

BEVERLY MIDDLE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING

Date/Time of meeting: January 14, 2014 at 7 PM
Location of meeting: Memorial Building, 502 Cabot Street, Beverly, MA
Participants: Albert Argenziano; Bryant Ayles; George Binns; Raymond Bouchard; Michael Cahill; Janet Chrisos; Michael Collins; Maria Decker; Betsy Desmond; Robert Fortado; David Gelineau; Roy Gelineau; William Guzowski; David Manzi; Judy Miller; Joanna Murphy Scott; Joseph Remondi; Thaddeus Siemasko.
Staff: Denise Deschamps; Jean Sherburne.

Meeting Notes

Submission of Enrollment Questionnaire to the Massachusetts School Building Authority

Per the requirement of the Massachusetts School Building Authority the City of Beverly, submitted the completed enrollment questionnaire to the MSBA on January 14, 2014. The information provided by the City will be analyzed by MSBA and used to help determine the enrollment projection for the new middle school.

Milestones

Discussion then moved to the schedule of key milestones that lay ahead. Those that were mentioned include the educational specifications drafted by Supt. Argenziano. These were drafted to get a sense of the square footage that will be required per educational space and the cost associated. However, once the architect is hired he/she will work with the school district to identify its needs, analyze those needs and produce a final version of the educational specifications. The City Council has already approved the appropriation of \$1.5 million for the Feasibility Study. Enrollment projections were submitted to the MSBA on January 14, 2014. MSBA needs to review enrollment data then will meet with the City. Then MSBA will send letter to City publishing its enrollment projection for the new middle school. In the very near future the District will need to finalize the grade configuration for the middle school. Will it be grades 5-8 or 6-8? This is a very important decision because it will impact the enrollment number and the size of the building required.

Public Engagement-Grade Reconfiguration

A series of meetings with parents, in each elementary school, need to take place by the end of January or early February. Certain members of the public school administration and staff will play a role in these presentations. Generally, issues to be discussed are the social, emotional and academic impact of a grade reconfiguration which would include grades 5-8. Discussion would also include a general description of the building design which would separate grades 5-6 from grades 7-8. It would also be beneficial to have

information about other school districts that have adopted the grade 5-8 configuration. What exactly is the agenda for these meetings? This needs to be discussed with the School Committee and finalized. Anyone is welcome to attend these meetings but parents of students will be the targeted audience. Any presentation at the meetings should include a list of the reasons supporting reconfiguration of the grades. Identify what opportunities result from reconfiguration. The Mayor and Superintendent will speak with one another tomorrow in more detail re the content of the presentations and time line. It may be a challenge for the community to reach consensus on a grade configuration plan in a timely fashion.

What has the public heard about the project thus far? Matthew Poska did present the findings of an ad hoc committee to public during two meetings in 2011. However, there had not been any public conversations about the issue since that time. Therefore, parents will need to be informed directly about upcoming meetings and the meetings will also be publicized on BevCam.

The previously projected date of the new middle school opening, year 2017, is an important issue. In order to meet that date the City will have to hit every milestone on time. In the immediate future the City will need to submit a Maintenance and Capital Planning document in April. This document is almost entirely complete. The long term capital planning may not be what they hope to receive because most of our buildings are new and so do not need extensive maintenance. To stay on course the City would like to meet with the MSBA Board in March if at all possible and in April at the latest.

The Committee members received a report from NESDEC entitled 2013-14 Enrollment Projections. It was noted that the report “flat lines” the projected enrollment from years 2013-2023.

Project Cost

The draft educational specifications which were distributed include an assumption for rate of reimbursement from MSBA of 55/45 assuming bonus points. If it is decided that the 5th grade will not be included in the middle school grade configuration approximately \$20 million could be subtracted from the estimated cost of construction. It was recommended that you construct a building of sufficient size so that Pre-K classes may be held in the elementary schools. Dr. Argenziano shared his draft education specifications with the City's former Finance Director, John Dunn, who felt the estimated cost to the City of \$26 million was reasonably accurate. A Committee member suggested that cost of construction now is \$440/SF and it may be more once the City reaches the point of breaking ground. Another committee suggested that the City may wish to explore the possibility of including grades 4,5,6,7,8 in the middle school if enrollment increases in the elementary schools, which are new, in order to avoid future overcrowding. It was mentioned that the MSBA process will naturally drive us to critically analyze the costs of building a middle school in great detail. The Beverly Middle School Building Committee was also reminded that the purpose of the upcoming Feasibility Study is to analyze the current middle school and its deficiencies and determine if the current middle school

should be rehabilitated or if a new site for the middle school should be identified and then if that site should be the Memorial Building.

Beverly School Committee-Grade Reconfiguration

All information related to the impact of grade reconfiguration will need to be conveyed to the School Committee in order for this body to make its final recommendation.

The School Committee has formed a study group including School Committee members Paul Manzo, Annmarie McNulty-Cesa and Kristin Silverstein in addition to citizen representatives and school administration to examine the question of whether a grade 5-8 or 6-8 configuration is preferable. The study group will reach a conclusion in 5 weeks.

The Mayor stated that the City would reach out to parents. Paul Manzo stated that the School Committee could reach out through BevCam

Potential Subcommittees of Middle School Building Committee

The School Building Committee formed during the *new high school* construction divided into five subcommittees: (1) technology; (2) alternate construction materials; (3) fields and grounds; (4) green building alternative energy; (5) Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment. The current School Building Committee does not necessarily need to recreate this subcommittee structure. In the past these Subcommittees invited additional members to join the subcommittee only in order to inform their discussion. At this point it is too early to populate these subcommittees. These subcommittees may not be populated until Summer/Fall after the Owner's Project Manager and Designer have been selected.

OPM/Designer Selection Process

Once we hire an OPM and designer the decision-making process is fast-paced. In order to select an OPM, who is selected before the designer, an OPM Selection Committee will be formed. The City will issue a Request for Qualifications, interview applicants and make the selection. How long will it take the City to write an RFS for the OPM and long will it need to be posted? The OPM will need a broad set of skills such as working with new construction, rehab, working with students in a building. The City will be speaking with MSBA regarding the details of this process. Send your name to Denise Deschamps if you would like to sit on the OPM Selection Committee. The City needs to keep the OPM Selection Committee at an odd number so when they need to take a vote there are no ties. As regards the selection of a designer the MSBA casts 12 of the 15 votes in the selection process. It was advised that the RFS for the designer be customized as much as possible based on City's experience with the high school construction to ensure the City attract designers with the skills and experience necessary. Once construction is underway there are weekly meetings with relevant parties as well as weekly briefings with the Mayor to discuss the process, finances, change orders and other topics as they arise. The OPM and designer take the lead in conducting the Feasibility Study.

Feasibility Study

There were a variety of comments made regarding issues that will be addressed as part of Feasibility Study including: Is the Memorial parcel big enough to accommodate the new middle school along with fields, parking, etc? Yes. There is an issue of where the buses will park. MSBA has walked the Memorial site and informally indicated their support for it as an alternate site for the middle school. There are advantages to having a multi-storied building as opposed to a sprawling footprint

Various Requests/Questions by Committee Members

Member(s) would like a schedule for the OPM Selection process.

The Committee would like a set of the MSBA regulations Michael Collins was referencing and highlight the specific pages related to the School Building Committee.

The technology plan is a critical component in order to understand what infrastructure is necessary to support the plan implementation. People would like to learn more about educational programming before the subcommittees are identified.

The Committee had questions regarding which services are reimbursable by MSBA, specifically which consultants services are covered? What components of the project are reimbursable: furniture, testing agent, etc?

Members want a copy of the Strategic Planning Committee Report from 2011.

What can committee members do now to help process along?

Next Meeting of the Beverly Middle School building Committee

The Beverly Middle School Building Committee will schedule a meeting after the vote relative to the reconfiguration takes place.