

School Building Committee Coordination Meeting
Monday, March 4, 2024, from 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.
Remote Meeting

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

Members from Dore & Whittier: Jason Boone (absent); 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 (absent); Martine Dion (absent); Lorraine Finnegan; Anthony Jimenez (absent); Anoush Krafian (absent); Rosemary Park; Phil Poinelli; 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 12:06 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. This document is typically 1,000 plus pages and 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.

Alan Levine: I'm the point person for the Appropriation Committee for writing up Article 26 and the appropriation of \$10 million for the high school design. I did ask Carolyn Kosnoff at the last meeting, and she said that the 10 million is reimbursable by the MSBA even if the project never goes forward to a project funding agreement. I found the feasibility study agreement on the LHS building project website. It states that up to 31% of the 1.825 million is reimbursable. But I don't have any documentation about the 10 million, so I assume the feasibility study agreement limits it to 31% of the 1.825. So, as my understanding, any more than that 31% is not reimbursable during that phase. However, for the schematic design phase of module four, I looked at the MSBA website. It didn't say anything about how that works. Will we have to execute another schematic design agreement with the MSBA that will have the reimbursement ability in it and give the right for the reimbursement ability of that 10 million dollars?

Mike Burton: Yes, it will be reimbursable, which will occur when we get to the project funding agreement. The 31% rate usually remains the same. They adjust those rates throughout the years, but it should be reimbursable.

Alan Levine: The feasibility study agreement was executed before we started spending the money, or at least most of the money on that phase of it. Does the same thing happen for the schematic design phase, or is it waiting until it's over?

Mike Burton: We do what I call a thirty-eleven; it's a total project budget. It's the MSBA form that is on the website; you can get that, or I can just forward you a copy of it. That thirty-eleven is the total project budget, which will have a complete breakdown of all the eligible items in eligible items. It will show the maximum MSBA grant amount, and so at that point, when we submit the schematic design, that is when we make our agreement with the MSBA. So even though we're not done with design, we have to go to the MSBA and make

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our deal with them. That's what the total maximum grant is based upon, and so does that answer your question?

Alan Levine: I also need to know whether it is reimbursable even if the project doesn't progress to construction.

Carolyn Kosnoff: The percentage in the previous agreement was 31%, but we are assuming a 25% budget rate for budgeting purposes. My understanding is that the 10 million would be reimbursable regardless of whether construction moves forward.

Kseniya Slavsky: I have two projects I am working on in this situation where it did not pass on the first vote. The MSBA reimbursed us for the first round of feasibility, but we did not get reimbursed for the second round of feasibility.

Mike Burton will contact the MSBA to verify Alan's question with them.

Lorraine Finnegan and Rosemary Park reviewed the [Ed Focus Group recommendations](#) that need further discussion or review.

Joe Pato: I just want to ensure the academic program is achievable without natural gas, or is there another way of supplying the gas for those burners?

Rosemary Park: We have experience using alternative things like hot plates or electricity instead of piped natural gas.

Mike Cronin mentioned that a group of teachers from LHS would contact their colleagues in other districts that are using non-natural gas burners and bring this information back to us.

Hsing Min Sha: Who decided the building would not have natural gas?

Lorraine Finnegan: The Town determined that no fossil fuels would be connected to the building, so it will be an electric building.

Mike Cronin clarified that the all-gender bathrooms will have sinks down the middle with stalls to the left and right for all students.

Lorraine Finnegan: We need to determine who we start working with to go through each item in the yellow as some of them could have substantial impacts, such as costs for elevators.

Julie Hackett: I have many comments for everything in yellow, and it will take too long to say them here. I have some questions in terms of the process and whether these suggestions came from an individual or if they represent the group.

Kathleen Lenihan: I have questions about whether storage needs were discussed, not just for teachers, but for example, we have a massive thing called the graduation party that the PTO runs, and they decorate the entire field house. All the material needs to be stored at the high school, so it would be good to figure out a space for this all to go.

Rosemary Park: Storage for all the extracurricular activities and clubs did take place and we provided space for those. However, just because something is not a part of this focus group recommendation does not mean it will not make the final list. This is just one group's recommendations and their priorities.

Lorraine Finnegan: I think we need to understand how much space the PTO needs and where it might go.

Hsing Min Sha asked what the process for deciding the items in yellow would be.

Lorraine Finnegan explained that they are asking the School Building Committee to accept the space summary by March 18th. The space summary is subject to change until it is locked in with an agreement with the MSBA. Some things are policy-driven by the School Committee and Town, and the school administration educationally drives some. This overview aims to walk you through the list and for us to get a sense of who we would be working with to review the items that need further discussion. We will be sending the package to estimators on March 25th.

Kathleen Lenihan recommended that SMMA and Dore & Whittier meet with Dr. Hackett and the administration to review some of these items to give it a first pass.

Dr. Hackett agreed and recommended adding Mike Cronin and Mark Barret to the meeting to narrow it down. We all understand that we cannot have everything we want in the project, but we are willing to make hard decisions. We could also review and make recommendations to the School Building Committee.

Lorraine Finnegan: We are happy to meet directly with Dr. Hackett, Andrew Baker, Mike Cronin, Mark Barrett, and the OPM team to review the items that need further discussion.

Phil Poinelli explained that an individual may have brought up items in one meeting. Still, we heard these items in many programming meetings with teachers and students, so these items came up multiple times by multiple people.

Rosemary Park reviewed the changes that were made to the draft space summary. The number of general education classrooms remains the same, but we have added one more science lab, one more art room, and an additional digital design lab.

Joe Pato asked why, studying the study hall space, you end up adding a lab space. There would be a justification for this, but it needs to be clarified.

Rosemary Park explained that when examining study seminars, instead of I-block, the number of periods per rotation dropped to 30-32 blocks instead of 35. So what we do is take the number of students taking each course, multiply that by the number of projected students, and then we figure out from there how many sections are required and then how many times a rotation are they meeting, and so by swapping the number of periods from 35 to 32. While this did not raise the number of general education classrooms, it increased the number of science, art, and digital design labs.

Kseniya Slavsky commented that we need to give feedback where appropriate, but to say it will be better to go with the best reimbursement scenario would be a bit of an ignorant statement, and I don't want to go there. What do you see as our role in this process?

Rosemary Park: With the first few passes of the space summary and the program, it's taking all of the information that we've read about in the educational plan, taking the information we've received in the programming meetings with practically every educator that's in the school, and then looking at the master schedule of courses. It is not just looking at one thing; all of our information and conversations with the educators are critical to us. We reviewed these numbers with department heads at the high school as well. It's a push and pull throughout this to ensure that we maximize what we can through the MSBA reimbursement and meet as many of the requirements and needs as possible through the program.

Kseniya Slavsky: Does that mean that the push and pull is already happening as part of a conversation? Faculty tells you what they need, and you classify which is less reimbursement. If these items are necessary for the right academic program, then it is what it is. Is this something that needs more passes to further refine for a better financial outcome?

Lorraine Finnegan: Rosemary and Phill analyzed your curriculum with the appropriate number of students per class versus who's taking them now and up to a maximum of 23 students in a classroom. And from that, it tells you how many spaces you need under certain areas. That's not to say we didn't listen to the programming meetings. But moving forward, there might be a different way of providing that program in a different space. Just because you do it in a certain space today doesn't mean that's how you'll do it in a new scenario. This is not a wish list of spaces. This is required to provide the spaces necessary to deliver the program. We will know how the MSBA feels about this after we've submitted the PDP and received the first round of comments.

Phil Pionelli explains that once we have a PDP and are working in schematic design, they will meet with educators again to get more details. We are not anticipating significant changes, but tweaking may occur from the schematic design programming meetings.

Kathleen Lenihan: What do you need from now until the next meeting? I want to get a sense of what happens in the immediate near future and then going forward.

Lorraine Finnegan: We expect the School Committee to vote on accepting the ed plan and space summary on March 12th, and the School Building Committee will vote on accepting the space summary on March 18. We also want to review all the items that need more review by March 18th so the cost estimator understands what they should be pricing.

Kathleen Lenihan: It sounds like meeting with Julie Hackett, Mike Cronin, and Mark Barrett would be a high priority in reviewing these items. At the next School Building Committee meeting, we will want to hear the recommendations discussed at this meeting.

Hsing Min Shing: What would be helpful to me is to have a list of specific issues that have the most impact on cost. What are the main things that are controversial and impactful?

Lorraine Finnegan: The goal for the March 11th meeting is to bring the site focus group recommendations forward and review site development requirements, such as parking spaces and items like that.

Julie Hackett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:02 p.m. Joe Pato seconded the meeting. Ms. Lenihan took a roll call vote, passed 8-0.