

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, September 25, 2015
Mansion Room, Community Center
35 Marrett Road

PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Mary Czajkowski, Chair Jessie Steigerwald, Margaret Coppe, Judy Crocker, Bill Hurley
Absent: Alessandro Alessandrini

ALSO PRESENT: Interim Finance Director Ian Dailey, Director of Facilities (DPF) Pat Goddard, Selectmen Chair Joe Pato and Suzie Barry, Town Manager Carl Valente, Permanent Building Committee (PBC) Chair Jon Himmel

The minutes were taken by Judy Crocker.

At **7:32 am**, the Chair called the meeting to order.

Agenda:

1. Pre-Kindergarten, Elementary, and Middle School Capital Projects

a. Review of Selectmen's September 21, 2015, Vote to Release Funds

Ms. Steigerwald asked Mr. Goddard to review his September 21 presentation to the Selectmen. Mr. Goddard stated that the Board of Selectmen (BoS) voted to:

- Proceed with Clarke and Diamond design documents, including Diamond cafeteria relocation and additional ILP space
- Proceed with Clarke and Diamond schematic design study of Clarke partitions, Diamond mechanical upgrade, and science space at both schools
- Continue with Pelham property schematic design
- Pause on Fiske design documents for Brick and Mortar addition

Mr. Goddard expressed concerns of a lack of resources to continue with the four projects as proposed by the School Committee, namely Clarke, Diamond, Pelham and Fiske.

New to the discussion since the BoS's meeting, Mr. Goddard stated that the Inspector General's office would not allow Lexington to switch the Fiske and Pelham projects within the current design selection RFP process involving Construction Managers (CM). Lexington must now advertise separately for Pelham. Advertising will go out shortly and the process takes about six weeks. However, during this time period, priority schematic design studies to support the intended building use can continue. For example, this includes how best to layout for K-5 classrooms and identifying system needs for the building. This is being done with the understanding that the Town has limited access to the building.

Mr. Hurley expressed strong concerns that the multiple school projects may need more than one architect if the current firm could not handle the workload. Mr. Goddard explained the benefits of having one firm – knowledge of all the moving pieces and long-time, respected, working relationship with DiNisco Design.

Mr. Hurley also expressed concern over not knowing the design documents funding needed for Pelham as well as an overcrowding back-up plan if Pelham cannot be occupied for fall 2017. He is satisfied to pause on Fiske if Pelham can be online when proposed. Ms. Steigerwald conveyed a correspondence from Mr. Alessandrini that stated that without Fiske, standard modular must be put back on the table for Bridge, Bowman, and Fiske.

Superintendent Czajkowski stated that she needs time to organize the proposed K-5 building and to create a redistricting plan to use this space.

Mr. Goddard stated that there is about \$900,000 remaining in the March Special Town Meeting funds that can cover the current and proposed Pelham schematic design.

Ms. Crocker echoed Mr. Hurley's concerns over a lack of resources. This is the third time Facilities has mentioned apprehension over too much work with not enough resources. She stated that the district's educational needs should push the agenda, not lack of personnel who can be hired i.e. a second architectural firm. She is concerned about meeting the building scheduling and enrollment timeline district needs and how Fiske was the "Plan B" if the Pelham property was not timely. She also wants a second access point from the community center property to be included in the current study.

In addition, she was surprised that Hastings is not included on the BoS's list for it was listed as first on the School Committee's list of school capital projects. She was under the impression that Hastings would continue to move forward so as to stay on a fall 2018 timeline and only pause for a financing decision when MSBA renders a decision in mid-December.

Mr. Goddard said that funds approved in July will carry Hastings through December.

b. Discussion of Next Steps in Preparation for November Special Town Meeting

The purpose of the November Special Town Meeting (STM) is to secure funds to proceed with design and schematic studies between December 2015 and March 2016. This includes Hastings.

Ms. Steigerwald asked how the BoS would release monies for Pelham. Mr. Goddard replied that there are two options: wait for the proposed monies to be determined or ask the BoS to release monies for Pelham work as a placeholder. This would need to be discussed at future BoS meetings. Mr. Himmel stated that the STM needs for

the Pelham property include its budget, schedule, and preliminary not schematic plans. Mr. Goddard advocated for the lump sum to be given to DiNisco. The firm does a lot of Lexington work and has always been trustworthy. Mr. Himmel estimates that 2-3 times the current Pelham expenditure of \$21,000 would be needed so that the priority plans can be accomplished for STM. The PBC can assist as requested. Mr. Goddard agreed and will talk with DiNisco prior to the September 29 School Committee meeting for the Pelham funding sum needed to be released. Everyone present was in support of this action.

Mr. Hurley noted that we won't know by STM if Pelham will be online for fall 2017, therefore a Plan B needs to be included.

Ms. Coppe asked about the state of the Pelham negotiating progress. Mr. Valente said that the eminent domain timeline is about two months and can occur after STM. STM can be asked to negotiate eminent domain. This approach will clear any possible title issues.

Ms. Steigerwald mentioned some of the recently received parent emails. Hastings has been waiting for its HVAC system to be addressed. Mr. Goddard stated that a lot of work has gone into Hastings to make it structurally sound and environmentally safe. The building is showing its age, as seen last winter when a gym beam had to be replaced and ice dams water infiltration affected 16 classrooms. Its 15-20 year old standard modulars have building envelop concerns. The building has multiple issues but the educational spaces are challenging but adequate.

Superintendent Czajkowski reported on the September 22 walk-through visit by the MSBA, attended by their two engineers and Diane Sullivan. They reviewed documents, areas of concern, the educational programs, and toured the building. Lexington should hear from MSBA if the Town qualifies for reimbursement funding in mid-December.

The conversation turned to concerns of overcrowding at Bridge, Bowman, and Fiske for fall 2016. Phase One of the redistricting plan would address current inadequate space at 3 elementary schools and would use existing space at Estabrook and Harrington. If Pelham doesn't happen, a Plan B is needed.

A 4-0 straw vote was taken to make Hastings a priority with or without MSBA funding and independent of other projects.

If Pelham is not available for any reason for fall 2017, the discussion turned to Harrington, Fiske, and the use of standard modulars. Scenarios included:

- Harrington study results determine if more cost effective to proceed with Harrington over Fiske
- Fiske brick and mortar addition and Bridge/Bowman standard modulars

- If no additional building space is added by 2018, then lease standard modular for this gap period.

Mr. Godard will discuss these scenarios with the PBC on October 1.

The decided-upon goal (straw vote 3-1: Coppe) is to build more permanent brick and mortar at Pelham or Harrington and to use standard modular during the gap interval. Mr. Goddard discussed the timeline for standard modular acquisition. For an October 2017 date, bid packages go out in January and orders must be placed by March.

The date for Pelham information needed for the March STM is to be determined.

A 4-0 straw vote was taken for the following to be requested for the November STM warrant:

- New Hastings design documents
- Acquire Pelham property
 - Proceed with design documents
 - If Town does not acquire Pelham, proceed with using Estabrook and Harrington open classrooms and then access additional space needs of Bridge, Bowman, and Fiske for Fall 2017 to determine if standard modulars will be necessary.
- Clarke and Diamond design documents
- Harrington design documents for renovations of LCP space

Ms. Coppe left at 8:30am.

Mr. Hurley asked to revisit his request for a lower cost estimate for the ILP program change at Diamond. It is not an add/alternate based on Director of Special Education Ellen Sugita's correspondences. Mr. Goddard said that the information should be available at the next PBC meeting on October 1.

Ms. Crocker described the School Committee's need to vote on the proposed updated PBC charge at their September 29 meeting. She believed that it is time sensitive and action is required before STM by both this committee and the BoS. Mr. Valente agreed.

8:38am Adjourn: On a motion made by Hurley and seconded by Crocker, the School Committee voted unanimously 3-0 to adjourn at 8:38am.

Materials:

School Committee summary of multiple building project options from September 16 meeting

Voted Approved by School Committee 2.2.16