

School Building Assistance Committee Meeting - November 12, 2012

Minutes

Members Present: Skip Marcella, Dave Girard, Dave Dockendorf, Mary Lou Osborne, John Macero, Debi McDonald, Bob DiMento, Karin Chavis, Barbara Flavin, Gerry Boyle, Tony Evangelista, Gary Skomro, Jim Letterie, Vinny Crossman.

Members Absent: Jim McKenna, Monica Ford, Martha Kelleher, Richard Lawton

Also in Attendance: Mary Ann Williams, Tina Stanislaski, George Metzger

Dave opened the meeting at 5 p.m.

Approval of Invoices: On a motion by Barbara Flavin, seconded by Karin Chavis, there was a unanimous vote to approve the invoice for Skanska in the amount of \$11,345. Invoices for HMFH were presented for approval but subsequent discussion raised the issue that the invoices had not been distributed to all members in advance of the meeting. There was a suggestion that we should still try to vet and approve these invoices so that in the event that there would not be a quorum at the Nov 15th meeting, they would be approved in timely fashion. (Our next meeting after Nov. 15th was scheduled for December 6th.) A suggestion was made to make copies of the 3 recap sheets for the invoices during this meeting and distributed to members for their consideration. The original motion to approve was withdrawn with the item to be taken up again, later in the meeting, after members were able to review the invoice recap sheets.

Feedback from MSBA: Mary Ann Williams reported on a preliminary feedback conference call with MSBA staff that also included John Macero, Mary Ann Williams, George Metzger, Tina Stanislaski, and Mary Lou Osborne.

Mary Ann stressed that there had been no formal, written response from MSBA, yet. During the call the MSBA raised issues of the Education Plan created around academic disciplines for the HS. MSBA suggested that our plan should reflect the possibility of switching to a project based layout in the future. They also asked that we make some revisions to further clarify the Education Plan. Concerns were expressed that a program currently in the MS, "MassStart," was serving younger students and therefore considered by MSBA to be a district-wide program which would not be subject to reimbursement. There were some concerns of square footage running over MSBA approved amounts in some areas. Specific mention was made that the Black Box square footage would come under the overall allotted square footage for the auditorium. We were cautioned that we reserve enough funds in the project to deal with HazMat issues. Mention was made of the need to deal with a 10,000 gallon fuel tank on the site and the need to also deal with a drainage easement on the HS property. MSBA also urged us to make sure we were able to get clear title if closing a portion of Cross Street was to be part of the

project. MSBA also told us that we need to respond to the question, “What happens to the current middle school building if the project that goes forward is a combined middle school/ high school.

This last item opened up a discussion on addressing a re-use of the MS. Some concerns were that while the current MS was at this time under the control of the School Committee, the committee had neither the expertise nor any budget to address this concern. In the event that the MS is vacated by the school department, both the School Committee Buildings and Grounds subcommittee and the Town Council Capital Assets committee would be convened to deal with the issue. Since MSBA raised this issue and because the townspeople keep raising the question of what would happen to an empty MS building, the discussion turned to the SBAC establishing a Re-use committee to advise the School Committee and Town Council. Some potential uses of the MS building were raised at this time, including possible for profit educational uses and a new fire station. There was a great concern among us that the townspeople did not want an empty, mothballed building in the center of town, especially since we have some buildings that have remained empty for so long. Mention was made that another community established a re-use committee for their empty school building and they were able to engage a local university’s urban planning department to assist them.

A motion was made by John Macero, seconded by Barbara Flavin to establish a Middle School Re-use Committee which would consist of: School Committee member or designee of SC, Town Council member or designee of TC, Supt or designee, Town Manager or designee, Facilities Manager or designee and two SBAC members-at-large. The motion passes unanimously.

The committee next took up the HMFH Invoices raised earlier in the meeting after the committee had been able to review the information. Mary Ann assured us that she had vetted these invoices earlier in the day with her recommendation that we approve them for payment. The motion to approve the invoices totaling \$87,784.53 was made by Barbara Flavin and seconded by Jim Letterie. The motion passed unanimously (with the exception of Gerry Boyle and John Macero who had stepped out of the meeting temporarily.)

Tina and George next presented **five variations of Option A** to us. All would be a renovation/addition project for grades 6-12, all with larger spaces than currently existing for gym and auditorium, but one shows a much larger gym.

A-1 creates a HS classroom wing in the new, 2 story addition, eliminating the current courtyard and replaced with a larger auditorium and the library being moved to where the auditorium currently is. The 8th grade classes would be clustered on the Payson/Main street first floor corner with the 6th and 7th grades classrooms on the front and sides of the second floor. And entrance for MS would be on Main Street with the HS entrance located on Payson Street. **Total estimated project cost: \$66,276,832.00**

A-2 uses the new addition space to house a new, much larger gym space. The library would be located in the current courtyard space and the auditorium in it’s current location. The current gym space would be used for some classrooms and a new courtyard space, adjacent to the Black Box, creating the possibility of outdoor performance space. The 8th grade classrooms are clustered on the Payson/Main Street first floor corner with the 6th and 7th grades located above on the second floor and extending to the back of

the building. HS classrooms are located on the Cross Street/Main Street half of the building. **Total estimated project cost: \$67,685,332.00**

A-3 uses the addition wing as performing arts space with a new auditorium. The gym is located in the current space. The library is moved down into the current auditorium space. This variation of Option A maintains the current courtyard space. Grade 8 classrooms are on the first floor, Payson /Main Street corner with 6th and 7th grade classrooms located on the second floor spread around the front and sides of the building. HS classrooms are mainly on the second floor at the back of the building, including part of the new addition space. **Total estimated project cost: \$60,956,932.00**

A-4 uses a 3-story new addition to house the middle school classrooms and moves the auditorium into the current courtyard space. **Total estimated project cost: \$72,564,172.00**

A-5 uses a new, two-story classroom addition to house HS classrooms with the MS classroom all located on the second floor of the renovated building. This variation also eliminated the courtyard, moving the auditorium into this space and the library into the existing auditorium space. **Total estimated project cost: \$66,276,832.00**

Option B is now All New Construction (no longer using the existing foundation) with an expanded footprint and 3 stories. This option locates all HS classrooms in the Payson Street side of the project and all MS classrooms in a Cross/Main Street corner wing. Total estimated project cost: **\$81,731,252.00**

Option C is a Gut Renovation of the Existing HS, to house grades 9-12 only. Total estimated project cost: **\$51,773,992.00**

HMFH also provided us with a Pros/Cons comparison chart, comparing all options, assigning the plus(+) symbol to items considered pro, a minus (-) symbol to items considered cons, and a circle (o) symbol for neutral items. In totaling the “scores,” the top three options were Option B with 11 pluses (+), Option A-4 with 8 pluses (+) and Option A-5 with 6 pluses (+).

Much time was spent on discussing the variations of Option A since we thought there would be confusion in introducing the community to more than one A option, so we wanted to bring just one Option A forward to the community meeting on November 14th. While the committee saw the advantages in A-3’s larger gym, after assurances that the gym space in A-4 and A-5 would be adequate for both MS and HS gym classes, the committee focused on choosing between A-4 and A-5 since they both gave the most distinct, separate locations to the MS and HS portions of the building. As long as all designs met the Educational Plans for Winthrop and allowed us to make our plans unique to our educational community, we felt that MSBA would allow us to reduce some square footage from classroom space. This would allow for a Black Box, for example. Debi pointed out that A-5 gave more flexibility to swap MS grade classrooms as the populations for grades changed. After a lengthy discussion, a motion was made by Tony, seconded by Barbara to choose A-5. A unanimous vote followed.

Discussion continued to include comments about Options B and C. Vinny raised the issue of Option B being a three story building that might be of concern to abutters. He compared the issue of Atlantis Marina and how that project negatively impacted neighbors views. George responded that to reduce the project to two stories, we would need more land coverage – a problem with the flood plain issues and playing fields in the area. He also suggested that the issue of “view” was a qualitative one. (What view would be blocked by a three story building at the HS location?) Also of note was that the smaller foundation for a three-story building would be cheaper than a bigger footprint foundation for a two story building. It was pointed out that estimated project costs for all options included Miller Field (not turf field, however) but not the cost of swing space/temporary classrooms. Also, the cost of demolition is not covered. Some parts of Miller Field are reimbursable but there are too many variables in play right now to determine what’s eligible for reimbursement and what’s not. John brought up the possibility of matching grants for the field costs.

John explained that at the November 14th Community presentation, those in attendance would be given stickers to indicate their 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice on the three option boards.

Dave Dockendorf gave a brief update on the website informing us that, to date, Vinnie Ruocco had posted 29 documents of the SBAC page of the website.

The meeting ended at approximately 7:20 with unanimous vote, based on a motion to adjourn by Skip, seconded by John.