

# WELLESLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

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In light of the many questions that have emerged regarding the Town’s opportunity to partner with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) on elements of the Hardy, Hunnewell, and Upham project (HHU), the School Committee wishes to clarify several important points.

Chief among the questions raised recently is whether or not the MSBA process will allow the Town to examine the feasibility of building on either the Upham or Hardy sites, since the MSBA’s invitation to Wellesley names Upham exclusively.

The School Committee has never wavered from its belief that whether Upham or Hardy was invited into the MSBA eligibility process, the Town would require the flexibility to examine feasibility at both sites.

Over the past several weeks, Town officials have worked closely with the MSBA to clarify this important point, with the MSBA confirming this week a shared understanding that proceeding with the named Upham project will indeed allow the Town to conduct feasibility studies at both the Upham and Hardy sites:

*Based on our discussions, the MSBA understands that the Town is considering a district-wide redistricting effort as part of the feasibility study. This redistricting would signal options that could include a potential project at the existing site of the Upham Elementary School including the current Upham students plus additional students from other neighboring schools. Other options could include site(s) other than the Upham Elementary School site which would not necessarily include the Upham Elementary School students. The MSBA does not object to the options identified above being included as part of the feasibility study. However, it should be noted if options that include sites other than the Upham Elementary School site are selected, the District needs to ensure that the existing Upham Elementary School building will no longer be used as a K-5 facility. The Town and the MSBA will discuss this further as part of the enrollment discussion conducted during the Eligibility Period.*

**–MSBA email message to WPS on 5/7/2018**

We hope this confirmation from the MSBA clarifies this important question prior to Special Town Meeting, when feasibility and schematic design funds will be requested to move forward in this work. At the same time, we know there are many other questions about the scope of the feasibility study and subsequent decision-making process that will only be answered once this project moves forward, a designer is selected, and the Town works collaboratively with the MSBA to navigate this process.

There are many important and difficult decisions that lay ahead for our community regarding the HHU projects. It’s likely that there will be sharp disagreements on topics such as consolidating schools, school design, swing space, and redistricting. It is our hope that we can engage on these topics with thoughtfulness, transparency, respect, and a shared goal of creating world-class schools for our students.

For more information on the School Committee’s position statement on HHU, please visit:

<https://wellesleyps.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/HHU-Position-Statement-2018-05-08.pdf>