one could cut the cord and attach a new power system to temporarily keep it running for three to five years. Going back to Alan's point, that really is looking at eight to 10 years from the start of construction or from when the vote is taken. So I think we do not necessarily need to look at ten years from when the high school is completed, and the cord is cut, but eight to ten years delay on when the vote would have to be taken by the Town to approve spending more money for whatever version of the field house the Town was willing to entertain at that point in time. We're talking about expansion for the high school. I understand this would not work if we were talking about a reno or an ad/reno, but if we're talking about a new small field house, is it possible to design the new small field house such that, should the town have an appetite for a larger field house in the future? Have an obvious way to just add to that box so you're not replicating that bit that you have already built, just like we're talking about having that additional box that you tack on the side of the high school buildings. It seems like, given that the field house, by definition, is largely an empty box, tacking on a box on the side that would give you that larger space at some point in the future when the budget appetite is there would be beneficial because we would be talking about a 50 to 75-year lifespan, and that's a massive amount of time to be locked into the smaller size.

Dawn McKenna—9 Hancock Street—I appreciate hearing that we are now doing the pricing for all five field

house options. I think this is what everybody's been looking for so we can really understand what the costs are. Julie Hackett had stated that her job at the Summit was to deliver one project. While I agree that's true, that one project should meet all the needs of the entire school. MSBA has the requirements for financing that would require two votes with respect to the field house. Everyone agrees that the field house is needed. I appreciate the conversation I've been hearing today, really asking some good questions, but the reality is the field house was designed for programs with 28% of today's users, and that was only for the track program at the time. So delivering one project means that we need to allow the residents to decide on two questions, potentially. But I have been trying to get a clear answer to how to treat the field house in the PSR because my question is, does the committee have to include the new 72,000 square foot building of a new field house in the PSR in order to preserve the ability to decide on any of the five options? Also, I agree with Kseniya Slavsky that the work that has primarily been done to this point has been geared towards doing a reno or an ad/reno, but the discussion shows that there may be a win-win way to address the overall concern if we keep getting more information. So I just want to make sure we allow ourselves the opportunity to preserve all options in the PSR since that date's coming up so quickly, knowing that we'll have to continue to come to a conclusion. But I think getting those numbers that we're going to get in the middle of October, that's not going to give anybody enough time to really analyze what that means and I think we owe it to the community to really do that.

Olga Guttag, 273 Emerson Road: The current field house, when it is used by athletes from the school, is essentially connected to the locker rooms that are part of the high school, and the designs that I looked at didn't look to me that there was a planned connection of the field house to the high school. I believe that Dr. Hackett ought to talk to the physical education people and see whether losing the connection of the field house to the locker rooms would actually be detrimental to that program.

#### *Discuss Proposed November 12th SBC Retreat*

Christina Dell Angelo: We had originally thought that getting to a preferred option on the 12th might be a retreat day, just based on the experiences working with the SBC and what we went through when we narrowed down from the 18 options to the five. So after further review of the work plan from SMMA, we can see that we're progressing with the different decisions that have been made and the confirmations. So on next Monday's meeting, we're going to be looking for confirmation of choosing one new construction on the fields, as well as confirmation of choosing one phased-in-place option. Then from there, there will be a discussion about a decision between ad/reno or new construction, and a decision between building on fields or on the existing footprint, and then the confirmation from there on the 28th of October. So with all these decisions and confirmations being made before November 12th, I'm not sure that we actually need a retreat after all. I believe that we could just have a regularly scheduled meeting to choose the preferred option.

Joe Pato: I just want clarification. I thought I heard that we would choose between one field option and then a choice of one phased in-place option. But then I heard subsequent decision points, deciding between ad/reno and new that seems like we've already done that on the in-place portion, no?

Lorraine Finnegan: At the meeting next Monday, we're asking you to narrow down the six to two, so the three on the fields narrow down to your preferred on the fields and the phased-in-place, whether it be an ad/reno or new because you have three options over there to narrow it down to one of those three. So the goal is to come out of next Monday's meeting with two options.

Kseniya Slavsky: I agree that the work, decisions, and evaluations we're doing now will probably put us in a place to decide, in a not all-day fashion, on one option come November 12th. However, I think we should still plan to have that meeting be longer than a normal meeting to allow more space for public comment, and there have been prior requests to allow a public comment period to proceed in the meeting. That may be a good place and a good session to consider that, as well as some following. So maybe we reserve time for committee business and have a normal meeting like Christina Dell Angelo laid out, but I think we should leave more time for public comment. I do think that if there's a way that we can schedule these meetings so that more types of

people from the community would have an opportunity to join who might not be free during the business day or chasing kids around at the 5 p.m. hour, so if there's a way we can accommodate allowing more members of a community to be present, that may be a good session to do that.

Julie Hackett responded that we could consider a later afternoon meeting and poll the School Building Committee to determine what works best.

Julie Hackett: How well known is the narrowing of the six options to the abutters, and when is the next abutters meeting? How do we communicate with them as we narrow down because this is probably the most impactful part of the project regarding the neighbors? Does anyone have any updates on the next abutters meeting and communication?

Christina Dell Angelo and Mike Burton explained that they would like to hold the next abutters meeting on 10/16 but wanted to confirm if this would work as the Town is holding its regularly scheduled Financial Summit.

Julie Hackett, Joe Pato, and Carolyn Kosnoff agreed that Dore and Whittier are not required at the Summit on 10/16, and they may move forward with the abutters meeting on 10/16.

### **Reflections:**

Jon Himmel: I thought that the revised bloom was an excellent achievement, and it seemed that most of the committee favored it. We asked the designers to take bloom off the softball field, which they did successfully. It got me wondering if we were to try to avoid the football field with a revised bloom, whether that would run into the existing campus, and I think the answer is yes, but we seem to be thinking about these things in either reno in place, new in place, or new on the field, and there may actually be a two-phase on the field, and new on the existing campus that we may want to take a look at. The only reason I'm saying that is we've also heard and I'm not necessarily a subscriber of it, but trying to keep as many of the fields consolidated together has an advantage. I also believe that the speedier the project is, the more acceptable it is, and we want to stay away from the existing buildings as much as possible because it's disruptive. But by the same token, there may be a solution there that is worth exploring, or at least exploring enough to understand that it's not or is advantageous. I'll do a little bit of groundwork as best I can and then share it because I think the window is closing, and it's better to do this now before we find it to be really unpalatable.

Carolyn Kosnoff asked when we are expecting to see the revised cost estimates. I had expected that we would see that before we did any further narrowing, and if we're going to start narrowing next week, I'm just trying to understand that we're doing that without having those estimates.

Mike Burton stated that the cost estimates will be presented to the SBC on October 15th.

Lorraine Finnegan explained that we have had the narrowing on the original PSR timeline that was provided to the entire SBC.

Carolyn Kosnoff: If we are narrowing next week, then why would we be getting cost estimates for all 6 options? Also, I am fine with bypassing an entire day retreat on November 12th, but I do want to make sure that we leave enough time to give thoughts and feedback as we go down to this one last phase here because I think it's going to be really important for people to hear the reasoning, and I want to make sure we leave time for everybody to give their comments and feedback.

Mike Burton explained that the MSBA requires us to price all six options, so we are relying on the PDP pricing for the Monday meeting. If we get something earth-shattering back on October 15th, then we can reevaluate.

Julie Hackett: How do we treat the field house in Schematic Design? I think the question we heard from the

public was, should the 72,000 square feet be included for it to go forward?

Mike Burton: The whole point of the November 12th meeting is to tell the design team the one option that will be further defined through schematic design. So ultimately, we need to tell them we may come back and do something in the future for a field house and kind of work around this area. That's okay, but ultimately, we're picking the option. We're picking what's included, so we already know the district offices are included. We need to know if a renovation of a field house or an addition/renovation of a field house will be included. From there, we go on to eight months of a truly deep dive into schematic design.

Lorraine Finnegan: If the School Building Committee tells us you need to plan for a 72,000-square-foot field house in the future, we will show a 72,000-square-foot box and design the building to assume that that box will be there in the future. If that box doesn't go forward, you could lose out on other ways that we would design the building or other ways we designed the site that might be beneficial in the future because we will be leaving this space.

Kseniya Slavsky asked if we are having an October community forum and what the agenda is for that forum. I would like to be very careful about the possibility that we will receive new estimates right before the forum without sufficient time to digest them.

Lorraine Finnegan responded that the next community forum is on October 15th, and the School Building Committee should receive the cost estimates by October 9th.

Mike Burton responded to Kseniya Slavsky. The Communications Working Group, which you are a member of, recommended that we push it back a little bit but due to all the other meetings with stakeholder groups, that was not possible, so we landed back on 10/15.

Julie Hackett explained that the Communications Working Group Meeting can discuss this and bring back some recommendations to the SBC.

Dan Voss explained that our experience with the police station and other facilities around Town, where we started to consider the visual aspect and the kind of structures we needed for solar at the end, was very painful. At this point, we are going to start moving buildings around to provide for concerns around playing fields that are going to ultimately be in the plan. But there's a question as to whether or not we disturb them or not in the short term. That could mean a 20% shortfall because it adjusts the parking layout, and that means we can't get as much efficiency as we'd like with generation, then we need to have that discussion now before we get the public locked in on a certain orientation or a certain visual aspect.

Jon Himmel: I'm just reflecting on this estimate process and the activities that are involved. The estimators have had the material for a while, they will submit their estimates, and then the team will sit down and go through the reconciliation and vetting process. I am going out on a limb here, but I suspect the vetting and reconciliation process will not be a huge continental shift of prices, and I'm just wondering whether, at a summary level, it would be safe to share what you're learning with the caveat that it's pre-reconcile, which would allow us to have a sense of whether this scheme is dramatically more expensive or not. I think cost is a very important piece when we're making any sort of evaluation, and if it's just a matter of following schedule activities that have been established and accepted, as opposed to modifying and understanding that it's still not fully baked, it might help us have a little bit more confidence about what we're doing while you do go through the vetting and reconciliation. So I'm just suggesting it, take a look at it and see if we can perhaps benefit from some early warning.

Andrew Baker: I think we should keep something of the retreat on the 12th. It does not need to be the whole day, but maybe we can find a balance point there. I think we want to do our due diligence with the time on the 12th.

Julie Hackett: We will send out a poll about availability for November 12th and look at some of what Kseniya Slavsky suggested about maybe bumping it up a little later. We will also be looking for a communication on the 10/16 abutters meeting, and the Communications Working Group will discuss what happens, if anything, between October 9th and the 16th. Then, a more prolonged discussion around reno and ad/reno will be held at a future meeting.

Kseniya Slavsky: The groups that were advocating for bigger field houses talked about some private partnership money potentially being available. I don't know what that looks like. I don't know if that's something that we're able to consider, but I just wanted to throw it into some future agenda.

Kseniya Slavsky motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:18 p.m. Joe Pato seconded the motion. Kathleen Lenihan took a roll call vote, passed 8-0.