

School Building Committee
Thursday, March 23, 2023, from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Central Office, School Committee Meeting Room, and Via Zoom

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

The minutes were taken by Sara Jorge, Administrative Assistant for the Lexington Superintendent.

The School Building Committee Chair, Kathleen Lenihan began the meeting at 2:36 p.m.

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the [February 13, 2023 meeting](#). Mr. Stephens made a motion to approve the minutes from February 13, 2023. Mr. Himmel seconded the motion. Ms. Lenihan took a roll call vote, passed 6-o.

Dr. Hackett updated the Committee on the March 1st Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Board Meeting vote to invite Lexington Public Schools into the capital pipeline. It means that we can look forward to a significant State investment in this project. If, after the Feasibility Study, the MSBA and Lexington stakeholders determine that a new high school is the way to go, a project of that scope and magnitude would cost at least \$400 million and quite likely more. Lexington receives a 32% reimbursement rate, but once allowable costs are factored into the equation, Lexington has an effective reimbursement rate of approximately 25%. In other words, Lexington will be reimbursed a quarter for every dollar spent on a new or renovated high school.

Dr. Hackett updated the School Building Committee about the work the School Building Subcommittee accomplished for Annual Town Meeting. This update will be presented at Annual Town Meeting but Mr. Himmel reviewed the [Roles and Responsibilities](#) and the [Timeline Review](#) with the Committee. The Roles and Responsibilities indicate which committees in Town have review and input and which ones would review, give input, and approve.

On the organizational charts, the School Building Committee is central with other committees and departments connected to it. One organizational chart is for the financial snapshot, the second is the design snapshot, and the third is design & construction snapshot.

Ms. Slavsky: The organization structures are reflective of the reporting structures but as the design team's responsibility, there is going to be coordination and the gathering of input from educators and a broad spectrum of people. I just want to make sure we don't have a rigid structure and somebody might not be heard as part of a design that is built into the process.

Mr. Himmel explained that educators are listed on the organization chart. Also, there is a line down to the Department of Facilities then down through the Project Manager to the Architects to keep communication open.

Ms. Slavsky stated that the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) also dictates a certain amount of outreach with visioning sessions during the early phases of a design, so it is very upfront in the process.

Mr. Himmel: To Ms. Salvsky's point, during the Owner's' Project Manager (OPM) solicitation which this is a part of, it has a visioning session already designed into it as part of the criteria that is being developed for the

selection of those firms. I think those visioning sessions are very important and that is the reason I suggested that we go to Town Meeting with an update to make sure that community members know they will be paying taxes for this project.

Dr. Hackett: Also designed into this process are the abutters meeting to make sure that people are aware and heard.

Dr. Kavanaugh: I am trying to figure out where the appropriate place to add students is.

Mr. Himmel pointed out that students are listed on the bubble with educators, residents, and the community already.

Dr. Kavanaugh: I think it is just a format issue as I had a hard time finding students so maybe highlighting the students makes more sense.

Ms. Lenihan: I agree, I think this project is different. We really don't get feedback from students on a preschool building project, but with this project, some of these students will be 18 years old and will be voting on this project.

Dr. Hackett and Ms. Salvsky agreed that students should be directly involved with this high school building project. There will be direct listening sessions for students as there will be for educators.

Ms. Lenihan: I think that the School Committee needs a direct line to the School Building Committee. I think it would be important to my colleagues as well as me that the School Committee be more centrally located since it is a school building project.

Mr. Himmel: We can certainly do that. Another reason for these diagrams is to show that we will need to get all these departments and committees together. It would be far easier to do this project without a lot of input but that would not serve the community. With all the input that we will need for this project, the communication on this project needs to be managed very carefully and the OPM is going to help with that.

Ms. Lenihan: Could you explain the role of an OPM for the community that is watching?

Ms. Slavsky: An OPM manages the project with strict deadlines. An OPM understands what the design team does, they understand what the construction team does and manages them on behalf of the district. The OPM is hired primarily to make sure the district's requirements, policies, and preferences are all represented in all the details of a design process and then in all the details of a construction process. An Owner's Project Manager has a fiduciary responsibility as well to manage and control the finances of the project.

Mr. Kanter asked if there is a plan to have a very active online diagram with sub-elements to address the very thing that you are talking about for the general populace, so that the flow from the diagram we just saw, and the question just raised about the activities of a particular element. This may be one of the most powerful media for getting to the populous is having a multi-layered one so that you see the gross amount.

Ms. Lenihan agrees with Mr. Kanter and will work on getting these added to the School Building Committee website.

Mr. Himmel reviewed the three draft project timelines. These timelines hopefully resemble the project timeline but one of the responsibilities of the OPM is to help us better understand the timeline as part of their work.

Mr. Malloy: the color scheme on the timeline is hard to read on the top bar.

Mr. Himmel will look into the color scheme but he is not sure it can be changed as it is Microsoft Project and not a spreadsheet.

Ms. Lenihan: This timeline is great for individuals who are a part of the project but for your average resident or parent, they are going to want a little less detail and just more dates and be a little more user-friendly.

Ms. Kosnoff: Could we have another bar to show the fiscal year periods and not just the calendar years?

Mr. Cronin and Mr. Himmel will look into this or have an internal document to show this.

Mr. Himmel: the timeline of when the new high school would be available is based on this project being a construction management and not a lump sum bid. If this was to be a lump sum bid, it would likely be an all-one construction package and there would not be an early design package.

Ms. Slavsky: There will be a lot more discussions that we will be having on this topic especially when the OPM is on board along with the design team, and usually they will come with their own ideas. I am working on a project where the MSBA was strongly encouraging the use of a model school so the central message here is that there are a bunch of variables and a range of approaches that will produce a range of completion.

Mr. Cronin: Each one of the blue and green boxes on the timeline that are depicted in length is associated with a specific timeframe that was prescribed by the MSBA as a guideline. We have taken all the MSBA's language and transcribed it into this timeline so that the date at the end is somewhat arbitrary because we have not been invited to each one of the MSBA's steps yet. This timeline is just an example and will not be published stating that a new building will be opening in December of 2028 because nothing is set in stone.

Dr. Hackett explained that the timelines were also run by the MSBA consultants as well. Mr. Malloy, what are you thinking about the construction documents? Do you have a preference as we move into the OPM selection?

Mr. Malloy: I do not feel strongly one way or another. I have been involved in school-building projects that have been outbid normally and the construction management process. The School Building Committee just has never taken a vote or made a determination on which way we were going and we should at some point.

Ms. Lenihan: If there is a faster way to complete this project, I would prefer that because every day that students attend the current high school is just another day of them attending a building that does not meet their needs.

Ms. Slavsky: There are a couple of variables and for example, a model school's approach that is presumably and allegedly faster where a community takes a design from one of the selected design teams from a school that they have previously built. That is supposed to reduce the time during design development because they have worked out a lot of the design details already. This is also supposed to give you a set of design documents that is more robust because it has been vetted and tested through the construction process where people really take the design apart and find out the issues that may come with that particular design. If some of the designs can be adapted that can be a time advantage and if you have a really robust well-done design, it can also make for a stronger argument to go with a lump sum but it is a risky thing to do the lump sum approach when you're dealing with a Net 0 school. When you are dealing with a lot of Net 0 renewable energy matters creates a lot more uncertainty and things that are harder to pin down, the design is definitive and it opens you up for more change orders, those can be mitigated with good contingencies but there is a lot to it.

Mr. Himmel: The benefit of having a Construction Manager (CM) instead of a lump sum bidder on the Estabrook project was they helped us with an especially tight site. The CM came up with strategies ahead of

time on how to keep the school operations away from the construction operations. They actually also helped us understand how to engage students and have them understand what the construction was and how to manage a variety of events at the school. With a lump sum bid, you could have a much longer job just based on the lack of deliveries but a model school could accelerate the process, but if the Town is interested in the integrated design process, I think it would be very difficult to incorporate all the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). The CM brings a lot of interesting information that will be filtered by the OPM.

Dr. Hackett: I thought the MSBA was moving away from model projects.

Ms. Slavsky: The MSBA just strongly encouraged another community to scrap a schematic design that they already had to move forward with a model school. They even offered them a better reimbursement rate in association with going with the model school. The model school did not necessarily fit the site as well but it will work. I see the value with a CM but I think the only reason to ever go with a General Contractor (GC) of a lump sum bidder is because of the alleged savings. I think that there is every reason in the world for a project like this just on the size, complexity, and energy efficiency requirements in a community to go with the construction manager's approach.

Dr. Stephens: I have had experience with a building project using a model school that needed to be completely redone for the local project and that is a process. I am wondering if the MSBA has adjusted its model school from 10 years ago.

Mr. Cronin: With working with our MSBA Representative, the MSBA inserted model school language back into the RFS we submitted so it is still in their minds. Whether we use it or not is a different story, but they certainly are still promoting model schools.

Mr. Cronin explained that we submitted our MSBA Request for Services (RFS) on March 16, 2023, with 10 attachments. We have received feedback from the MSBA and they are very particular about us editing any of their standard contract languages, and we saw that as we are working on our third draft. The OPM advertisement went out yesterday. The schedule between now and June 5th is extremely tight where we have to receive all bids by April 20th and then begin the interview process for a week and a half, and send comments back to the MSBA with our first selection. By May 10th, we will submit all of our paperwork for our meeting with the MSBA on June 5th.

Dr. Hackett: The tight window of time is driven by the MSBA's schedule. To clarify the process, we were given two target dates that we could select but the other date was in the middle of the summer which would be more challenging with schedules, so we chose the earlier date of June 5th.

Ms. Lenihan: When will we in Lexington be interviewing candidates for the OPM?

Mr. Cronin: It looks like the week of April 25th we will be interviewing Owners' Project Managers.

Ms. Lenihan explained that Mr. Cronin sent an email with some suggestions for creating the OPM Selection Committee. A member of the Permanent Building Committee, a member from Sustainable Lexington, the Director of Facilities, the School Building Committee Chair, the Certified Purchasing Agent, the Superintendent of Schools and a community member.

Dr. Hackett: Mike, what are you thinking about in terms of what is really important to this community? In my last district, they were very much interested in making sure they had a connection with someone who would be readily available on-site.

Mr. Cronin: There are 12 requirements that are listed in the RFS as part of the standard protocol of the MSBA.

9 of the 12 are fairly standard boilerplate things and I think there are 2 or 4 areas that we will focus on with sustainability being one of the most significant components to this whole building project with the understanding of Lexington's cost model.

Mr. Levine: This project is going to need a huge amount of community input much more than Hastings or any other project we have done in Town.

Ms. Lenihan listed out the members that will be on the Owner's Project Manager Selection Committee: Mr. Cronin, Dr. Hackett, Mr. Favazzo or Mr. Himmel, Mr. Voss, Ms. Lenihan, and Mr. Barrett.

Dr. Stephens made a motion to approve the above members to the Owners' Project Manager Selection Committee. Mr. Cronin seconded the motion. Ms. Lenihan took a roll call vote, passed 10-0.

Mr. Himmel reviewed the sustainable policy documents that were linked to the agenda. How are we going to integrate all of these activities into a schedule for the feasibility study? How are we going to integrate all the departments and committee members that show up as entities on the organizational chart and all the other things that are important to sustainability by orientation, the massing of the building, and all those other aspects, including dealing with the LEED Lexington score sheet? The plan is to get all the items together to make the recipe.

Ms. Slavsky: A lot of this is on the design team and less so on the OPM team as a responsibility. Although the OPM has to understand it all and manage and lead the critical work, but this will be on the design team.

Mr. Himmel: Yes, we understand that this is mostly on the design team but the OPM is the choreographer so they need to know how to put this all together and all of it needs to be part of the OPM process.

Mr. Himmel explained that the OPM needs to know the whole process and needs to address what it is that they do, what it is that they think their team will need to do, and what it is they will seek the architect to do. One of the reasons that I made a companion to the integrated design policy is that I am hoping that when the solicitation for the design team goes out, it actually has the integrated design policy with it. This will then introduce all of those topics to the Architectural Engineer (AE). If the integrated design policy becomes known as part of our requirement, the message will be out there for what we are looking for.

Mr. Cronin: Another reason we came up with this, is we went through a working session with the architect who did the first integrated design for the fire station to review for the new police station to find out what worked and what did not. They gave us a lot of feedback about how we could do the process better so we tried to integrate that feedback and identify a work plan but also in the edited version of the integrated design and the LEED checklist.

Mr. Levine: What is the scope of the work for the OPM in terms of the project, it is not just a high school, it is demolition of the old high school, outreach, putting the fields back in, etc.

Mr. Cronin: Everything with this project in the center complex is their responsibility.

Ms. Lenihan: Are there lessons learned from the Hastings project about making sure that sustainability isn't an afterthought as part of the interview process of the OPM?

Mr. Cronin: The thing that we didn't do well at Hastings was the integration of the whole solar battery piece from the very beginning now maybe that was not our focus back then. We now know that it should be and so we want to make sure that when we talk integrated design, geothermal will be a likely piece, air force may also be a supplemental piece, and we also expect solar to be part of that net zero building. So all the things including the batteries, are apart of the initial understanding of what the scope of the project will be.

Mr. Voss: I know we refer to the policy as sustainability but it is also high-performing building standards that we integrated into the policy as well not just sustainability standards. It is the health elements that we are discussing as well as understanding the red list and working our way through that.

Mr. Himmel pointed out that with the Estabrook project, DiNisco was involved from the beginning and perhaps in the design development. We had DiNisco come to 201 Bedford Street to figure out how to be a little bit more responsive to the LEED requirements, and it was actually an interesting working relationship with them because they got it. When the Fire Station project began, they were hired again and we didn't have the Integrated Design Policy as of yet. During this time, Mr. Himmel recommended to the Director of Public Facilities, Mr. Cronin that the Green Engineer who helped us through LEED assist us again through this process and it evolved to the point with the Integration Design Policy in place that Sustainable Lexington and Permanent Building Committee (PBC) worked in conjunction with, in a more concerted effort with Mr. Cronin's group, and it worked really well. There were all different types of people from different backgrounds who were able to chime in which evolved into this revised Integrated Design Policy. We have done a lot of on-the-job training and practice and as things evolve the policy will also evolve.

Ms. Slavsky: For the community members who do not know some of the languages we are using. LEED is a prepared rating system for sustainable features, where points can be earned for different solutions and accumulate to a certain level you get a certain level of certification in terms of sustainability.

Mr. Himmel explained that the Redlist takes a look at all materials, chemicals, and elements known to pose risks to human health as it is being incorporated into buildings. Especially as some items are in contact with people who are occupying and working in the building so we want to avoid certain materials.

Ms. Slavsky explained that there are special reimbursement points that are available beyond the normal reimbursement rate to help with some of the costs for sustainability through the MSBA.

Ms. Lenihan: Are there any specific items the MSBA will not cover in regard to sustainability?

Mr. Barrett believes that it is not specific items but how they characterize it much more broadly and a maximum of 2%. I believe we received that on Hastings and Estabrook.

Ms. Lenihan: I think it is important to remember that in Lexington in Town Meeting, we have taken at least one vote that I can remember about our commitments to sustainability issues and to be good stewards of the environment. There was never any point where we said, but only if it costs X amount of dollars. We have said as a Community that this is what is important to us and what we value.

Dr. Hackett: High-performance buildings and health and safety matters. Mr. Barrett, are there things you wish we would have done, or things you are thinking about?

Mr. Barrett: When we discussed the Police Station, there were aspects of looking at the bigger picture with Fletcher Park that maybe we had included those thoughts at the beginning of the schematic design, then maybe it would have been a more fluid thing. With the high school project now, we are already thinking about the bigger picture and being as broad as we can. Piecemailing items end up costing more and take up more time.

Mr. Voss: For the most part, we had elements in the Police Station that are health-related. Talking about these elements as sustainable elements often makes them seem optional. Health is critical to energy efficiency and environmental impact is vital, they all are part of a high-performance building. As we think of a high-performance building maybe we don't think of them as sustainable elements but we think of them as items we would want in our building as we focus forward rather than facing backward. Some of the red list

items in the Police Station paid for themselves and that is also critical to understand. If we look at the actual lifetime cost of the building and not just the upfront capital cost, choosing these high-performance options in many cases ends up lowering the cost of the building on average over its lifetime.

Mr. Pato: Costs are when you treat these elements as an add-on and have to go back and retrofit and costs are certainly a factor in the decision-making process. However, when it is done as an integrated process, we are likely to be creating a better building that in the total lifecycle cost is going to be considerably better than if we were to not address these issues from the beginning.

Ms. Slavsky: There is a new building code that is about to come into effect and it has extremely high and stringent requirements for energy efficiency. I think this will actually help the conversation along because the new building code is reflective of the same values that Lexington holds strongly. So, some of these elements will not be optional at all under the new building code and I think we are doing well already by hiring a team with the same expectation that these are priorities whether or not it is a current building code or not.

Mr. Himmel: One of the things I suggested at Town Meeting last year, the fields at the high school are like Lincoln Field, which is attracting CPA funding. I think the Town needs to have a strategy to see how much field is being disturbed within a logical distance from the building and therefore, perhaps at the attention of the MSBA and how much is beyond. Having a strategy for this will allow us to know if we are capable of being reimbursed by the MSBA or CPA. Going back to the policy, we will be doing something that is integrated from the beginning, and decisions that are made at the very early part of the design are the most potent in terms of getting the budget balanced. Also, the reason I was recommending getting the value management workshops is to get the information out early and get a balanced design, so that it is fully integrated for energy and health, but also program, and above all, education.

Dr. Hackett: Do you envision the value management question for the OPM?

Mr. Himmel: Yes, they would be a part of it or they may have somebody on staff that has done value management workshops or they may wish to reach out to someone who does that as a business.

Ms. Slavsky: As part of the schematic design, you have two independent estimators give an estimate and then make sure their estimates are in alignment with each other. Then you go through the process of what was identified as possibly being optional and what should be added or what should be reduced. Value Management will be anticipating some of those things upfront. An OPM on an MSBA project is always going to have an estimator as part of their team. It might be someone who works for them or it might be a consultant or a sub-consultant under them.

Dr. Hackett: I know value management is part of the process but what I was thinking I was hearing was let's create space for the community to get all their wants and needs out early so that everything can be considered and then let's figure out what should be kept and what should be reduced from there. This way we are not having last minutes surprises.

Mr. Himmel: Value management is part of most projects it just happens at the wrong time. The people that normally do it are looking at detailed estimates and we need somebody conducting those series who is charismatic and not necessarily part of the process but can encourage people to brainstorm as these things are really critical to getting the ideas out there.

Mr. Malloy: I think that we just spent a bit of time defining different terms. I think our time as a Committee would be spent in a better way if somebody defined all terms in a document that we could share out. I also just wanted to remind everyone that when it comes to whatever building code we are building to, we just adopted the new stretch energy code a few days ago, so we are building to that level, not the new building code.

Dr. Hackett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:29 p.m. Mr. Stephens seconded the meeting. Ms. Lenihan took a roll call vote, passed 10-0.