HHU Master Plan Committee Minutes: May 26, 2016
Great Hall, Town Hall
Minutes Approved: June 16, 2016

Committee Present: Hans Larsen, Ellen Gibbs, Jack Morgan, David Stern, Allan Port, Ed Cloaninger, Maura Sullivan, Sara Jane Shanahan, Nancy Calderwood, David Lussier, Jose Soliva, Matt Kelley, Sharon Gray, Lara Pfadt, Seong-Il Ahn, Scott Vaughn, and Tom Ahern

Committee Absent: Stephan Gauldie, Brent Warner, and Todd Ofenloch.

Staff: Meghan Jop, Michael Zehner, Judy Belliveau, and Joe McDonough

Meeting Documents: May 26, 2016 Meeting Agenda; May 19, 2016 Meeting Minutes, Revised Enrollment RFP, dated May 25, 2016; Excerpts from SMMA Planning Options; HHU Facilities Project Options Matrix; School Capacities Spreadsheet

Mr. Larsen opened the meeting at 7:08 pm.

Mr. Larsen welcomed Scott Vaughn, the newly appointed representative of the Schofield District. Mr. Vaughn introduced himself, reviewing his background as an architect and construction attorney.

Approve Minutes of May 19, 2016 Meeting

Mr. Larsen suggested that the Committee consider approving the minutes of the May 19, 2016. Dr. Lussier moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Gibbs seconded the motion. Mr. Larsen asked the Committee if they would like to discuss the minutes or if there were any issues. Hearing none, Mr. Larsen called for a vote. The Committee approved the minutes unanimously.

Enrollment Study - Revised RFP and Timetable

Mr. Larsen referenced distributed materials, including the revised RFP, and asked Ms. Belliveau to review changes to the RFP. Ms. Belliveau reviewed the materials, noting that the response date had been extended to June 9, with interviews to be held on June 16.

Mr. Larsen asked the Committee if there were any questions or comments on the changes to the RFP, noting that the process had been consciously slowed down to provide an opportunity to interview consultants. Mr. Kelley discussed the timeline and the ability for the Committee to review the responses. Mr. Cloaninger asked a question about the response deadline. Mr. Larsen responded and discussed the timeline further.

Mr. Cloaninger noted that interviews are scheduled for June 16, and deliverables are expected by August 31. Ms. Sullivan expressed the same concern as Mr. Cloaninger. Mr. Larsen stated that he is content to leave the deliverables date as August 31.

Ms. Shanahan asked if any responses were received on May 25 in response to the original RFP release. Ms. Belliveau stated that no responses were received, that all consultants had been notified of the extension. Ms. Shanahan asked when the consultants had been notified that the RFP would be reissued. Ms. Belliveau indicated that they had been notified before the deadline.

Ms. Sullivan asked whether it was understood that the RFP was going to be reissued, stating that she believed that had not been decided at the Committee's last meeting. Ms. Sullivan suggested that in the future an email should be sent to the Committee requesting comments and that a deadline be given. Mr. Larsen stated that the Committee needs to avoid deliberating by email, but that comments may be emailed to staff. Ms. Sullivan stated that she appreciated the clarification that this would be procured under MGL Ch. 30B.

Mr. Larsen asked for additional comments. Ms. Shanahan asked for confirmation that the RFP had been issued. Mr. Larsen and Ms. Belliveau discussed the issuance and posting of the RFP on the Town website.

Mr. Cloaninger asked if there was a concern regarding the issuance of the RFP. Ms. Shanahan wondered how consultants will know that the Town is looking for assistance. Mr. Larsen stated that he assumes that we are reaching out to school enrollment demographic experts. Ms. Belliveau indicated that they have communicated the RFP to the same universe of consultants that have previously responded.

Mr. Zehner suggested edits to the RFP to allow consultants with demographic experience, but not necessarily experience working with schools, to respond. Mr. Kelley indicated that it was necessary to use consultants with experience conducting school enrollment studies. Ms. Sullivan noted that any responding consultants would be interviewed and that broadening the pool may offer unique perspectives. Mr. Larsen indicated that there will be multiple consultants responding and that he is content to box out others that do not have school experience. Mr. Morgan stated that the Committee has the opportunity to reject all proposals, and that the Committee can reconsider the qualifications based on the interviews. Mr. Morgan further discussed the qualifications of the firms that comprise Cropper, indicating that he would like to see some nationally known demographics firms.

M. Sullivan asked whether the RFP should be more prescriptive. Mr. Larsen stated that the core requirement is someone familiar with demographics, with enrollment as core skill, suggesting that the Committee seek a group of consultants with the core skill, and find others with other variables. Ms. Belliveau expressed an understanding of the Committee's goals, and recited the basis for the study as stated in the RFP.

Ms. Shanahan indicated that she expected that demographers will have experience for in and out-migration, and that anyone in Massachusetts should have experience factoring in 40B development. Ms. Shanahan indicated that she felt that the description was comprehensive enough, stating that the Committee is not looking for a cookie cutter or boiler plate study based on U.S. Census data. Ms. Sullivan asked whether the RFP language was the same as that which resulted in the first Cropper study. Ms. Belliveau indicated that the language was similar, but not as specific.

Mr. Morgan stated that he does not believe any of these firms would use U.S. Census data, indicating that the overwhelming driver is births in Town, but that is no longer the case in Wellesley.

Ms. Belliveau indicated that the expected interview date is included in the RFP so that consultants are put on notice so that they may be available well in advance or make other arrangements otherwise. Ms. Sullivan asked whether there will be a list of questions and script for each respondent. Ms. Belliveau responded affirmatively and asked the Committee to share any questions that they may be thinking about.

Mr. Larsen asked the Committee if there were any other questions. Ms. Shanahan asked whether NESDEQ made a proposal. Ms. Belliveau indicated that their fee is based on a reduction contingent on membership.

Mr. Larsen asked whether the Committee needed to vote on the RFP. Hearing no objections, Mr. Larsen confirmed that the RFP would proceed without a vote.

Current State of Hardy, Hunnewell and Upham facilities (Joe McDonough)

Mr. Larsen recognized Joe McDonough to make a presentation on the existing conditions of the Hardy, Hunnewell, and Upham schools. Mr. McDonough presented a PowerPoint to the Committee. Mr. McDonough discussed ongoing maintenance, the FY17 Capital Budget, and existing conditions and deficiencies. Mr. McDonough discussed progress that had been made with respect to the maintenance of the facilities. Mr. Larsen mentioned the Town's effort to catch up on maintenance. Mr. McDonough discussed the maintenance work that had been performed since 2012.

For the three schools, Mr. McDonough reviewed the existing conditions and deficiencies with respect to floor plans, windows, roofs, facades and entries, classrooms, interior doors, interior finishes, heating and ventilation systems, electrical, plumbing, bathrooms, modular classrooms, lunch accommodations, life safety systems, hazardous materials, egress and circulation, and structural core. Mr. McDonough also reviewed what a typical robust renovation of the schools would look like.

Mr. McDonough asked the Committee for questions. Ms Calderwood asked about the code for sprinkler systems. Mr. McDonough indicated that in his opinion, a major renovation needs to meet current code, which means that sprinklers would need to be added.

Mr. Ahn asked Mr. McDonough to clarify whether there were hazardous materials issued beyond the asbestos in pipe insulation. Mr. McDonough responded that the bulk of the hazardous materials had been removed in 2009, but that it was decided that some of these materials could be left in crawlspaces. Mr. McDonough stated that asbestos tiles were removed at that time. Mr. McDonough indicated that the Facilities Maintenance Department knows where remaining asbestos is and that it is not a threat due to access. Mr. Larsen stated that there is asbestos in insulation above ceilings that has affected projects, which Mr. McDonough confirmed.

Mr. McDonough discussed the MEDICIS system, indicating that it cannot be used in Hardy, Hunnewell, or Upham because the equipment is over 50 years old.

Mr. Larsen described the recent work to Hardy, but noted that much of the equipment is original to the building. Ms. Sullivan commented that FMD is in a holding pattern. Ms. Pfadt observed that if money is being spent on the systems that there becomes a point at which sprinklers will need to be added and egress codes will need to be met.

Mr. Larsen stated that this was a good segue to Alex Pitkin with Symmes Maini & McKee Associates.

Symmes Maini & McKee Associates - facilities assessment and scenario analysis (Alex Pitkin)

Mr. Pitkin presented the PowerPoint to the Committee that was presented in the School Facilities Committee in December 2015. Mr. Pitkin discussed SMMA's experience on the High School project. Mr. Pitkin indicated that SMMA was hired in 2012 to study the schools' existing conditions, program and educational needs and deficiencies, plan and site constraints, benchmarking, master planning, and cost estimating. Mr. Pitkin discussed the relevance of educational goals on facilities design, including teaching methodology's influences on building size, shape, space type, and content Mr. Pitkin reviewed enrollment scenarios and the impacts they have on school sections and strands.

Mr. Pitkin reviewed the Hardy site, including program deficiencies associated with the building. Mr. Pitkin reviewed the Upham site, including program deficiencies associated with the building.

Mr. Soliva asked whether SMMA had ascertained the percentage of space that would be lost to meet current codes. Mr. Pitkin responded that they had as a planning exercise, determining the delta between the new building and the renovated building. Mr. Soliva stated that small classrooms and ADA issues in the hallway were already a concern. Mr. Soliva indicated that it is important for the Committee to review renovation only scenarios versus new construction. Mr. Pitkin and Mr. Soliva discussed the MSBA process. Dr. Lussier indicated that the Schools have submitted Statements of Intent to the MSBA each year to ensure that they are not precluded from funding. Mr. Soliva discussed the MSBA process, indicating that funding is available. Dr. Lussier stated that he is not optimistic that funding is available for Hardy, Hunnewell, or Upham. Mr. Morgan stated that he thinks that the various committees are very mindful of the attractiveness of MSBA funding, and that the Town continues to apply. Mr. Morgan noted that the MSBA provided a substantial amount towards the High School, as well as the Middle School windows, but no encouraging feedback for elementary schools.

Mr. Larsen stated that it is not the case of the Town lobbing in SOIs each year, but that with Representative Peisch's support, we regularly call and meet with the MSBA and ask for guidance. Mr. Soliva stated that what Mr. McDonough reviewed is quite extensive, and the baseline of repairs is fundamentally sound. Mr. Larsen indicated that it is nice to hear that the Town's buildings are well maintained. Mr. Pitkin indicated that the SMMA did a master plan for the Town of Lexington, and that they decided to move forward on a schematic design for the school without MSBA assistance. However, Mr. Pitkin continued, they experienced explosive growth, then submitted to MSBA and received funding.

Mr. Pitkin reviewed the Hunnewell site and deficiencies. Mr. Pitkin and Mr. Stern discussed MSBA standards and recommendations. Mr. Pitkin noted that SMMA and other firms have healthy

conversations with MSBA that have resulted in some spaces being reimbursed for that had not previously, while they still do not reimburse for computer labs.

Mr. Pitkin reviewed other planning options, including the North 40, noting that it does not need to be discussed because it is off the table. Ms. Shanahan asked why the North 40 is off the table. Mr. Pitkin responded that maybe that is not right. Mr. Morgan stated that in terms of the work of this Committee it is not off the table, that all options and different alternatives can be considered. Mr. Morgan indicated that the SFC concluded that they did not see advantages to putting a school on the North 40 as opposed to renovation or a new school at Hardy. Mr. Morgan indicated that the North 40 site does push things further down Weston Road, closer to Town and closer to Hunnewell; additionally, Mr. Morgan stated that given uncertainties with planning for site and the need to look at alternatives for 3 school sites, the question can certainly be reconsidered. Ms. Shanahan asked when the North 40 should be reconsidered as part of the Committee's process Mr. Larsen responded that the North 40 could be considered when the Committee discusses further options. Ms. Shanahan asked Mr. Pitkin to clarify at what point the North 40 was ruled out. Mr. Pitkin said that he did not rule out the site. Mr. Larsen stated that the SFC ruled out the site relatively late in the process.

Mr. Pitkin discussed options with the sites, including for new construction, renovations, and additions. Mr. Pitkin reviewed the scenario slide of the presentation, indicating that a total of 41 options had been explored. Mr. Larsen and Mr. Kelley explained the table. Mr. Morgan encouraged everyone to go back and look at the approaches, noting that the biggest constraint was problems with swing space, as well as the feeling that the SFC was not comfortable trying to perform renovation work while building were occupied.

Ms. Sullivan asked Mr. Morgan to clarify whether concerns about renovations would preclude half of a building from being renovated with proper precautions. Mr. Morgan responded that the SFC came to the conclusion that it would work well to build a new school as a first step, but that the Committee can go back and look at alternatives. Ms. Shanahan asked whether space at St. Paul's was available when they consider options. Mr. Morgan indicated that the St. Paul's space was not available at that time, and stated that he does not know whether it is available now. Mr. Larsen stated that the Committee should keep in mind that renovations of Schofield and Fiske while they were occupied is different than the level of renovations for Hardy, Hunnewell, and Upham.

Ms. Sullivan stated that it seems that phasing the renovation of Hunnewell was not considered, that it seems that you could demolish half of the building and maintain children in the other half. Mr. Pitkin responded that conceptually, anything could be done, but considering what the School Committee did not want to do for High School age students, the site is constrained. Ms. Sullivan asked about the use of the Cameron Lot for staging and storage. Mr. Larsen indicated that the Cameron Lot is highly utilized. Ms. Pfadt indicated that parking is not the only consideration, also utilities installation, materials storage, etc., which makes the site harder to plan for and much more costly.

Ms. Vaughn asked whether there was a bias against building multi-story buildings. Mr. Pitkin responded in the negative. Mr. Vaughn stated that the consolidation of schools creates a large population, and

wondered whether that was a good or bad thing. Mr. Vaughn also asked whether options for temporary lease space were considered. Mr. Larsen noted that the Facilities Maintenance Department is in leased space, and that it is a possibility if there is a suitable space for educating students. Mr. Larsen noted that people are open to alternatives, referencing Salem's use of modulars in front of their school and the use of a modular library when the Free Library was being redone, indicating that it is an approach to creating swing space. Dr. Lussier stated that he has only seen modulars as swing space when attached to a main building for core space. Mr. Vaughn stated that what he was contemplating was starting to look at what is available, maybe costs associated with modifying, but in all cases it might be cheaper. Mr. Pitkin noted that any potential change in Building Code use group would need to be considered. Dr. Lussier reiterated that the renovations at Fiske and Schofield were modest compared to these.

Mr. Larsen urged the Committee to study the options slide, noting that a lot of thinking underlies each option, and indicated that they will include some time on the agenda to answer specific questions. Mr. Ahn asked Mr. Pitkin to discuss the most challenging issues with each school site. Mr. Pitkin responded that with Hardy it was drop off and pick up and traffic impacts, but did note that there is a potential to create a longer access road, which would be good. Mr. Pitkin further noted that the Hardy site has limited onsite parking, there are historic resources that would need to be maintained, and that core spaces do not work. Mr. Larsen noted that there are some grade changes on the site and that some previous work had been done to create more queuing space, despite this, cars are still backing up on Weston Road. Mr. Ahn noted that the site does provide opportunities to build further into the site, perhaps alleviating traffic, and suggested that the Committee should reconsider the site.

Ms. Shanahan asked Mr. Pitkin whether the brainstorming by the School Facilities Committee and their discussion of the pros and cons with each option, whether those are in the Report. Mr. Pitkin stated that there would be minutes of the meetings. Ms. Shanahan asked whether the Report reflected Mr. Pitkin's views or the input of the SFC. Mr. Pitkin responded that SMMA puts options on the table, but in no way dictates to the community, indicated that the recommendations are not SMMA's. Ms. Shanahan asked Mr. Pitkin to clarify the Report's comment that there is a strong preference for two schools. Mr. Pitkin responded that it was a preference of the SFC.

Mr. Soliva asked Mr. Pitkin whether the options considered allowed for future expansion on sites, and whether the sites are still viable. Mr. Pitkin responded that future expansion was discussed and considered, and that options vary from site to site. Ms. Sullivan asked how much enrollment projections could increase or decrease before affecting the scenarios, noting that the Report identified a low enrollment of 2,000 and a high of 2,500, further asking whether enrollment as high as 2,800 could be accommodated. Mr. Pitkin discussed the concept of utilization factor, noting that the idea was to be down in the 90% utilization range. Mr. Pitkin indicated that the Committee should not forget that buildings would have filled all of the specialist spaces, but in terms of student to teacher ratios, stated that it was a different discussion. Mr. Morgan indicated that he believes the 2,500 enrollment capacity would be a district-wide 90% capacity, but that with 6 or 7 schools there is no such thing as 90% and that with any of these options the system would be okay up to a 2,500 student enrollment. Mr. Morgan stated that the SFC did not plan for alternatives that were significantly above that figure, and also indicated that another thing to consider is what if we end up with a lot fewer students, resulting in

potentially painful decisions. Ms. Shanahan asked for confirmation that the studies that were considered contemplated a 1,000 student capacity for these 3 schools. Mr. Morgan responded that the question opens consideration around redistricting. Mr. Cloaninger clarified that 800 students were currently distributed between Hardy, Hunnewell, and Upham, and that there would be a 25% increase. Mr. Kelley stated that he thought 1,600 were distributed between Bates, Fiske, Schofield, and Sprague, and 900 between Hardy, Hunnewell, and Upham.

Mr. Kelley indicated that the School Committee had spoken with representatives of St. Paul's to see what options might be available, but that they only recently had a conversation and will report back once they know more.

Ms. Shanahan indicated that she had derailed Mr. Pitkin's comments regarding the site constraints of Upham. Mr. Pitkin noted that the Upham site has a linear drive in, there are drop off pick up issues, accessibility issues inside and out, ledge at the back of the property, and that the site does have a landlocked nature, noting that he is sure that neighbors would be concerned. Ms. Shanahan asked about alternatives. Mr. Pitkin responded that there are other options to build on the existing footprint and potentially make use of a second access. Mr. Soliva stated that Upham was one of the sites that cannot be remodeled, but wondered about the addition of a second floor. Mr. Pitkin stated that it may not be structurally sound.

Mr. Larsen asked if there were any final remarks.

Mr. Pitkin stated that with regard to enrollment, that concerns about the real estate market have been heard. Mr. Pitkin noted that there is a firm that SMMA is working with in Andover. Mr. Pitkin also noted that Cropper is excellent. Mr. Pitkin indicated that if the MSBA is not willing to participate in a full project, that maybe boilers and windows could be replaced on historic parts of the buildings. Ms. Sullivan asked whether life cycle costs were taken into account. Mr. Pitkin responded that it was far too early. Mr. Larsen agreed, indicating that the Town has not gotten to that point.

Mr. Larsen indicated that it was his sense that people will want more time to ask questions about the data presented, and that at some point we may need Mr. Pitkin to come back. Ms. Sullivan and Mr. Ahn both indicated that they would like to see the buildings first. Mr. Pitkin indicated that one of the things that he would caution is that the buildings are not operating anywhere near code requirements, that it is not an apples to apples comparison.

Review work plan and calendar

Mr. Larsen discussed next steps, including the tours of Hardy, Hunnewell, and Upham, as well as Sprague and Schofield.

Mr. Larsen provided a spreadsheet with information for the sections and capacities at each of the schools, noting that similar information is attached to the RFP. Dr. Lussier explained the table. Mr. Larsen asked about spaces for music and art at Bates. Dr. Lussier discussed the utilization of flex space. Ms. Belliveau indicated that only when the section count exceeds that it is necessary that art and music

spaces need to be take away. Mr. Morgan asked whether the Hardy, Hunnewell, and Upham section capacities include the modulars. Ms. Shanahan stated that she had heard there was a preference for a 21 section school, which is different than SFC recommendations, noting that the Report mentions 24 sections. Dr. Lussier indicated that there had been discussions about going up to 24, but agreed that the preference was 21 section.

Mr. Larsen asked the Committee when they would like to discuss the election of a chair for the Committee, whether the Committee would be ready for this discussion next week. Mr. Kelley indicated that if the Committee is not ready they do not need to do so. Ms. Shanahan indicated that the important thing at the next meeting is to have an open discussion. Mr. Cloaninger agreed. Mr. Larsen asked whether Mr. McDonough or Mr. Pitkin were needed. Ms. Shanahan responded that she did not think so. Ms. Pfadt indicated that as long as someone was at the meeting that was familiar with the background of the scenarios. Mr. Larsen indicated that the Committee could have a little bit of a deeper dive with an opportunity for a freeform discussion. Mr. Port stated that it would be helpful to hear from some of the other members.

Citizen speak

Mr. Larsen asked if there were any public comments.

Marlene Gayle, Worcester Street, spoke, indicated that she believed there to be a disconnect between what the School Committee and the community wants. Ms. Gayle noted that time after time taxpayers have rejected 4 section schools, and further discussed concerns with 4 section schools. Ms. Gayle asked when the Town is going to start asking residents what they want. Ms. Gayle discussed the benefits of the Hardy neighborhood and questioned the quality of education with massive schools. Ms. Gayle concluded by asking the Committee to consider smaller neighborhood schools, and thanked the Committee.

Mr. Larsen asked if there was anyone else that wished to speak.

Adjourn

Hearing no one else, Mr. Larsen asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Morgan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cloaninger seconded the motion.

The Committee's meeting adjourned at 10:03pm