

Update on the Sandy Hook School from the Sandy Hook School Task Force

We wanted to take a moment and update you on our progress with the Sandy Hook Elementary School decision. As you may know, we are a task force of 28 individuals who serve as elected officials in Newtown. We have met three times and expect to meet one or two more times with our next meeting being held on Friday, May 3rd from 7:00pm to 9:30pm at the Municipal Center.

Our task force reviewed 40 options prepared by a technical advisory committee and the task force has narrowed those down over the last several weeks to two locations: 12 Riverside Road (the current school location) and 28 Riverside Road (also known as SAC field). Both locations would include the creation of a new access road and if the current location is chosen, the task force will also have to analyze whether the project should be a renovation to the existing building or a new build.

We wanted to encourage anyone interested to attend our next meeting on May 3rd and to review past task force meetings on the town's website at www.newtown-ct.gov (click on video on demand). You can also view the special study prepared by the Sandy Hook Advisory Committee on the town website or view it in the First Selectmen's Office or Land Use offices in the Municipal Center during business hours.

The hope of the task force facilitator is that we will further discuss and analyze the two options on May 3rd and be able to make a recommendation to the Board of Education. However, we have also allocated time for another meeting on May 10th if more time is needed.

It's also important to know that we have a couple of other parallel processes going on regarding the future of Sandy Hook Elementary School. First, the task force will make a recommendation to the Board of Education on location of the school. Second, the technical advisory committee continues its work to develop a building model and meet with state and local officials on permits, schedules, and protocols for design criteria of the project. Last, the legal team is working on the legal framework. Regardless of renovation or rebuild, when funding is considered, the town will hold a referendum as the appropriation spent on our behalf with state or federal funds still needs to be approved by referendum.

Again, we encourage you to weigh in on the fate and future of the building and program. Please feel free to join us at our next task force meeting Friday, May 3rd from 7:00pm to 9:30pm at the Municipal Center, view meetings at www.newtown-ct.gov or send any of the task force members (Board of Education, Finance Board, Board of Selectmen, or Legislative Council) an email or letter expressing your views.