

**School Building Committee –Minutes**  
**August 1, 2019**  
**Great Hall, Wellesley Town Hall**

**Present:** Chair and member of School Committee Sharon Gray; Vice Chair and member of the Board of Selectmen Thomas Ulfelder; Virginia Ferko; Marjorie Freiman; Mary Gard; Steve Gagosian; Matt King; Meghan Jop; David Lussier; Cynthia Mahr; Ellen Quirk, Jose Soliva; FMD Project Manager Richard Elliott; FMD Project Manager Kevin Kennedy; Tim Bonfatti of Compass Project Management; Alex Pitkin and Kristen Olsen of SMMA; Deane McGoldrick, Director of Transportation for Wellesley Public Schools. Members of the School Committee who convened and joined the meeting at 6:20 pm: Vice Chair Linda Chow; Matt Kelley; Jim Roberti

**Absent:** Joubin Hassanein; Ryan Hutchins; Melissa Martin; Heather Sawitsky; Charlene Cook; and Jeffery Dees.

Ms. Gray opened the meeting at approximately 5:35 p.m. She announced that the meeting was being broadcast live and recorded by Wellesley Media for later viewing. She said that the Wellesley School Committee would join the meeting at or after 6:00 pm.

**Public Comment**

No member of the public provided comment.

**SBC Business**

**Approval of Minutes.**

Ms. Gray announced that the July 25, 2019 minutes would be presented for approval at the next SBC meeting.

**SBC Administrative Job Posting**

Ms. Gray distributed a draft job posting for a temporary, part-time administrative assistant to assist the SBC with minutes, scheduling and communications. Ms. Gray said that Gayle McCracken, Director of HR for the Wellesley Public Schools has offered to help guide the search and to benchmark hourly rates for similar administrative positions. Ms. Gray invited other committee members to volunteer to help review resumes.

Ms. Jop asked if the position would be funded from both SBC projects proportionately. Ms. Gray said she would seek clarification but given that the Hunnewell feasibility study is nearly complete perhaps funds should come from the Hardy/Upham project, which SBC will be working on for the next year.

There was a discussion about the range of hours/week to post. Ms. Jop suggested reviewing expected tasks to help more accurately estimate the hours needed. Dr. Lussier suggested that the range of weekly hours be sufficient to account for greater complexity of tasks as the process continues.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve the job posting for an administrative assistant for the SBC subject to confirmation of a range of hours per week. Mr. Soliva seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Hardy/Upham Project**

#### **Review and Approve SMMA fee and contract for the feasibility study phase**

Mr. Elliott distributed a draft Contract for Designer Services for the Hardy/Upham project feasibility study and SMMA's Designer Services Proposal dated July 23, 2019, including a summary of reimbursable consultant services. The total proposed fee is \$1,073,085.

There was a discussion of the schedule and milestone dates set out in the proposal. In response to questions from Ms. Jop and Mr. Ulfelder, Mr. Bonfatti clarified that the December 18, 2019 item described as "Submit Preliminary Design program to MSBA" does not presume site selection by this date but instead the submission of an educational plan, documentation of existing conditions at both schools and a long list of options that will be considered.

In response to a question from Ms. Freiman, Mr. Bonfatti explained that the item on the schedule for May 6, 2020 "Submit Preferred Schematic Design to MSBA" refers to conceptual plans to meet the approved educational plan on a particular site. Schematic design will follow.

Ms. Gray noted that the PBC also needs to review and approve this contract and Mr. Gagosian said he would arrange to put it on the PBC agenda.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve the SMMA fee and contract for the feasibility study phase of the Hardy/Upham project. Mr. Soliva seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Hunnewell Project**

#### **Review and Recommend SMMA and Compass Project Management fees for design and bidding phases**

Mr. Kennedy distributed SMMA's revised proposal dated 7/25/2019, for services through the design and bidding phases of the Hunnewell Elementary School project; and Compass Project Management's proposal dated July 23, 2019, for services through the design and bidding phases of the Hunnewell Elementary School project. He said that both had been extensively reviewed by the Facilities Management Department and that he recommends approval.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve and recommend to the PBC the SMMA fee for the design and bidding phase of the Hunnewell project. Mr. Gagosian seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Ulfelder moved to approve and recommend to the PBC the Compass Project Management fee for the design and bidding phase of the Hunnewell project. Mr. Soliva seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Feasibility Study Report**

Ms. Olsen presented edits that SMMA has incorporated into the Feasibility Study Report since the last SBC meeting.

Mr. Soliva suggested that the lists of pros and cons for each option the SBC considered could be perceived as a comparison among options and suggested modifications to bullet points related to the main entrance, accommodation of current and future curriculum, and the survivability of the oak tree.

Ms. Gray said that based on Mr. Soliva's comments she included an edit to clarify that the orientation of the main entrance toward the neighborhood and Brook Path was considered by the committee to be a positive attribute of Option C (new construction).

Ms. Olsen said that the bullet points were meant to describe the merits of particular options and not to highlight points of comparison among them.

### **Joint Meeting with School Committee**

Ms. Gray introduced her fellow School Committee members: Linda Chow (Vice Chair), Matt Kelley, and Jim Roberti.

Ms. Chow called the School Committee meeting to order at approximately 6:20 pm. She reiterated that the meeting is being recorded by Wellesley Public Media.

### **Schedule and Next Steps**

Ms. Gray reviewed a schedule of upcoming meetings and proposed action:

August 2 - Submit Feasibility Study Report to PBC and Advisory Committee

August 6 - School Committee vote to approve Feasibility Study

August 8 - Presentation of Feasibility Study to PBC

TBD - School Committee present Feasibility Study and discuss project with Advisory Committee

December 9 - potential Special Town Meeting to request design funds (pending work on swing space)

In response to a request by Mr. Kelley for clarification, Ms. Gray said that School Committee will be the proponent of the project. Mr. Ulfelder said the Board of Selectmen would vote on the project as a whole, including swing space, when it is ready to go to Town Meeting.

### **Swing Space**

Ms. Gray said that the project team has been working to provide more detail on the early and late Hunnewell swing space options. She said that the only early Hunnewell swing space option, allowing a school to open in 2023, is internal swing space. The St. Paul's School option is no longer under consideration because the church is working to finalize a lease with another party for that property.

Mr. Kennedy presented information about the internal swing space option. This plan would use existing space in the district's other elementary schools for Hunnewell students during the 18-24 months of construction (3 or 4 school semesters). Additional classroom space for Hunnewell students will be created, in order of priority, by:

- Class consolidation made possible by projected declining enrollments within the host schools,
- reclaiming former classrooms,
- converting space into a classroom, or

- using either music or art rooms.

Each grade level at Hunnewell would be hosted at one school, kept together and taught by Hunnewell staff. Students would remain at that school for the entire period of construction (3 or 4 semesters) to minimize student transitions.

Dr. Lussier noted that the district has often used internal space to meet temporary needs. PAWS classrooms have used elementary school classrooms and specialized spaces such as art and music rooms have been repurposed to accommodate enrollment. He added that classroom consolidation would occur due to declining enrollment and the class size guidelines (18-22 for K-2nd grade and 22-24 for 3-5th grade) would remain. Dr. Lussier emphasized that the lowest priority would be to use art or music rooms for classrooms but even if those spaces are temporarily repurposed, the art and music curriculum will still be delivered, as the Spanish curriculum is now delivered to all elementary students in their own classrooms rather than in specialized rooms.

Mr. Kennedy and Dr. Lussier presented a chart showing projected enrollment and sections per school for the upcoming school year and the two years of construction to demonstrate how declining enrollment may free up internal swing space.

Dr. Lussier noted that Schofield enrollment is not projected to decline, and in fact may slightly increase, which will make it challenging to host swing space there. Upham, due to its small size and the space needs of the Skills program, may also be unable to host swing space, though it is too early to make a determination. Based on projected enrollment decline at Bates, Fiske, Hardy, and Sprague, those schools should be able to host swing space, and Sprague and Bates might each accommodate two grade levels of Hunnewell students. The exact details of the swing space plan will not be finalized until the winter of 2021.

Ms. Chow asked if the Warren School was under consideration. Dr. Lussier said that classrooms hosted there would not have access to school infrastructure that is available in WPS buildings (nursing, OT/PT as examples) creating isolation and operational inefficiency.

In response to a question from Ms. Gard, Dr. Lussier said given the existing school infrastructure it would not be possible to redistrict into 6 schools now.

Dr Lussier said that many Hunnewell parents expressed support for an early Hunnewell project, including internal swing space. There is a plan to talk with all elementary school communities in September about swing space and redistricting.

Mr. Ulfelder noted that there has been extensive and detailed work done since last spring to develop the internal swing space option which supports the conclusion that it is in fact viable.

Mr. Kelley pointed out that a reduction in the number of sections at many schools will occur as a result of declining enrollment, whether or not that school hosts internal swing space.

Mr. Roberti asked how internal swing space would impact special education classrooms. Dr. Lussier said that most special education services are delivered in classrooms but there has been a careful look at the space needed for the Hunnewell TLC students at host schools and also at how to move some special education students to more appropriately sized spaces at host schools to free up full-sized classrooms for swing space.

Ms. Jop asked if 4th and 5th grade Hunnewell students could be integrated into the 4th and 5th grade populations at host schools rather than hosting them in separate classrooms. Dr. Lussier said if efficiency was the only goal that could make sense, but Hunnewell parents have expressed support for keeping Hunnewell grade level cohorts together so that peer relationships may be maintained.

Mr. Pitkin reviewed the transportation analysis done by Beta Group relative to internal swing space. He summarized BETA's conclusions as follows:

- There are preexisting transportation issues at the elementary schools with delay and queuing on Weston Road, Rt. 9 and Kingsbury Street;
- The analysis used the most conservative data (highest values) for vehicles and demographics;
- Small increases in volume are manageable and not expected to significantly exacerbate traffic operations;
- Most vehicle trips are offset by declining enrollment - except at Schofield;
- Likely an increase in car queues, particularly in the afternoon. Carpools or buses could mitigate these concerns;
- Additional management for drop-off and pick-up is required particularly at Hardy and Schofield (if used for swing space);
- Limited capital project work would be required at school sites other than some pavement striping, signage, etc.

Mr. Pitkin then presented aerial views of each elementary school with car, bus and pedestrian access identified on each image.

Dr. Lussier and Mr. McGoldrick presented potential plans for internal swing space transportation, specifically the hybrid transportation model that features:

- Centralized staging area within Hunnewell attendance zone for students going to Fiske (and Schofield if used for swing space) with an estimated ride time of 15 minutes;
- Morning pick-up from each of five Hunnewell neighborhoods on buses that will then travel to each of the host schools - Bates, Hardy and Sprague (and Upham if used for swing space) - with estimated travel time from 8-12 minutes to 25-30 minutes, depending on the host school.

- Afternoon pickup on a bus directly from each host school to Wellesley Middle School for parent pick up. (Bus drop off on Donizetti Street and student pickup on Calvin Road, occurring well after WMS dismissal).

Ms. Mahr presented internal swing space transportation cost estimates as follows:

- \$690,822 in School Year 2021-2022
- \$738,288 in School Year 2022-2023
- \$1,429,110 Total

These estimates include the cost of 6 buses, bus monitors and additional vans for the TLC program.

In response to a question from Mr. Ulfelder, Mr. McGoldrick confirmed that the number of buses could be reduced if ridership is low.

Dr. Lussier said that Hunnewell families with children assigned to multiple schools will have the option of open enrollment, based on space availability, to keep siblings in one school. Ms. Quirk said that she is confident that carpooling to assist parents with students in multiple schools will be organized by parent volunteers.

Late Hunnewell swing space options were then reviewed by Mr. Pitkin.

Late Hunnewell Options with redistricting include (potential number of students at each school is noted in parentheses):

- Option 1A –Redistrict and use New Upham (365) with Hunnewell split between Old Upham (182) and Old Hardy (183) without modulars
- Option 1B - Redistrict and use New Hardy (365) with Hunnewell split between Old Hardy (182) and Old Upham (185) without modulars
- Option 1C - Redistrict and use New Upham (365) with Hunnewell (365) at Old Hardy with modulars
- Option 1D - Redistrict and use New Hardy (365) with Hunnewell (365) at Old Upham with modulars

Late Hunnewell Options without redistricting include:

- Option 2A – No redistricting, use New Upham for Upham (195), Old Upham for Hunnewell (256) (Combined 451 students on Upham site) and Old Hardy for Hardy (277)
- Option 2B – No redistricting, use New Hardy for Hardy (277), Old Hardy for Hunnewell (256) (combined 533 on Hardy site) and Old Upham for Upham (195)

Mr. Pitkin referenced the presentation by Beta Group at the last SBC meeting and reviewed some of the conclusions of Beta’s study related to late Hunnewell:

- Pre-existing conditions currently operate with significant delay and changes in traffic patterns will temporarily exacerbate conditions; will delay but not degrade intersections
- In these scenarios vehicle trips are less likely to be offset by declining enrollment
- Mitigation measures such as carpools and buses should be considered
- Study was done using most conservative data (highest values) for vehicle and demographics

Mr. Pitkin presented slides illustrating potential traffic circulation/drop-off and pick-up scenarios, for the six late Hunnewell options.

Mr. Pitkin noted that options that continue to use an old school on the site of the new school present the challenge of delaying demolition and the completion of site work for the new school project.

Mr. Pitkin said that further study will be needed to determine how vehicles may be able to access Route 9 from the newly acquired parcels on the Hardy site. Ms. Jop said that in her experience the Massachusetts DOT is likely to approve curb cuts on Route 9.

Ms. Gray asked how teacher parking would be accommodated and what impacts there would be on playground space in the various late Hunnewell scenarios. Mr. Pitkin replied that there are a number of highly complicated variables to consider for the site on which a new school is constructed while the existing school is in operation, complicated further if the old school is then retained for Hunnewell swing space, delaying completion of the new school site work. There would need to be pre-design work done to plan for all the needs on the site, construction vehicles, playgrounds, teacher parking and traffic circulation. He said it is anticipated there would be work on these issues as part of the design work for the MSBA project.

Mr. Kelley said that he does not see any advantage to Option 1A or 1B vs. 2A or 2B since the number of students on the site with two schools in operation is similar or greater.

Mr. Soliva asked if the MSBA will allow a delay in closing out one of its projects, as would be required in the scenarios that propose operating two schools on the new school site for up to two years. Mr. Bonfatti said the MSBA is pushing districts to close out as soon as possible and his sense is they would not like it.

Mr. Pitkin presented the following Late Hunnewell conclusions:

- Highly complicated variables
- Delays Hunnewell project; extends need to operate Hunnewell until 2024 and current Hardy/Upham until 2026
- Numerous impacts at host sites related to two schools on one site (parking, traffic, playgrounds)
- Tied to H/U project – could influence final site selection and design of the new school and site for temporary condition of swing space
- Study was equitable between both sites

Mr. Gagosian noted that the risk associated with extending operation of the old buildings (Hunnewell, Hardy, and Upham) should not be minimized.

Mr. Ulfelder said it is important to understand that there has been extensive and detailed work and analysis of the late Hunnewell options, despite what may appear to be an emphasis on internal swing space at this meeting. Mr. Pitkin said there is not much more analysis of the late options that may be done at this point in the process.

Mr. Bonfatti reviewed the schedule and conceptual range of costs for the swing space options.

- Internal Swing Space- \$3.3-\$3.7m
- Late Hunnewell (using Hardy/Upham Schools) \$10-\$12m

Mr. Bonfatti presented a graph comparing construction cost escalation vs. the Consumer Price Index. The average change in consumer price index is forecasted at an average 1.48%/year and the average change in construction cost escalation is forecasted at an average 4.8%/year.

Mr. Ulfelder noted that these costs have not been updated to reflect the most recent Turner Cost Index that projects escalation costs to be even higher. Mr. Bonfatti said the Turner index was revised for 2019-2020 from 5.6% to 6.9% but given the difficulty of projecting out multiple years and accepting that there could be economic factors that modulate cost escalation, the 4.8% figure was used to estimate costs.

Mr. Bonfatti presented conceptual project budget summaries for the swing space options as follows:

#### Internal Swing Space

- \$100,000 – Construction within buildings (potential partitions, etc.)
- \$300,000 – Site work, signage, police details etc.
- \$250,000 – Consultants fees
- \$2,400,000- Busing and TLC Program costs
- \$450,000 –Moving, contingencies and other administrative costs
- \$3,500,000 - Total concept budget

#### Late Hunnewell with no redistricting

- \$6,300,000- Building escalation
- \$1,000,000-Delay demolition
- \$0 - Modulars
- \$300,000 Consultant fees
- \$900,000 Busing
- \$1,400,000 Soft cost escalation
- \$9,900,000 - Total concept budget

#### Late Hunnewell with redistricting and modulars

- \$6,300,000- Building escalation

- \$0-Delay demolition
- \$2,000,000 - Modulares
- \$300,000 Consultant fees
- \$900,000 Busing
- \$1,400,000 Soft cost escalation
- \$10,900,000 - Total concept budget

Mr. Bonfatti reviewed timelines as follows:

- Early Hunnewell - construction beginning in mid-2021; move-in date in 2023.
- Late Hunnewell -Hardy/Upham construction beginning in mid-2022; Upham/Hardy move-in date in 2024; Hunnewell construction beginning in 2024; Hunnewell move-in date in 2026; followed by old Hardy or Upham vacated in 2026 followed by demolition and completion of work on that site.

Ms. Gray encouraged committee members to submit questions concerning swing space to Mr. Kennedy and suggestions for developing a frequently asked questions document to her. She also told members to be prepared at the next meeting to discuss any lessons from the Hunnewell project that may help inform the process for the H/U project.

At approximately 8:50 upon a motion by Mr. Ulfelder and seconded by Mr. Gagosian the School Building Committee voted unanimously to adjourn. Note: the meeting of the School Committee continued after a short break.

#### **Documents and Exhibits used**

- Draft "School Spring" SBC Administrative Assistant Job Posting
- Draft contract and SMMA proposal for designer services for the Hardy/Upham Feasibility Study and Schematic Design dated 7/23/2019 with attached memo from SMMA outlining the scope of services and budget for reimbursable consultants
- SMMA Proposal for services through design and bidding phases of the Hunnewell Elementary School Project (rev. 7/25/2019)
- Compass Project Management Proposal for services through design and bidding phases of the Hunnewell Elementary School Project (7/23/2019)
- Compass Project Management and SMMA Power Point Presentation to SBC 08/01/2019
- Draft Hunnewell Feasibility Study Report and Appendices (08/01/2019)

**Approved 9/5/2019**