

Wednesday, February 4, 2026
Advisory Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Great Hall
Town Hall
525 Washington Street
Wellesley, MA

Madison Riley, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was livestreamed on Wellesley Media at www.wellesleymedia.org and broadcast live on local cable channels Comcast 8/Verizon 40.

Those present from Advisory Committee: Madison Riley, Chair; Mark Benjamin, Vice Chair; Jay Prosnitz, Vice Chair; Doug Wilkins, Secretary; Lucienne Ronco; Jay Bock; Penny Rossano; Rani Elwy; Doug Smith; Mariana Vinacur; Dan Weinger; Aaron Williams.

Absent: Paul Barnhill; Susan Clapham; Phil Jameson.

Also present: Joe McDonough, Director, Facilities Management Department (FMD); Dave Cohen, Director, Department of Public Works (DPW); Dave Hickey, Town Engineer, DPW; Glenn Remick, FMD; Jeff Wechsler, Chair, Board of Public Works (BPW); Michael McManus, BPW.

Citizen Speak

There was no one present for Citizen Speak. The Chair noted that this would be a good opportunity for residents to bring matters before the Advisory Committee and encouraged town residents to participate in the future.

Article 20 - DPW Campus/Municipal Service Building Feasibility Study - FMD

The presentation provided background on the DPW campus project. The Park and Highway Building System Study identified approximately \$10 million in renovations needed for the then 75-year-old building, which increased to \$13 million by the time the project was revived after COVID. At that point, the Town decided to undertake a master planning process to review the entire program and determine if it could more effectively fit on the municipal waste site if the Park and Highway building were replaced.

The history of improvements at the DPW campus were highlighted. Many phases began in 2006 with replacement of the Water and Sewer building, followed by the new DPW administration building in 2012, and other improvements including the salt shed, Park and Highway roof, HVAC system, and the fuel depot completed in 2025.

The presentation outlined why the original renovation plan was not pursued:

- The building is now 78 years old.
- The renovation cost increased to \$13 million.
- Challenges with finding swing space during renovation.
- The original study did not include the cold storage shed.
- Fleet maintenance issues, with many vehicles unable to fit in the current facility.

The \$135,000 Master Plan was funded as part of FY25 cash capital and examined the entire Municipal Way site with the goal of providing comprehensive long-term strategic guidance. The Master Plan evaluated operations and programming; identified building size needs (123,668 square feet for DPW plus potentially 13,500 square feet for land use and FMD), and assessed various buildings and site conditions.

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52 The Park and Highway building and cold storage shed were determined to be beyond their service life and
53 should be demolished and replaced. Photos were provided of the current inadequate facilities, including
54 cramped bathrooms, workshops with poor ventilation, and vehicle storage areas that cannot properly
55 accommodate modern equipment.

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57 The proposed feasibility study would cost \$858,000, with \$380,000 allocated to architectural/engineering
58 basic services and the remainder for various expenses like site investigations, wetlands delineation,
59 geotechnical work, and traffic analysis. If approved at Annual Town Meeting, the study would begin in
60 July 2026, with potential design funds requested in spring 2027, and construction funds in spring 2029.

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62 There is also the potential inclusion of land use departments and FMD in the project, as their current leased
63 space at 888 Worcester Street ends in June 2027. With the building being sold and expected lease costs
64 potentially doubling, this is an opportunity to create permanent office space for these departments, although
65 it was emphasized this was not critical to the DPW project.

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67 **Questions/Discussion**

- 68 • What is the lifespan of the feasibility study?
 - 69 ○ It will be good for at least 5 years, though some field investigations might need updating if
70 the project were delayed.
- 71 • A question was asked about the relationship between the feasibility study and the Townwide
72 Capital Planning Committee (TWCPC).
 - 73 ○ The feasibility study would help inform the capital plan by providing options for phasing
74 the project, and having this data is essential before the TWCPC could properly slot the
75 project.
- 76 • What are the potential cost savings if land use/FMD are not included?
 - 77 ○ It is estimated at around \$10 million off the total project cost.
- 78 • The \$100 million cost estimate was questioned when other major projects such as Hardy and
79 Hunnewell Schools were less expensive.
 - 80 ○ Current construction costs, inflation projections, and the specialized nature of DPW
81 facilities impact the estimate.
- 82 • Could the Town realistically phase the project if the full \$100 million is not approved.
 - 83 ○ Phasing is possible and would be a key part of the feasibility study, with the potential for
84 a two-phase approach with the most critical facilities built first.
- 85 • Several members expressed concerns about the expense and need of certain elements of the
86 feasibility study, such as traffic analysis.
 - 87 ○ These expenses would be carefully managed and only used if needed.
- 88 • It was suggested that future town growth and density be considered in the planning.
 - 89 ○ Flexibility for future needs will be a priority.
- 90 • It was questioned whether lower-cost alternatives could be considered for some aspects of the
91 project, particularly vehicle storage. Concern was expressed about the timing of the project relative
92 to other capital needs in town.
 - 93 ○ To better understand the current conditions a tour of the DPW facility will be scheduled.
- 94 • It was noted that while the cost was significant, the feasibility study would provide valuable
95 information to help the Town make informed capital planning decisions.

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97 **Minutes Approval**

98 Mariana Vinacur made and Jay Bock seconded a motion to approve the January 28, 2026 minutes.

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100 *Vote:* The motion passed 10 to 0 with 1 abstention.

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102 **Administrative**

103 The dates for the Committee's voting on Annual Town Meeting articles are March 4, 5, and 11. Meetings
104 will be in-person only, not hybrid, to facilitate discussion and voting.

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106 **Liaison Reports**

107 *School/Jay Bock* - the School Committee met the previous night and approved the administration's
108 recommended budget by a 5-0 vote.

109 *MLP/Doug Smith* - reported on the MLP Board meeting of January 28. It was noted that 42% of Wellesley's
110 power is generated by nuclear, 24% by hydro, 18% by wind, 13% by bilateral contracts, and 3% by solar.
111 The DC chargers offered by MLP generated revenue of \$6,200 in December. The MLP is also looking at
112 implementing time-of-use rates in the future.

113 *Select Board/Rani Elwy* - the Select Board approved Article 6 - the salary of the Town Clerk. They are still
114 debating the FY27 budget deficit, with discussion continuing next week. The Select Board will not meet
115 on February 17 due to school vacation week.

116 *NRC/Lucienne Ronco* - the NRC will not make a motion at Annual Town Meeting for the land conservation
117 plan, as they want to complete work on the plan before proposing further action.

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119 **Adjourn**

120 Mariana Vinacur made and Doug Smith seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting.

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122 The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m. 11 to 0.

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124 Meeting video [February 4, 2026](#)

125

126 **Meeting Documents**

127

- Wellesley DPW – Memo w-attachments 01.14.2026 Submitted to SB 011626
- Wellesley DPW - Master Plan Study Report_01.15.26 (no appendices) Submitted to SB 011626
- DPW Master Plan Presentation FINAL Submitted to Advisory 013026
- Draft 012826 Minutes.revdw1