

School Building Committee Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)
REMOTE MEETING
April 2, 2020, 5:30 PM

Present: Chair Sharon Gray; Vice Chair Thomas Ulfelder; Virginia Ferko; Marjorie Freiman; Mary Gard; Steve Gagosian; Joubin Hassanein; Ryan Hutchins; Meghan Jop; Matt King; David Lussier; Cynthia Mahr; Melissa Martin; Heather Sawitsky; Jose Soliva; FMD Project Manager Kevin Kennedy; FMD Project Manager Dick Elliott; Jeff D’Amico of Compass Project Management; Alex Pitkin and Kristen Olsen of SMMA.

Absent: Charlene Cook; Jeff Dees; Ellen Quirk.

Ms. Gray opened the meeting at approximately 5:35 p.m. She announced that the meeting was being conducted remotely, and broadcast live and recorded by Wellesley Media for later viewing. Participants joined via Zoom conferencing. Ms. Gray noted every vote will be by roll call. She thanked Wellesley Media and the Town’s IT Department for making it possible to conduct meetings remotely.

Ms. Gray noted that many community members had written the SBC and other boards with concerns about conducting meetings on the Hardy/Hunnewell/Upham projects during the state of emergency. The SBC remains responsible for the Hardy/Upham project, and will discuss next steps for the building project at the next meeting on April 16. The Committtee understands the importance of engaging with the public on important milestones and throughout the projects.

Public Comment

No Public Comment

Call in number 781-489-7748

SBC Business

Approval of Minutes - November 21, 2019; December 19, 2019; January 9, 2020.

Ms. Martin and Mr. Gagosian suggested edits to the November 21 and December 19 minutes.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve the SBC minutes of November 21, 2019 as amended. Mr. Gagosian seconded. Roll call: Mr. Ulfelder – Yes, Ms. Ferko – Abstain, Ms. Freiman – Abstain, Ms. Gard – Yes, Mr. Gagosian – Yes, Mr. Hassanein – Yes, Mr. Hutchins – Yes, Ms. Jop – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes, Ms. Sawitsky – Yes, Mr. Soliva – Yes, Ms. Gray – Yes. The motion carried 10-0 with 2 abstentions.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve the SBC minutes of December 19, 2019 as amended. Ms. Freiman seconded. Roll call: Mr. Ulfelder – Yes, Ms. Ferko – Abstain, Ms. Freiman – Yes, Ms. Gard – Abstain, Mr. Gagosian – Yes, Mr. Hassanein – Yes, Mr. Hutchins – Yes, Ms. Jop – Yes, Mr. King – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes, Ms. Sawitsky – Yes, Mr. Soliva – Yes, Ms. Gray – Yes. The motion carried 11-0 with 2 abstentions.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve the SBC minutes of January 9, 2020 as presented. Mr. Gagosian seconded. Roll call: Mr. Ulfelder – Yes, Ms. Ferko – Yes, Ms. Freiman – Yes, Ms. Gard – Yes, Mr. Gagosian

– Yes, Mr. Hassanein – Yes, Mr. Hutchins – Abstain, Ms. Jop – Abstain, Mr. King – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes, Ms. Sawitsky – Yes, Mr. Soliva – Yes, Ms. Gray – Yes. The motion carried 11-0 with 2 abstentions.

Approval of Invoices

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve Future Think invoice #1714 in the amount of \$10,992.80. Ms. Martin seconded. Roll call: Mr. Ulfelder – Yes, Ms. Ferko – Yes, Ms. Freiman – Yes, Ms. Gard – Yes, Mr. Gagosian – Yes, Mr. Hassanein – Yes, Mr. Hutchins – Yes, Ms. Jop – Yes, Mr. King – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes, Ms. Sawitsky – Yes, Mr. Soliva – Yes, Ms. Gray – Yes. The motion carried 13-0.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve Compass #CPM69-19.1 in the amount of \$480. Mr. Martin seconded. Roll call: Mr. Ulfelder – Yes, Ms. Ferko – Yes, Ms. Freiman – Yes, Ms. Gard – Yes, Mr. Gagosian – Yes, Mr. Hassanein – Yes, Mr. Hutchins – Yes, Ms. Jop – Yes, Mr. King – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes, Ms. Sawitsky – Yes, Mr. Soliva – Yes, Ms. Gray – Yes. The motion carried 13-0.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve SMMA 0052520 in the amount of \$104,993.75. Ms. Freiman seconded. Roll call: Mr. Ulfelder – Yes, Ms. Ferko – Yes, Ms. Freiman – Yes, Ms. Gard – Yes, Mr. Gagosian – Yes, Mr. Hassanein – Yes, Mr. Hutchins – Yes, Ms. Jop – Yes, Mr. King – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes, Ms. Sawitsky – Yes, Mr. Soliva – Yes, Ms. Gray – Yes. The motion carried 13-0.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve Compass invoice CPM74-11 in the amount of \$16,723.00. Mr. Soliva seconded. Roll call: Mr. Ulfelder – Yes, Ms. Ferko – Yes, Ms. Freiman – Yes, Ms. Gard – Yes, Mr. Gagosian – Yes, Mr. Hassanein – Yes, Mr. Hutchins – Yes, Ms. Jop – Yes, Mr. King – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes, Ms. Sawitsky – Yes, Mr. Soliva – Yes, Ms. Gray – Yes. The motion carried 13-0.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve Applied Geographics invoice 20998 in the amount of \$11,899.20. Ms. Martin seconded. Roll call: Mr. Ulfelder – Yes, Ms. Ferko – Yes, Ms. Freiman – Yes, Ms. Gard – Yes, Mr. Gagosian – Yes, Mr. Hassanein – Yes, Mr. Hutchins – Yes, Ms. Jop – Yes, Mr. King – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes, Ms. Sawitsky – Yes, Mr. Soliva – Yes, Ms. Gray – Yes. The motion carried 13-0.

Hardy/Upham Project

Mr. Pitkin reviewed Observations for Consideration for the Upham site as detailed below.

- Code Upgrade Option is required
- New Construction Option: From SMMA & MSBA ‘process’ perspective, both new construction options behind the existing school are essentially the same, but SMMA offers a strong recommendation for Option 6a due to grade change along the southern edge of site. In our opinion no option reduces ledge or tree removal substantially. New Option 6c, on the footprint of the current Upham, is responsive to request of neighbors to consider building on the footprint.

Mr. Pitkin briefly reviewed the PSR Option 6a 365 New Construction. It has good visibility to the building entrance, excellent solar orientation, is 2 stories, and has expanded parking at back of the lot. It will require removal of much of wooded area and will assume the need for retaining walls.

Dr. Lussier asked what the delta is from the top of the school to the top of the existing canopy. Mr. Pitkin said it the heights would be very close to the same.

Mr. Pitkin briefly reviewed the PSR Option 6b 365 New Construction. It has less optimal visibility to the main entrance, excellent solar orientation, fewer options for play space, 2 stories, can utilize expanded parking at back of lot, removes much of wooded area, assumse retaining wall and has a 10-foot change in grade that requires at least 120 feet of ramp.

In conclusion the Upham site general summary for options 6a and 6b include,

- Blasting (which may require two phases of ledge removal)
- Through-site access not critical – but connections and rear parking could be beneficial
- Avoid edges of site (vegetated buffer / topography ‘run out’)
- Phase 2 work involves regrading up to 222’ level.
- Access (vehicle, bike and walking) from four sides is possible

Dr. Lussier asked if there is much difference in amount of ledge removal between the two options in the center of the site and the option more toward the front of the site on the existing footprint. Mr. D’Amico replied that ledge removal of the option on the footprint is about 16 percent less.

Mr. Pitkin reviewed his thoughts on constructing on the existing footprint at Upham.

- Swing space would be needed.
- Building on the existing footprint does not substantially reduce ledge or tree removal (only about 16 percent as stated above)
- The elevation changes from Wynnewood road at 202’ to the new main entrance at 210’ and subsequent access around the entire school will still require careful consideration for accessibility.

Mr. Pitkin briefly reviewed the PSR option 6c: ‘Split Level’. (Which means the front of the building is on a main level, then after the main corridor rises to a second level.) It has good visibility to the entrance, accessible parking and visitor parking only close to the front door, terraced play field at front of school, excellent solar orientation, maintains the existing ballfield, is 2 stories, utilizes expanded parking at the back of site, removes much of wooded area.

Ms. Gray asked Mr. Pitkin to discuss the aspects of the interior of a split-level plan. He noted it would add more square footage by having three main corridors, perhaps not the most ideal solution. Dr. Lussier pointed out that the site disturbance with this option would not be that different than having the school at the center of the lot.

Ms. Gray asked what SMMA has learned about putting modulars as swing space on the Upham property. Mr. Pitkin said a full school would more than fill up the baseball field in the rear of the property, and it would be difficult to make it accessible according to code. Much site work would be needed on the site, which would result in additional cost.

Mr. Pitkin reviewed Hardy Site PSR Option 4: 365 Option Add/Reno. It would require swing space, no loss of play space, 3 stories at back of school to keep the compact footprint, requires expanded parking at back of site, retains 1923/24 portion of Fells School, is the least impactful to forested area, and utilizes route 9 connection to increase auto drop-off and pick up queuing length.

Hardy/Upham Traffic Study

Ms. Olsen began her review of the Beta Group traffic study by reviewing two questions from the past meeting.

- What are the major traffic-related differences between the current 7-school district map and the proposed maps for building at Hardy and Upham?
- How do either the Hardy or Upham redistricting maps impact traffic to the school attendance zones as a whole?

She showed the approved Hardy map, noting areas that have changed from the previous map, with most of the added areas located north of Route 9. This means more traffic will come from the north on Weston Road on arrival and return north on the way home. Most notably, this will increase the number of difficult left turns onto the school site. Access to the site via Route 9 in the morning would overlap with commuter traffic.

She showed the approved Upham map, noting areas that have changed from the previous map, with added areas coming from the north, west and east. With Upham, there would be an increased number of trips on Lowell and Wynnewood roads, and some new arrival/dismissal traffic on Dukes.

Ms. Olsen said Beta’s scope of work did not include town-wide analysis of the updated redistricting maps, but the firm has made some observations based on professional experience.

Upham Map: The proposed attendance zone observes geographical boundaries most successfully for attendance zone borders.

Hardy: The proposed attendance zone continues to have Hardy and Sprague zones straddle Route 9 which has limited crossings. There will create more need for households to cross Route 9.

Ms. Olsen reviewed other questions that had been previously posed, including *what percentage of students are assumed to travel by personal vehicle?* The project team has two data points, the conservative estimate of 85 percent travel by personal vehicle (worst-case scenario), and a 2016 WPS survey indicating that in the current attendance zones, 67 percent of Upham families used a personal vehicle, and 45 percent of Hardy families used a personal vehicle. This would be considered the best-

case scenario. Ms. Olsen noted that the difference between the use of the worst-case or best-case scenarios resulted in only a limited amount of impact on the level of service at the Upham site and no impact on the level of service at the Hardy site, though it did impact anticipated queue length. Considering the worst-case queue length during the planning process is recommended.

Ms. Gray asked whether potential mitigation at Hardy (access from Route 9 and/or Lawrence and Hardy roads) was incorporated in this analysis. Mr. Kien Ho of Beta said it was not, but Beta has made recommendations for mitigation that will follow in the presentation. Mr. Ulfelder expressed concern that the SBC is being asked to make a decision where traffic is a consideration, and the Committee does not have some of the key data it would need.

Ms. Olsen reviewed site plans of each school. Locating the 365-student school at Upham near the center would allow for additional queueing onto the site. The use of Dukes to exit the site would lighten the load on Wynnewood. The recommendation from Beta is for one point of entry, with multiple points of egress, including Dukes Road. Ms. Gray mentioned that at the abutters' meeting in March, there was significant pushback from several neighbors about the idea of opening up Dukes Road, even with a gate. Mr. King said he is struggling with the idea of adding new points of exit from the site, given the overall Level of Service rating of A for surrounding intersections.

Ms. Olsen reviewed the Hardy site plans. Beta noted that there would be minimal benefits to opening up the Hardy site at Hickory road. The recommendation of Beta would be to consider opening the site at Lawrence and Route 9. Mr. Hutchins and Mr. Ulfelder felt that the analysis has not addressed some of the outstanding questions. For example, if Hickory or Lawrence or Route 9 can improve intersections from an F to a D, that would be progress, but that data has not been analyzed. Mr. King would prefer the analysis to define what is possible and what is not possible.

Ms. Gray asked about the utility of opening up Lawrence Road and potentially keeping cars from stacking up on the sidewalk at pickup time, which is a consistent problem. Mr. Ho commented that he doesn't believe the traffic on Weston Road will improve even in the best case scenario of 100% of households north of Route 9 using the Route 9 entrance. If Lawrence was encouraged to be used as a primary access, it could potentially improve the traffic in the area, but not necessarily improve the level of service from an F rating.

Adjournment

At approximately 7:15 PM Ms. Gray adjourned the School Building Committee meeting.

Documents and Exhibits used

- **Minutes for approval**
- **Invoices for approval**
- **Beta Group Traffic Report**
- **SMMA meeting presentation**