

3.3.1

Introduction

- A. Overview of Process since PDP Submission..... 7
- B. Summary of Updated Project Schedule.....11
- C. Summary of Final Evaluations of Existing Conditions.....13
- D. Summary of Final Evaluation of Alternatives.....14
- E. Summary of District’s Preferred Solution18
- F. MSBA PDP Review and District Response 25

3.3.1 Introduction

A. Overview of Process since PDP Submission

Lexington High School is a public high school located at 251 Waltham Street, Lexington, Massachusetts that supports grades 9-12 with a current enrollment of 2,419 students.

The high school occupies part of a larger campus that is approximately 56.5 acres. Along with the high school building, at-grade parking, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and outdoor plazas and classrooms associated with the school resides on the southern portion of campus on approximately 28-acres. The northern portion of the campus includes several athletic and recreation facilities including baseball diamonds, track, tennis courts, football field, playground, and an outdoor pool.

The campus is bound by Worthen Road to the west and Waltham Street and residential properties to the south, east, and north. Several wetland resources exist on the site along with an underground drainage culvert that runs through the site containing discharge from off-site and on-site wetlands as well as runoff from the campus.

The Town of Lexington submitted the Preliminary Design Program (PDP) submission on May 31, 2024 and since that time the School Building Committee (SBC) has met almost weekly and the Permanent Building Committee (PBC) monthly to review the alternatives and narrow the options from the nineteen (19) considered in PDP to five (5), then six (6) as one alternative was added to account for additional community feedback, then two (2) and finally to the preferred option.

The SBC has endeavored to maintain a public, transparent and open process. All meetings were recorded and promptly uploaded to the Project website.



The design team created a milestone graphic to ensure the SBC as well as the community understood the agendas for each meeting and when the SBC would be required to take critical votes. That timeline is attached to this section.

At the outset of the PSR phase the SBC held a community workshop at the existing High School on June 6. The purpose of this workshop was to engage the Community in a hands-on discussion about the project including gaining a better understanding of the existing conditions of the facility; the impediments to Teaching and Learning and the proposed alternatives. The design team hosted 15 stations where multiple plans, diagrams and physical model pieces were available to the community to manipulate to gain a better understanding of the scale and scope. At the end of the session a community member from each station provided a report out of what their station had learned and what additional questions they wanted the SBC to consider moving forward.

Three (3) community meetings were held during the PSR phase (and 5 during the PDP phase) to gain feedback and insight from the community on the alternatives, cost, features etc. of the proposed project. These meetings were held on August 14th, September 18th and October 30th.

The topics included:

- 8/14 a discussion about the scope; building location and impacts and community values followed by Q&A,
- 9/18. Current Design Option update, Costs of Options as well as the cost of doing nothing and a community survey followed by Q&A,
- 10/30 included an overview of how the option selection was reduced from 6 to 2, overall project costs, student enrollment considerations, results from the previous community survey followed by Q&A.



Please rank your ideal construction approach by dragging the six dots the right (1=favorite/3=least favorite)		
Ranking	Average ranking	Answer
#1	1.36	New Construction on the Fields
#2	2.05	New Construction in Place
#3	2.58	Addition/Renovation in Place

The survey results presented on October 30th included over 734 participants, provided 551 comments and 16,155 ratings are summarized below:

On November 4th the SBC held two (2) retreat style meetings. The goal of these meetings was to ensure everyone has sufficient time to address any lingering questions, ensure that all members present received the same information at the same time as well as understood the needs of each group in anticipation for the preferred alternative vote on November 12th.

The afternoon session was primarily for the SBC and the Recreation Committee and allowed members to rotate through three stations

- Field House and Athletics Schedule
- New construction on fields versus build in place
- Enrollment and MBTA Zoning

Members of the public attended and rotated through the three stations also, listening to the discussions. At the conclusion of the afternoon workshop the group shared what they had learned and raised any questions or concerns which had not been addressed.

The Evening session was primarily for the Town Boards – Select Board, Capital Expenditures Committee, Appropriation Committee, School Committee, Recreation Committee and the Town Manager.

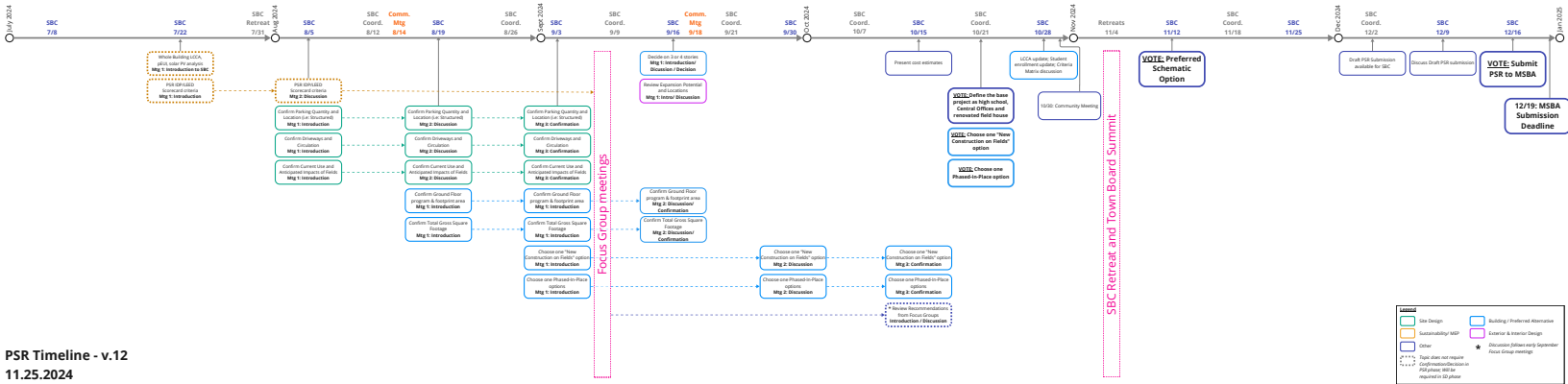
These members rotated through four stations:

- Cost Considerations
- Financial Implications for Taxpayers
- New construction on fields versus build in place and the challenges with renovations, phasing and delays
- Enrollment and MBTA Zoning

Consistent with the process, members of the public attended and rotated through the four stations listening to the discussions.

At the conclusion of the evening workshop the group shared what they had learned and raised any questions or concerns which had not been addressed.





B. Summary of Updated Project Schedule

The project schedule outlines the following milestone dates:

<i>Preliminary Design Program Submission to MSBA</i>	05.31.2024
<i>Preferred Schematic Submission to MSBA</i>	12.19.2024
<i>MSBA Board Meeting approval to proceed to Schematic Design</i>	02.26.2025
<i>Schematic Design Submission</i>	08.28.25
<i>MSBA Board Meeting for Project Scope and Budget</i>	10.29.2025
<i>Projected Town of Lexington vote to approve funding</i>	11.30.2025*

Final Town Meeting vote to be determined based on Town Meeting Schedule *

A copy of the current Project Schedule is included at the end of this section.



Proposed Construction Schedule

The following page includes the proposed design and construction schedule. The proposed construction schedule has been developed based on MSBA Board Approval and submission dates, standard permitting and bidding schedule, and consecutive construction schedule. This schedule also assumes the start of Schematic Design by the Design Team immediately following the submission of the Preferred Schematic Report.

Task	Start	Finish	Notes
PSR Submission		12/16/2024	Submit PSR to MSBA
Schematic Design	1/6/2024	8/28/2024	
MSBA FAS Board Meeting	1/15/2025	1/28/2025	waiting on confirmation of date
SD Estimate	6/4/2025	7/8/2025	
SD Estimate Reconciliation/Project Budget	7/9/2025	7/15/2025	
SD Submission		8/28/2025	Submit SD to MSBA
MSBA BOD Vote to Approve		10/29/2025	
MSBA PS&B Agreement	10/18/2025	11/5/2025	
Town Meeting Approval	11/3/2025	11/28/2025	
Debt Exclusion Approval	12/1/2025	12/29/2025	
Project Funding Agreement	12/30/2025	2/2/2026	
Design Development	9/1/2026	4/28/2026	~8 months
Construction Documents	4/7/2026	3/17/2026	~12 months
Bidding (includes potential early release packages to Final GMP)	4/8/2026	4/21/2027	~12 months
Construction Administration	5/6/2026	10/17/2030	~48 months
Target Move In Date	6/1/2029	7/12/2029	~1 month
Closeout	10/18/2030	12/18/2031	~14 months

C. Summary of Final Evaluations of Existing Conditions

During the PSR phase the design team and their consultants conducted the following items which expanded upon the existing conditions evaluations:

- Finalized the topographical survey.
- Revised the Wetlands report.
- Submitted the Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation (ANRAD) and received the Order of Resource Area Delineations (ORAD) from the Lexington Conversation Commission.
- Reviewed field usage information in detail with Lexington Recreation and Lexington High School Athletics to gain a deeper understanding of potential schedule impacts as well as future needs.
- Conducted a Historical Assessment of the existing building.
- Conducted a Geothermal Test well.
- Created additional detail on the existing building accessibility to support proposed addition renovation alternatives.

More detail on these and the reports are included in Section 3.3.2

D. Summary of Final Evaluation of Alternatives

Construction Alternatives at PDP

During the Preliminary Design Program phase, the project design team developed a total of nineteen (19) design Alternatives to explore opportunities and constraints of a wide range of construction approaches and siting possibilities either on or adjacent to the existing Lexington High School building. Variations of building height were explored in order to test how compact the building footprint could effectively be, versus how many floors would be appropriate for the school to navigate. ***Highlighted Alternatives were selected by the SBC to advance into the PSR stage of the Feasibility Study.**

01 Code Upgrade

A.1 - Renovation of all existing buildings on two floors

02 Renovation and Addition

***B.1 – Gut renovation of math and science buildings with major 4-story phased-in-place additions**

B.2 – Gut renovation of math and science buildings with major single, one-phase addition on athletic fields

B.3 - Gut renovation of C and D buildings with major, 4-story phased-in-place additions

03 New Construction

C.1a – All new construction on athletic fields with east-west linear massing, 3-stories

C.1b - All new construction on athletic fields with east-west linear massing, 4-stories

C.1c – All new construction on athletic fields with east-west linear massing, 5-stories

***C.1d – Similar to Alt C.1b, 4-stories reshaped for better scale and site relationships**

C.2a – All new construction on athletic fields with west-facing academic bar, 3-stories

***C.2b – All new construction on athletic fields with west-facing academic bar, 4-stories**

C.3a – All new construction on athletic fields with slender academic bar massing, 3-stories

C.4a – All new construction on athletic fields with “village courtyard” concept, 3-stories

C.4b – All new construction on athletic fields with “village courtyard” concept, 4-stories

C.4c – All new construction on athletic fields with compact “village” concept, 4-stories

C.5a – All new construction on athletic fields with radial “bloom” concept, 3-stories

***C.5b – All new construction on athletic fields with radial “bloom” concept, 4-stories**

C.6 – Phased construction with radial “bloom” concept, building toward Worthen Road, 4-stories

04 New Construction – Phased

D.1 – Phased construction with “village courtyard” concept, incorporating large new Field House

***D.2 – Phased construction, 4-stories similar to Alt B.1 except in all new construction**

Construction Alternative Selection for PSR

The design team developed each of the five remaining Alternatives (and at the request of the SBC, added a sixth called B.4) during the Preferred Schematic Report phase, with opportunities and constraints of each option being presented and discussed in many forums, including the School Building Committee, Permanent Building Committee, Select Board, Sustainable Lexington Committee, Recreation Committee, Appropriation Committee and several Community Forums, among others. The following is a summary of how those Alternatives were evaluated.

All project costs listed below include the New High School, Central Office and 48,000 GFA Field House Renovation-Addition alternate as decided by the SBC.

01 Renovation and Addition

B.1 – Gut renovation of math and science buildings (Buildings G & J) with major 4-story phased-in-place additions
Project Cost: \$713M

Many in the District voiced interest in understanding the potential benefits of a Renovation and Addition scenario. The resulting study was a means to understand whether A) taking advantage of existing infrastructure would help to possibly keep costs lower than in a new construction approach, and B) if reducing site development scope or eliminating permanent changes to existing recreation field locations could be possible by constraining the development footprint of the building.

The B.1 Alternative represented a “minimal” approach to renovation that would look for appropriate space types to occupy the 1960’s-era structures in new, thoughtful ways.

However, through study of the physical constraints of existing undersized structural grids and low floor-to-floor heights, neither of which are conducive to modern educational environments, it became clear that an approach involving renovations would be unlikely to resolve overcrowding in an economical and educationally appropriate manner.

The design team was additionally directed at mid-phase to add Renovation and Addition Alternative B.4, which might explore possible benefits of renovating even more square footage of the existing facilities than in the B.1 option.

B.4 – Gut renovation of Buildings B, C, D and E with major 3-story phased-in-place additions
Project Cost: \$715M

While the physical constraints of existing structures persist in this option, many examples of disruptive conditions that would occur at each phase of construction were also elaborated in more detail. These included construction-related noise, vibrations and distraction, variable access and egress patterns, temporary loss of spatial connectivity and loss of spaces. Several important spaces such as the Auditorium would be unusable for an extended period, while important infrastructure such as the main kitchen would need to be replaced with temporary facilities.

In the opinion of the SBC, the particularly invasive type of disruption to the lives of students and staff associated with a Renovation and Addition approach was less desirable than a Phased New Construction.

The latter would at least not be burdened by *permanent* compromises to the types of adjacencies and to the high degree of connectivity described in the Educational Program as essential to the vision for a renewed LHS. See Alternative D.2 below as the sole option that would be considered on the existing LHS building site.

02 New Construction on Fields

C.1d – All new construction on athletic fields with east-west linear massing, 4-stories
Project Cost: \$660M

C.2b – All new construction on athletic fields with west-facing academic bar, 4-stories
Project Cost: \$659M

C.5b – All new construction on athletic fields with radial “bloom” concept, 4-stories
Project Cost: \$662M

While all three of the New Construction on Fields Alternatives were shown through plan diagramming to be capable of delivering highly functional educational environments with interdisciplinary adjacencies, opportunities for collaboration, and places for general health, wellness and respite, the C.5b “Bloom” option demonstrates several advantages over the C.1d “Branch” and C.2b “Braid” Alternatives. The clearest advantage of C.5b is the ability of its compact plan to occupy the very center of the available site, which allowed more of the lighted field facilities, namely C1 and C7, to maintain their immediate proximity to the Center Rec Facility on the west end of the site.

This benefit was tempered by “Bloom’s” new proximity to the existing school as it was pushed eastward, especially where the LABBB Special Education program is currently housed – a condition that will require sensitivity and potential mitigation as design advances. The massing of the C.5 “Bloom” Alternative best responds to the scale of its surroundings by presenting the smaller end walls of its wings to the neighborhood rather than the broad side elevations of the C.1d and C.2b options. Additionally, the ability of the form of “Bloom” to elegantly subdivide exterior space around the building for diverse functions such as entrances, outdoor classrooms, loading area, and gardens was a distinguishing feature.

03 New Construction – Phased

D.2 – Phased construction, 4-stories similar to Alt B.1 except all new construction
Project Cost: \$734M

As the most desirable of the three options considered to be located on the existing LHS footprint, (the others being B.1 and B.4) the D.2 “Weave” Alternative provides a solution whose final conditions could rival the educational benefits of an all new building.

However, higher costs, a longer schedule, the need for temporary modular classrooms, the risk of unforeseen conditions, and invasive, persistent disruption during construction of the D.2 “Weave” Alternative were cited by the School Building Committee as reasons for ultimately not selecting this approach.

Field House Alternatives

The PSR phase included studies to support the SBC's consideration of whether to renovate the existing field house building or to plan for a larger field house in the future. The design team developed five options, as described in Section 3.3.3, which were accompanied by relative costs.

- Renovation only (34,400 GFA / \$27,000,000)
- Renovation-Addition (48,000 GFA / \$41,000,000)
- New Construction (36,000 GFA / \$38,000,000)
- New Construction (60,000 GFA / \$60,000,000)
- New Construction (72,000 GFA / \$71,000,000)

Given the relative costs presented, the SBC decided to include the 48,000 GFA Renovation-Addition field house in the high school project, as the field house is a critical component of the High School physical education program, High School athletics and Community use and the addition provides an opportunity to address growing needs for indoor activity space across many disciplines and programs.

Note that the project costs for B.1, B.4, C.1d, C.2b, C.5b and D.2 listed above include the \$41,000,000 cost for the Field House Renovation-Addition alternate.

E. Summary of District's Preferred Solution

On November 12, 2024 the School Building Committee selected the New Construction on Fields approach represented by the C.5b “Bloom” Alternative as the Preferred Solution.

Additionally, the SBC voted to include the 48,000 GFA Renovation and Addition Field House option as part of the base project for Schematic Design.

In summary, there are four major criteria in which the Bloom approach offers clear advantages:

Educational Excellence – provides optimized educational space and adjacencies to foster high degrees of collaboration and innovation.

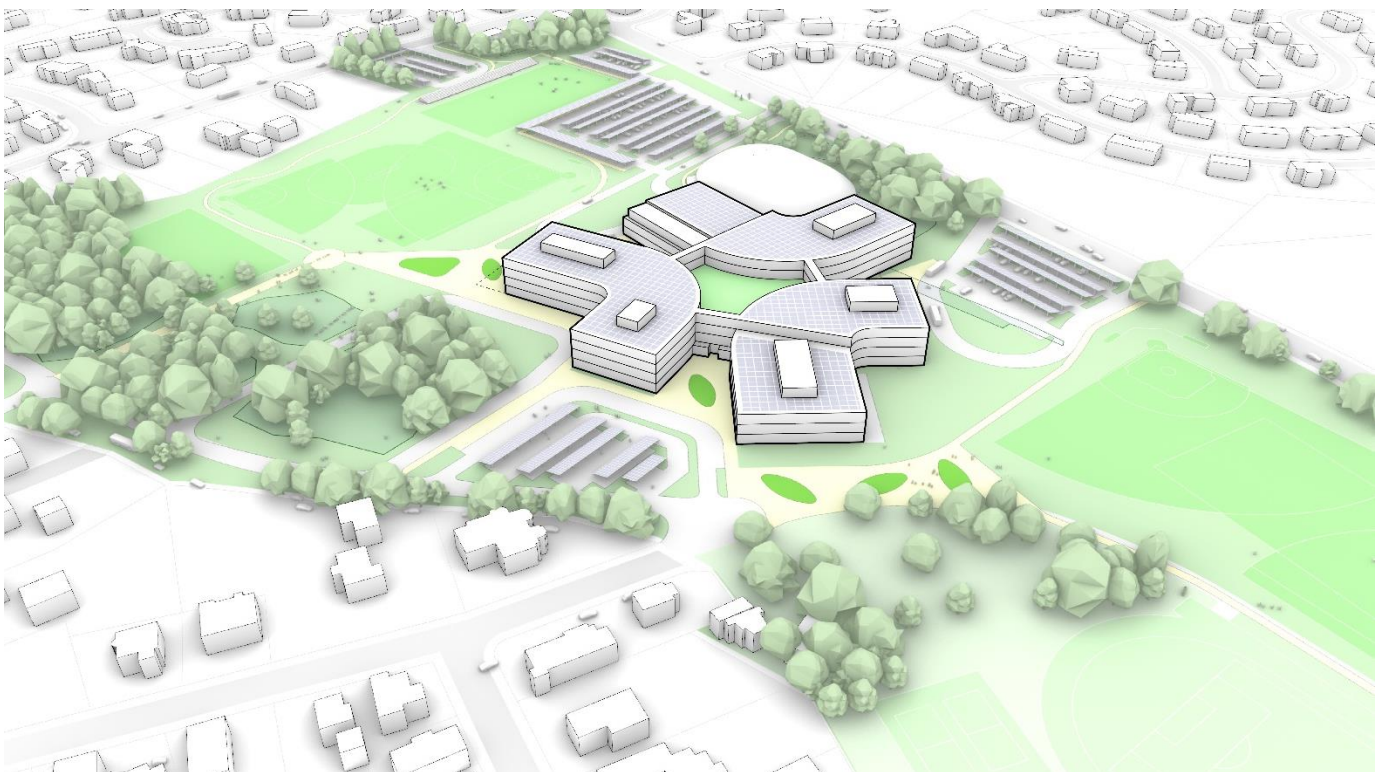
Cost Effectiveness – The new construction approach costs significantly less than building in place.

Efficiency of Construction – a reduced timeline has positive impacts on both cost and disruptions.

Minimized Disruption - the Bloom approach, which allows the existing school to operate without interruption, provides a more suitable environment for learning and working during construction.

In its Position Statement, the School Building Committee said “Bloom represents the best path forward for the Lexington High School Building Project. This option balances educational excellence, fiscal responsibility, and community considerations, ensuring a bright future for Lexington students and the town as a whole. We are confident that, together, we can make this vision a reality.”

[A copy of the SBC's position statement is attached to this section.](#)



Lexington High School Building Project: Position Statement

The School Building Committee (SBC) has worked diligently over the last two years to develop a plan for a new Lexington High School that meets the current and future needs of students and staff while being fiscally responsible and addressing community concerns. After thoroughly evaluating options and gathering feedback, the SBC strongly recommends option **C.5b Bloom** as the preferred design for a new Lexington High School.

This decision represents the culmination of extensive research, analysis, and community engagement.

How Did We Get Here

We began by assessing the condition of the existing high school facility. The complex was originally designed to accommodate 1,850 students. Current enrollment is 2,419 — leading to densely packed classrooms and overcrowded common spaces. Several major pieces of infrastructure are at the end of their useful life, and there are serious expensive code upgrades required to keep the building safe for students and staff. For these reasons, we determined renovation alone was not a viable option. Furthermore, a renovation would not meet the educational standards required to maintain Lexington as a leader of academic excellence.

We then engaged with the community through public forums, surveys, and meetings to gather input on design priorities.

Based on community feedback and the research completed by the project team, a total of 19 massing studies were created and considered as options for a new school. These options were carefully evaluated based on educational program needs, cost, construction timeline, and community impact. After months of deliberation, which included gathering additional feedback from the community, the SBC narrowed the choices to two: Bloom and Weave.

Choosing the Preferred Option

Educational Excellence: Both Bloom and Weave result in a new building designed from the ground up to meet modern educational needs. This allows for optimal classroom layouts, improved adjacencies between departments, and flexible spaces that support innovative teaching and learning practices.

Why Bloom?

Bloom emerged as the superior option due to several key advantages:

- **Cost-Effectiveness:** Bloom is projected to cost \$648 million¹, significantly less than Weave's price tag of \$720 million. A project of this magnitude requires the Town to prioritize any opportunity to reduce costs.

¹ A note about estimated costs - these have been developed by third party estimating firms as a means to compare the relative cost between concepts. They include the full project costs including ground preparation, field reconstruction, parking, central-office/expansion space, and renovation of the existing fieldhouse. The estimators caution that these are only estimates of what a construction bid would be for a project midpoint of 2028.

- **Efficiency:** Bloom offers a shorter construction timeline of 4.5 years, compared to Weave's 6.5 years. This reduced timeline means less disruption to the school community and a faster path to a new, state-of-the-art facility.
- **Minimized Disruption:** Bloom's construction plan involves building on some of the fields, allowing the existing school to remain fully operational until the new building is ready. When compared to Weave, this eliminates the need for disruptive phased construction and modular classrooms. The disruption associated with Weave is significant, involving multiple moves, managing travel corridors through construction areas, coaxing end-of-life mechanical systems to continue working under the stress of temporary and changing connections, and the loss of use of the cafeteria, gym, and auditorium for lengthy periods. Choosing Bloom ensures a more stable and consistent learning environment for students, safer working conditions for staff, and reduces the risk of expensive temporary repairs for the aging mechanical systems in the old facility.

Addressing Community Concerns

We have heard concerns from the community about the Bloom option, primarily regarding the following:

- **Article 97 and Athletic Field Relocation:** Bloom requires Article 97 legislation and necessitates relocating some athletic fields. This swap of recreation land for school sites is a common practice in Massachusetts, where unused land is simply unavailable. The SBC acknowledges these concerns and is committed to working closely

with the community to minimize the impact. We have engaged in extensive field use planning with representatives from the Recreation Department, Recreation Committee, and Lexington Public Schools Athletics to ensure we can accommodate current and future athletic needs. We have also explored various fieldhouse options to provide additional indoor space for athletics and community activities. It is worth restating that any recreation areas displaced by this project will be reconstructed on the land currently occupied by the existing high school. The cost of this reconstruction of fields and the amount of time it will take are both built into the current estimates for the price of the project and the estimated construction timeline.

- **Financial Burden:** Even with its lower cost, we recognize the significant investment the Bloom design represents. However, we believe that this investment is essential in providing our students with the safe facilities needed to deliver a modern educational program. Further, this investment represents a modest premium over simply addressing the critical infrastructure needs of the aging high school and the additional costs of reducing overcrowding. The cost of inaction would be significant in the short term and far greater in the long run, both in terms of educational quality and the increasing costs of maintaining an outdated facility.
- **MBTA Zoning and Enrollment Projections:** We share the community's concern about the unknowns of future growth and changes in enrollment. There are, however, practical limits to the size of a single high school facility. The challenges of operating a high school do not scale well with an enrollment in excess of 3,000 students. The Bloom concept includes opportunities for expansion

that meet and exceed these limits. In addition, the School Master Planning Advisory Committee is revising strategies for accommodating growth when that growth exceeds the maximum desirable size for a Lexington high school.

We have also formally requested reconsideration from the MSBA regarding enrollment projections. We have asked that some of the contemplated flexible expansion space be deemed eligible for MSBA financial support.

Alternative Proposals:

We appreciate the community's thorough engagement in the project thus far. The time and commitment spent by some residents to put forth alternative proposals is commendable, and we are grateful for their interest in finding the best solution for Lexington Public Schools and the community. However, the proposal they have put forward, which involves renovating a portion of the existing building and pursuing a phased construction approach, is not practical. Analysis by the Permanent Building Committee and the rest of the Project Team determined renovating only part of the existing building would be costly, disruptive, and ultimately prove insufficient to address the educational needs of our students. A phased approach, while recommended by some, would lead to extended construction timelines, logistical challenges, and increased costs. By phasing or delaying this project, we also risk losing our opportunity to work with the Massachusetts School Building Authority and taking advantage of the grant funding that comes with that partnership.

Conclusion

The SBC firmly believes that Bloom represents the best path forward for the Lexington High School Building Project. This option balances educational excellence, fiscal responsibility, and community considerations, ensuring a bright future for Lexington students and the town as a whole. We are confident that, together, we can make this vision a reality.

F. MSBA PDP Review and District Response

Lexington submitted the PDP to the MSBA on May 31, 2024, and received a response on August 14, 2024.

Lexington returned their responses on September 13, 2024, and a copy of those responses are included in the Appendix.

All items specifically noted for inclusion in the PSR have been incorporated into this report.

A copy of the PowerPoint for the Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (FAS) is attached separately to this report.