

School Building Committee Coordination Meeting
Monday, March 25, 2024, from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
Remote Meeting

School Building Committee Members: Andrew Baker (absent); 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; Steve Brown (absent); Mike Burton; Mike Cox (absent); Chrsitina Dell Angelo; Erica Downs (absent), Brad Dore (absent); Elias Grijalva (absent); Rachel Rincon; Chris Schaffner (absent)

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

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

The School Building Committee Chair, Kathleen Lenihan, began the meeting at 12:01 p.m.

Mike Burton explained that we are currently in the preliminary design program (PDP) phase, which will be submitted to the MSBA at the end of May 2024/ early June 2024. The next phase is the preferred schematic report, which goes through December. After that, the schematic design goes until September 2025.

Julie Hackett, Brian Black, Jon Himmel, Mike Cronin, and Jason Boone gave an overview of the [VA School Trip](#). They discussed the next phase of MA school tours, which will include Student SBC (S-SBC) members. They hope to visit Arlington, Belmont, Billerica, Boston Arts Academy, Minuteman, Somerville, and Waltham, along with the possibility of visiting some urban school systems that may offer insights into how community is built and sustained.

Julie Hackett gave an update on the community input for advocacy for or against a pool, performing arts center, and field house. The question is what goes to the cost estimator and what people are thinking.

Kathleen Lenihan: Regarding the Performing Arts, it is unclear what MSBA pays for and what they don't specifically.

Lorraine Finnegan: MSBA will fund 750 seats maximum in the auditorium, so every seat about that will be 100% on the Town. Regarding the Performing Arts Center, we need guidance around what that means for people.

Kathleen Lenihan: We need to, at the bare minimum, replicate what we currently have, just beyond seating but the wings and the pit, so we would need to know the cost to replicate it.

Julie Hackett explained what we hear from the Performing Arts people is that they want to make sure we have a pit orchestra and wings for storage.

Lorraine Finnegan explained that the cost estimator is pricing out a rough order of magnitude based on square footage as well as a narrative that we write. This is a 23-page document that they will receive right now, along with the massive diagramming that Brian Black has shown you. But one of the more important documents we give them is our cost estimate assumption memo because there's so much in that they might not know, such as how we want to receive the estimate back and how we want that broken out. The MSBA wants a baseline of the school without any add-ons for the purpose of making sure that you and your community are aware of what

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they will participate in. So, we have our educational program only, which includes an 18,000-square-foot new gym, but without the Fieldhouse, and then we go to B, which is the gym and the renovated Fieldhouse. C is basically A plus a central office, and then D is Central Office plus a renovated Fieldhouse, so you can see that the square footage is growing according to what's being added. So we range anywhere from 440,000 approximately square feet up to 514,000 square feet, so we'll get this back broken out, and it's going to allow you to look at those different alternatives and those different costs.

Julie Hackett stated that for people who have been coming to the advocacy meetings, their ideas are at least captured in the cost estimation in detail.

Jon Himmel: I'm just thinking about after we receive the estimate, we're going to be asking questions, and it seems to me that we should be thinking about what those questions are. So if the MSBA is allocating money for 750 seats and we're going to add another 250 plus, should have a line item in there so that when somebody says how much is it? The estimators will have you done it.

Kathleen Lenihan began the discussion on safety considerations in the design process. The current LHS building is a more porous facility than newer construction, but it is due to the openness of the campus.

Joe Pato: It is a concern of mine to create a building with a layout that physically establishes the inner portion of the school from the public. It is essential for us, as a School Building Committee, to come to a preferred direction for this.

Kseniya Slavsky: I do not know if it is a safe idea to discuss the details in a public forum, but I think it is important to have a commitment and an agreement on the goal we are trying to accomplish.

Julie Hackett: I'm thinking about the evaluation rubric for the design plans, which contains indicators that will have us assess critical elements like safety. Some of the designs are more porous in nature appear more porous or similar to what we have right now. So I guess my question is more of a process question: if we were to, as a body, identify that we want to make one type of a plan preferred over another, how does that impact when we actually go through the process of evaluating each of the models, because if we as a body prioritize that you're going to eliminate a number of the designs right up front? And it may be that is the desire and the intent, but I'm just curious about the process.

Brian Black: The challenge is to provide access to the outdoors without leaving the building container. When we get to the feasibility study and schematic design, we will be drilling down into these topics and exploring the possibilities of creating a sense of openness while actually having a very secure building and a lot of that is done through electronic systems of monitoring and controlling access. So there are many layers to this and it is hard to sort of simplify. But there are definitely some considerations regarding building massing that could enhance the ability to provide both and not either or.

Jon Himmel: We need to determine how much of this conversation is done at the School Building Committee level and how much of the real nitty gritty is actually done in a more secure group.

Alan Levine: If you're going to have a campus where students can go off campus during the day to Starbucks or wherever and come back if there are a fair number of them doing that, it is going to be hard to control access. Unless there's an attendant at the door or something that buzzes them in, but if multiple students are coming into the building at all hours of the day, somebody could just get behind a student and go into the building. My other point is going to be that not everybody who comes in and does malicious things in high school is from outside the high school community. Many of the terrible incidents have involved students or former students, so just controlling who comes into the building doesn't necessarily really provide good security. It needs a really deep dive. There isn't any issue of security where you're giving away any secrets at the level we're going to discuss it. It needs to be done in public, but I would advocate for some security expert who really understands the major issues because I am not convinced that the real issues have been brought to the floor yet of this

discussion.

Mike Cronin: This is a student question. We should have students weigh in and see if this enclosed courtyard is something they are looking for.

Public Comment:

Bob Pressman - 2 Locus Ave - Three facility buckets, and our definition of community bucket one is a high school, and funds are essential to replace it. Bucket two, a field house with one up to 70,000 square feet mentioned, and a pool. Bucket three other municipal projects mentioned for the same period, with the East Lexington fire station and a new Town Office building, which experts have rated as the lowest rating level. A major project for Clarke HVAC and upper floors of our library and even a combined replacement of the Bridge and Bowman schools definition of community repetitively one where we want to be able to have residents of all to retain and increase our residents of all economic levels.

Steve McKenna - If I'm looking at the documents that Lorraine Finnegan presented, scope E includes a 36,000-square-foot fieldhouse without a pool. Scope H includes a 36,000-square-foot field house with a pool. Scope F includes a 72,000-square-foot field house without a pool. Is there no option for a 72,000-square-foot field house with a pool being sent to the cost estimator? I'll just make my comment assuming that the answer is, in fact, no. I don't think that this was intentional, but the way that these plans have been drawn up, if that is, in fact, the case, inherently pits advocacy groups against each other. If there is, in fact, no option to include a 72,000-square-foot field house that has a better chance of meeting the track and field teams' programmatic needs, as well as a pool that would meet the needs of the swim team, then we have a problem. I'm clearly an advocate for a new athletic center that replaces the fieldhouse. However, there is also a way to include a pool that meets the programmatic needs at the high school and serves the community. Frankly, I reject the idea that at this point in this project, we cannot explore an option that provides for all the programmatic needs at LHS, whether their STEM needs, fine arts, athletics, etc. Before we decide what is too expensive for our community, I hope the committee can instruct the architects to send an option to the cost estimator that includes a 72,000-square-foot fieldhouse and a pool so we all have that information.

Dawn McKenna - 9 Hancock Street - I want to quickly thank Julie and Kathleen for organizing the community feedback on the three options. That's been very helpful, and we appreciate it. The thing I'm struggling with is the distinctions being made between performance arts programming and athletics programming because, basically, they have the same dynamics. Both of them are more broadly used by both the student community in and out of school and the broader community, in and out of school. So, I think they need to be discussed in the same manner. I listened to your prior meeting and saw some of those distinctions. So, I want to make sure we stop distinguishing them and just figure out the best way to do what needs to be done. Secondly, I want to say that I am concerned that there is even an option being put forward to talk about the 145-foot-meter track. We know that the track has to be at least 200 meters, but we already made mistakes with the outdoor track, please do not put forward an option that doesn't have as a minimum, the 200-meter oval, no matter which way you do it. My next comment is that I didn't see any place where you're asking for the school administration portion to be separated as a separate cost. It absolutely should be done separately, kind of to Alan's point, we need to be able to look at all these options in terms of what's going to cost and whether we want to include them or not. We can't do that without the information. The other thing I wanted to comment on is the number of seats in the auditorium. There are already aren't enough seats in the auditorium, you're building a school for a larger capacity. It doesn't make any sense to do anything but increase proportionately, at the very least, the number of seats in the auditorium to meet the program. Then I also just want to comment that on the website, I don't see the materials that are provided to the committee at all. So once they're provided to the committee, their public documents, I would ask that you perhaps put up a separate section there as you've improved the website, just to have documents like just the one today about the Virginia visit. I can't figure out how to read that. Then my last comment is that I just want to say what I said at the earlier meeting: we are re-envisioning LHS for the future, and at the end of the day, we are looking not to simply build back bigger but, in fact, to build back better. Every one of these programs we've always in the past started by looking at what the programmatic needs are for every

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program. Once we see what that costs, then we can start making choices. But we're not there yet. So we really still need to be looking at building back better and I highly encourage all of the options to be looked at.

Jim Malloy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:13 p.m. Julie Hackett seconded the meeting. Ms. Lenihan took a roll call vote, passed 10-0.