

Name of Committee: Brookline School Population and Capacity Exploration (B-SPACE)

Meeting Date: January 28, 2013      Time: 6:30 p.m.      Meeting Location: Town Hall,  
School Committee Room

Committee Members - present marked with "x"

Betsy DeWitt	x	Philip Kramer	x
Alan Morse	x	Bill Lupini	
George Cole		Michael Sandman	x
Katherine Craven		Rebecca Stone	x
Lisa Crossley	x	Fred Wang	
Ken Goldstein	x	Neil Wishinsky	x
Mel Kleckner	x		

Staff Present: Peter Rowe, Deputy Superintendent of Schools; Sean Cronin, Deputy Town Administrator.

Topic: Approval of minutes of 1-14-13

Approved.

Topic: Meeting Schedule

- Co-Chair Alan Morse reviewed the revised meeting schedule:

Monday, February 11<sup>th</sup>  
Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup> (as part of a School Committee meeting)  
Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup>  
Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, April 29<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Monday, June 17<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, July 1<sup>st</sup>

Topic: Explanation of Town Capital Expenditure Options and Limitations

- Deputy Town Administrator Sean Cronin made a PowerPoint presentation, which is included in its entirety at the end of these minutes.
- Key observations made throughout the presentation were the following:

- The Town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Funding Policy calls for 6% of Prior Year Net Revenue to be dedicated to the CIP. This is split between debt-financing and "pay-as-you-go" (cash).
  - The CIP Funding Policy and the Free Cash Policy call for an amount of Free Cash to be dedicated to the CIP so that total CIP funding reaches 7.5% of Prior Year Net Revenue.
  - The Town's has a Debt Management Plan that is revised annually as part of the CIP process. The Debt Management Plan plays a key role in developing a CIP within the Town's CIP Funding Policies.
  - The 6% Funding Policy acts as both a floor and a ceiling so decision makers know how much funding is available for capital and, therefore, not available for the operating budget.
  - Within the 6%, if more debt is used to finance projects, then there will be less "pay-as-you-go" capital available, which puts pressure on smaller projects that are normally funded with cash rather than with debt.
  - The proposed FY14 – FY19 CIP is balanced and complies with all CIP policies and does not rely on a Debt Exclusion Override for the Devotion School project.
  - However, when the debt service for the Devotion School project comes on-line in FY18, the amount of debt service increases significantly, which reduces the cash-financed portion of the 6% to very low levels.
  - Because of this, the "out-years" of the CIP is very tight.
- The Committee discussed the ramifications of a Debt Exclusion Override for the Devotion School project. Deputy TA Cronin stated that while the CIP is balanced without a debt exclusion, there are trade-offs. Specifically, the out-years of the CIP include fewer projects due to most the 6% funding going to service debt for the project. He also pointed that there will be additional operating costs in the School budget due to the re-use of the Old Lincoln School as a "ninth school" and the School budget cannot afford them. Because of this, the discussion of an Operating Override will need to occur. Since there is a chance an Operating Override might be needed, then asking the taxpayers to increase their taxes for both the Devotion School project and for operating purposes might be too much. Therefore, making sacrifices in the CIP in order to fund Devotion within available CIP funds (i.e., no Debt Exclusion) is his recommendation.
  - Committee members asked about current Debt Exclusions. Deputy TA Cronin responded that FY13 is the last debt service payment for the New Lincoln School and that additional taxing authority goes away in FY14. For the High School, the last debt service payment is in 10 years and that additional taxing authority ends then.
  - Ken Goldstein pointed out that the CIP as proposed does not include any funding for space needs at the High School, and there will be capital costs associated with addressing space needs there once the larger classes in the elementary schools reach the high school. Deputy TA Cronin responded that is accurate; a study is underway to determine potential costs. Once the costs are known, it will be factored into next year's CIP.

Topic: Presentation of Short-Term Space Plans FY14-FY15

- Deputy School Superintendent Peter Rowe made a PowerPoint presentation, which is included in its entirety at the end of these minutes.
- Key observations made throughout the presentation were the following:
  - There are 37 more classrooms in the K-8 schools now than in 2006.
  - The School Committee wants to avoid what they are starting to see: higher class sizes in the lower grades than in the upper grades.
  - What were 2 – 4 section schools are now 4 – 6 section schools.
  - Potentially placing modular classrooms at Lawrence and Baker schools for next school year.
  - If modular classrooms are not used, then would need to do the following:

<b>FY14 Probable Space Scenario's</b>			
<b>School</b>		<b>Space</b>	<b>Pre-K Emeth/ Ohabei Shalom</b>
Baker		Music/Teachers Room	Yes 1
	5 K's	4 4th's	
		No Dedicated Music	
		Move Out Pre-K	
Devotion		Music becomes Classroom	-
	5 K's		
		No dedicated Music Room	
Driscoll		Consolidate Pre-K Classrooms	Yes 1
	4 K's*	Move out Pre-K	
Heath		No Change	-
	3 K's		
Lawrence		Consolidate SPED Classes (for 4th K)	-
	3 K's		
Lincoln		Consolidate 7th to 2 sections	
	4 K's	Move Pre-K	Yes 1
Pierce		Move Computer Lab	Yes 1
	5 K's*	Move Out Pre-K	
Runkle		No Change	-
	3 K's		
	32 K's		4 Pre-K's
		* K's currently at Devotion and Lawrence	
		Will require reassignment of students	

- As noted in the table, without modular classrooms, K classes currently at Devotion and Lawrence will require the reassignment of students.
- Different scenarios of future in-coming classes were analyzed, including 540 students, 600 students, and 660 students. The 600 – 660 range is what is most likely for each of the next few years, and that results in the need for between 265 – 286 classrooms by FY20, an increase of between 23 – 44 classrooms.

Topic: Brief Sketch of Space Plan Options of FY15 and Beyond

- Deputy School Superintendent Peter Rowe explained that the Old Lincoln School is the one available space the Schools have. The plan is to re-open it as a school for the 2014/2015 school year.
- In response to Committee member questions, he explained how the Baldwin School and Lynch building are being used: the Winthrop House program and employee daycare at the Baldwin School and BEEP programs at Lynch.
- Co-Chair Morse noted that it is the desire of the School Committee to ultimately have pre-K's back in the K-8 schools. Unfortunately, in order to make space in the schools, the pre-K's have been moved out in each of the past few years.
- Committee members asked what the impact is on the Devotion School project of using Old Lincoln as a "9<sup>th</sup> school". Deputy School Superintendent Peter Rowe answered that doing so would make Old Lincoln unavailable for use as swing space. The Devotion School Concept Study recently completed by HMFH had various options for phasing the project and keeping students on-site. He also noted that even if available, Old Lincoln is not large enough to fit all Devotion students.

Topic: Public Comments

- Members of the public expressed concern about the logistical issues that come from moving pre-K's and K's around to different schools. They asked the Committee to be cognizant of those concerns.
- Members of the public asked how the public can participate in the decision making process and about public notification. Co-Chair Morse explained that this Committee will be holding public hearings. Those hearings will help inform the Committee's recommendations, which will be made to both the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen. Rebecca Stone reminded members of the public that the individual school PTO's and Site Councils are the primary points of contact.

Topic: Presenting Space Issues to the Public

- Co-Chair Morse reminded the Committee of the discussion prompted by Fred Wang at the last meeting regarding communication with the public and how to best present

complicated and complex information in the best and most simple manner. He asked who was willing to volunteer to develop the best communication strategy. Rebecca Stone, Lisa Crossley and Neil Wishinsky volunteered.

Topic: Wrap-Up

- Co-Chair Morse asked Committee members to think about what questions they would like to explore at the next meeting. Philip Kramer would like to get a better understanding on how the proposed Hancock Village project impacts the Committee's work. Even if the impact is 7 – 10 years out, there could be an additional 250 students. Town Administrator Mel Kleckner wants to further discuss Debt Exclusion impacts. He also wants to discuss potential modifications to school schedules. Lastly, he would like to get an understanding of the revenues and expenses of the Early Ed program. Michael Sandman wants to discuss the impact on classroom needs caused by accepting METCO students and the children of Town/School employees.

Committee adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sean Cronin  
Deputy Town Administrator