

School Building Committee Coordination Meeting
Monday, February 5, 2024, from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
Remote Meeting

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

Members from Dore & Whittier: Jason Boone (absent); Steve Brown (absent); Mike Burton; Mike Cox (absent); Chrsitina Dell Angelo; Erica Downs, Brad Dore (absent); Elias Grijalva; Rachel Rincon (absent); Chris Schaffner

Members from SMMA: Brian Black (absent); Martine Dion (absent); Lorraine Finnegan; Anthony Jimenez (absent); Anoush Krafian (absent); Rosemary Park (absent); Erin Prestileo; and Matt Rice

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

The School Building Committee Chair, Kathleen Lenihan, began the meeting at 12:03 p.m.

Mike Burton reviewed module 3, the feasibility phase. We are working on the preliminary design program (PDP), which will be submitted to the MSBA at the end of May 2024. This document is typically 1,000 plus pages, and it looks primarily at the existing conditions, which will be looked at today. It also includes the educational program and the space summary, which is what we think the overall size of the building will be, along with conceptual cost estimates that will be used to compare the options.

Julie Hackett: We will have a student join the next meeting on February 12th to give a full Student-School Building Committee update. I had students work on owners' project managers' (OPM) roles during the last meeting on February 1, 2024.

Lorraine Finnegan: Today's goal is to give you a high-level overview of our analysis of the existing conditions at LHS. After this meeting, we will send this report to you all for review and get your feedback to us through Dore & Whittier by Monday. We expect to make any changes or comments you've asked for clarification at the School Building Committee meeting on February 26. We will also ask you to vote to accept the existing conditions report during the meeting on the 26th. You'll have about 20 days between reviewing it, giving us feedback, and us making changes to when we'll send it out again. We'll send it out before the 26th so you can see a revised version, but to ensure people understand the expectation.

Lorraine Finnegan reviewed the existing conditions PowerPoint with the Committee. The SMMA Team of Architects and Engineers walked through the building for two full days on December 19 and December 20, 2023. The LHS campus is 56.5 acres, and the high school portion is 28 acres. No structures of the high school are listed under Historic Places with the State or local inventories

Building Investigation: Architecture

- Exterior building envelope is in varying states of condition, from fair to poor.
- Post-2000 buildings are in better shape but beginning to break down.
- Pre-2000 building enclosures perform very poorly due to lack of insulated wall and window assemblies, and thermal bridging of exposed concrete structure.
- Weathered and damaged masonry was observed on all buildings.
- Flashing and seals at doors, roof edges and windows are deteriorated.
- Roofing and drain systems are failing on several buildings, leading to ponding, leaks and constant

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patching efforts by maintenance staff.

- Interior finish systems are dated, damaged and provide generally poor acoustics.
- Door hardware, VCT flooring and ACT ceilings need constant repair.
- Elevators are outdated and undersized.
- Stair railings and guardrails do not meet current codes.
- Casework and furniture do not provide adequate accessibility and flexibility.

Building Investigation: Structure

- Mainly cast in place concrete with some steel framing
- Field House is geodesic dome with wood members and steel connectors
- Ground floor is mainly a reinforced concrete slab over a crawl space.
 - Some slabs on grade exhibit settlement.
- Generally the superstructure appears to be in good condition
- Expansion joints between building wings allow for seismically separate buildings
- Since original construction, code requirements have changed
 - Snow loads increased
 - Wind loads increased
 - Seismic analysis introduced
- Any proposed renovations or additions will be evaluated and could require structural upgrades and reinforcement.
- Mechanical – extensive update in 2000 but equipment is at/near end of useful life
 - Gas-fired Steam system serves A,B,C,D,E; Gas-fired Hot Water serves G,J,F,H
 - Most classrooms served from Unit Ventilators for heating and ventilation
 - VRF heat pumps provide heating and cooling of Library and modulars
 - Selected air conditioning of some spaces from rooftop units or split systems
 - Controls are a mix of pneumatic and digital
- Plumbing / Fire Protection
 - Fixtures do not meet the water saving requirements of LEED certification
 - Piping and valving does not meet current lead-free regulations
 - Buildings are sprinklered throughout (except Building F and Modular Building L)
- Electrical – normal and life safety distribution gear replaced & upgraded in the 2000s
 - Overall good working condition. Expected remaining serviceable life: 10-20 years
 - All lighting has been retrofitted to LED with automatic lighting controls and dimmers.
 - Does not meet current energy code requirements
- Minimal electrical capacity and physical space available for future growth

Site Observations:

- 450 Parking Spaces. Pavement is in generally fair to poor condition throughout.
- 32 Buses, 20-30 LABBB taxi/rideshare vehicles, 6 LABBB vans. Afternoon pickup is as well coordinated as possible, but there is a tremendous amount of strain on the site and on the faculty to safely choreograph the quantity of vehicles
- The site contains pockets of Urban Forest to the north and east of the existing building and to the west of the field house. The mature forest vegetation appears to be in good condition. Urban forest and other existing trees will be preserved as much as possible.
- Current parent drop off/pick up is accessed from Waltham Street and Park Drive. Circulation appears sufficient, but numerous conflicts with students were observed in both locations.
- Current bus drop off/pick up is accessed from Worthen Road. The quantity of vehicles in the relatively restricted area causes a great deal of vehicle and student conflicts.
- Outdoor student quad at heart of building is heavily used, but is in fair to poor condition.
- Current athletic facilities and recreation assets are all in good to very good condition, and are heavily

used by physical education, the athletics programs, and the community.

Wetlands Identification:

- Wetland Scientist completed field work on 12/15
- Survey team added exact flag locations
 - Survey expected 2/16
- Recommendation from Conservation Commission to File an ANRAD (Abbreviated notice of Resource Area Delineation)

Geotech Exploration: Field work completed 12/21 & 12/22

- Survey added exact boring locations – survey expected 2/16
- Preliminary report due 2/16

Findings:

- 13 borings completed
- 10 extended to 20-30 ft deep
- 3 encountered refusal at 6-7 ft
- Generally granular fill over native very soft peat/organic deposits
- Preliminary Analysis:
 - Ground Improvements or
 - Deep foundations necessary
 - Shallow groundwater

Traffic Study: Field work completed 12/14 & 12/15. Existing Conditions report complete.

Findings:

- Crash data reviewed indicated crash rates
- lower than District 4 and statewide averages
- Sight distances are sufficient at vehicular drives
- 89% parking utilization
- Signalized intersections studied operate at an acceptable level of service

Phase 1 Environmental Assessment: Field work completed 12/26 & 12/27

Findings:

- Site is not within any FEMA flood zones
- Site is not located in a National heritage Endangered Species program
- Several former and existing underground storage tanks (UST) observed/documentated
- A Phase II Environmental Assessment has been recommended including groundwater and soils sampling.
- Radon testing was conducted and levels are very low, no mitigation is required

Kathleen Lenihan: When you say the superstructure is in good order. Can you explain what superstructure means?

Lorraine Finnegan: Yes, that would be steel columns and roof beams. If you think of your house, it is the rafters, the floor joists, and the exterior walls.

Kseniya Slavsky: I understand that significant deep-ground improvements would be needed to construct a new building but are those ground conditions negatively impacting the current structural stability of the existing

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structure?

Lorraine Finnegan: I don't believe they're impacting the current structural stability, but because we saw a number of slab-on-grade cracks, we're relating that to the soil conditions underneath. So it's not an imminent issue if that's what you're asking, I want to be clear on that.

Kseniya Slavsky: If a renovation were to take place, would there be ground improvements needed?

Lorraine Finnegan: That will be one of the significant conversations we have with our structural engineer because how will we make grand improvements to the existing building? We need to have a plan in place so you address the cracks. It is a maintenance issue as you move forward and how to manage them. The building has been in operation for a long time, and those cracks are not posing a problem right now. But in the long term, is the load of the building going to increase more than what it is today under renovation? If we take down current materials and put up new ones, are we increasing the load on those slabs, and will that have a negative effect? That all has to be considered as the alternatives, so when we provide the report, the section on the alternatives will have a section on structure and recommendations on what needs to be done under each scenario, including cost.

Andrew Baker questioned how the 89% parking utilization number came about as depending on what is going on during a particular day, that number could be higher or lower.

Erin Prestileo explained that this data was gathered after arrival on December 14, 2023. This is to serve as a high-level summary. Still, we are going to map out all the existing parking and classify it, and connect the dots between the quantities and where they are located on the site with what our consultant found because, to your point, Andrew, this will serve as a basis for developing the parking program for the project.

Alan Levine: Your diagram shows that the pond between the science building and the athletic fields is not green. Could you explain that?

Erin Prestileo: I imagine it is stormwater management for the site only. It is just a detention basin.

Alan Levine: Some people have thought that if we build a new building, it could go in that area. What is the significance of that?

Erin Prestileo: We won't know for sure until we get our wetland resources confirmed with the Conservation Commission. We can replicate wetlands in other areas of the site. So there's a critical threshold where anything below 5000 square feet of bordering vegetated wetland can be permitted under local regulations. Anything over 5000 square feet of bordering vegetated wetland requires state review and is a NEPA review threshold. We will be keeping an eye on that for sure as we develop options as far as wetland impacts go.

Kseniya Slavsky asked if oil exports from the site are definite or just a possibility.

Erin Prestileo explained that she mentioned soil characterization in the event soil needed to be exported, but it is still too early to tell. But if it is required, that would be a big cost.

Kathleen Lenihan asked about the timeline for hearing back from the Conservation Commission on the LHS wetlands.

Erin Prestileo: We expect the final survey by mid-next week or the 14th.

Lorraine Finnegan told the committee that the existing conditions report will be shared today. They will need all their feedback by Monday, February 12, 2024. The School Building Committee will vote to accept the existing conditions report on February 26, 2024, because it will form the basis for all renovation and addition options.

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Kathleen Lenihan will ensure that all the School Committee members receive this report as well.

Jon Himmel: I was looking at the evaluation criteria - was that developed solely by Dore & Whittier, or was the Architect part of it?

Mike Burton explained that it was a group effort.

Lorraine Finnegan: We will review the draft space summary at the next School Building Committee meeting. This uses MSBA's spreadsheet, which is their method of characterizing space. We have documented all the existing space within the existing building, and we have determined how many classrooms you need for specific subjects, as well as filling in different types of spaces such as the gymnasium and fieldhouse. We have developed a few space summaries as there have been many discussions around the field house. One shows renovating the existing field house, and another shows building a new one. There is also an other category that falls below the line of where the reimbursement ends. We are demonstrating what a pool square footage would be; we are including the Central Office program needs and the welcome center. We will review this in full at the following February 12, 2024 meeting.

Jon Himmel: At a future meeting, I would like to see examples of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Several places in the report say to provide a culturally sustaining school, allowing all students to feel included. I read that, and I'm trying to figure out what that looks like.

Lorraine Finnegan: An example would be having a space in the cafeteria for Muslim students to sit during Ramadan to feel included in the cafeteria but have their space for fasting.

Kathleen Lenihan: Would the MSBA reimbursement be for a new or renovated field house?

Lorraine Finnegan: A renovated field house through the MSBA will depend on the gymnasium size. If it's renovated, they will pay for a portion of it, which we have experienced in the past. But if we also have an 18,000-square-foot gymnasium in there, they may say, we're not going to participate in any of the Fieldhouse because we're giving you the 18,000-square-foot gymnasium. A stand-alone field house, they will not participate in at all.

Public Comment:

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street - I heard a lot of helpful things for me to understand but is that draft report going to be put on the website so that the public can give you any feedback in the one-week drafting time as well? I also wanted to comment on one of the things that I heard in the presentation about the Fieldhouse, which I mentioned last week. I hear you say it's in good condition, but I did not see any reference to the safety and space concerns. So I'd like to know how that will get incorporated into the draft report. We shouldn't say that the field house is in good condition, especially if we want to argue to the state to participate in funding. I sent Kathleen today a copy of a report on the existing conditions with videos and links, and hopefully, you'll all get a chance to see some of the conditions there that need to be addressed and move forward. It is great to hear that there might be a consideration for an adequate-size gym, but the gym's and the Fieldhouse's functions are very different.

Bob Pressman, 22 Locust Ave. - I want to express my appreciation for the wonderful response I've received from multiple people about a question I raised about the link of a new facility to better education. In terms of overall community support of this project, the sooner there's something concrete about how athletic fields can be replaced where the high school is now located, the more important it will be to accept this project. I understand from the presentation that the peat-type soil extends to what Alan Levine referred to as the area, where possible, as a location for the new building. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Thara Pillai, 53 Grant Street - I've lived in the Lexington area since 2010. I have two kids, 9 and 15. Thank you very much for the presentation today. It was super helpful. A few parents have probably mentioned this before,

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and Dawn McKenna had particularly pointed out the field house; I have a student who is a track athlete in middle school and high school, and the field house has been a particular concern. There have been some questions among parents who are part of that community about the considerations that will take place to decide whether the existing Fieldhouse will stay or a new one will be constructed. I am highlighting to the people on the call. Please go by after school one evening and see how the space is currently utilized and some of the safety challenges in that space. We have wrestling, basketball, volleyball, and track athletes all using that space. So it's incredibly overcrowded. It is not adequately ventilated. There's no light coming into this space. I've seen basketballs go across the track facility while people are running at incredibly fast speeds. All you need to do is spend 15 to 20 minutes in the space to see that it's not acceptable and that the space is not adequate for your current needs. We have 200 plus athletes every season in the track program, and even with the outdoor space in the summer, it's still not adequate, with the middle school requiring the space as well. I'd like to ensure adequate consideration when thinking about that space and encourage you to go check it out if you have yet to go there recently. Thank you very much.

Robert Atkins, 178 Grove Street - I also have two students, one who graduated a few years ago and one who is a senior at the high school. I also have a soft spot in my heart for the Fieldhouse, having both athletes gone through the track program. Being in the other category, a new field house, and other things listed earlier. Many of those go beyond just utility to the school but also have utility to other programs in the Town. Those other considerations would impact deciding whether to stay with the current field house or replace it with a more modern facility and the other roles it could play in the Town community. Back to a question, how are you soliciting some of those beyond-school opportunities that the new building, particularly some of these things the other category might provide?

Erica Downs: The issue is not the version of LEED as we plan to register under LEED v4. That still allows us to substitute 4.1 credits where we decide it's optimal. The issue is that they're upgrading the energy credits. So if we register before the end of February, we'll be locked in under the V4 thresholds. If we wait until after that, we will be bumped into those new thresholds, and then we will look at eight points less under the new system.

Lorraine Finnegan: Often, we would wait until after the schematic design, or sometimes you wait until after the project has gone through Town Meeting but we think it's well worth the risk to get us locked in now because, for the same performance as Erica Downs mentioned. We'd be getting substantially more points which helps and again, we need to think about the MSBA reimbursement. It's a small investment of \$1,350

Mike Burton mentioned that the discussion of LEED will be tabled and discussed further at the next meeting.

Joe Pato made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:03 p.m. Kseniya Slavsky seconded the meeting. Ms. Lenihan took a roll call vote, passed 8-0.