

Capital Improvements Subcommittee Minutes  
Friday, April 8, 2016  
8:00 AM – 10:10 AM  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, Town Hall

Capital Improvements Subcommittee Members present: David Pollak (Chairman), Barbara Scotto, and Rebecca Stone.

Capital Improvements Subcommittee Members absent: Helen Charlupski.

Other School Committee Members present: Susan Wolf Ditkoff (by phone).

School Staff present: Joe Connelly, Mary Ellen Dunn, Matt Gillis, and Robin Coyne.

Other Staff Present: Ray Masak.

Others Present: Carla Benka and Sean Lynn-Jones (Advisory Committee) and David Lescohier (Town Meeting Precinct 11).

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM.

**1) Approve Minutes of the March 11, 2016 Capital Improvements Subcommittee Meeting**

On a motion of Ms. Stone and seconded by Ms. Scotto, the Capital Improvements Subcommittee voted UNANIMOUSLY to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2016 Capital Improvements Subcommittee meeting.

**2) Update on 9<sup>th</sup> School Site Search Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and other Work related to Site Determination**

The Committee discussed the schedule for the RFQ and study. We budgeted 90 days for the study and a month for revisions and would like a draft back in August. We will provide the consultant with any preliminary site documents. The Committee of Seven will probably interview a small number of the respondents. There were 20 firms at the pre-bid session; half were architects. We believe we will get some excellent applicants and will need to determine which firm is most qualified and most prepared to meet the deadline.

The Committee discussed the need for legal clarification related to various sites of interest for the 9<sup>th</sup> school. Town Counsel will provide a summary of the research that underpins her opinions in the two earlier memos. The School Committee would like a risk assessment for each property (Article 97, wetlands, zoning, etc.) and to understand whether an issue is legal vs political.

**3) Review and Discussion of Town Bylaw “Article 3.7 Building Commission; Procedure for the Construction and Alteration of Town Buildings and Structures.”**

The Committee discussed the need for broad stakeholder participation in relation to major school building projects. The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) dictates the makeup and responsibilities of the School Building Committee for MSBA partnership projects. The Town’s bylaws are silent on the topic. There was consensus that we should establish a School Building Committee with membership similar to what is required by MSBA. This Committee might be smaller than what is required by MSBA. Dr. Connelly, in consultation with the Building Department, will come back with formal recommendations for a committee framework (not names).

Ms. Dunn referred to the email from the Building Commissioner Dan Bennett regarding projected Building Department staffing requirements for the two planned projects (9<sup>th</sup> school and BHS).

*The Construction/Renovation Division of the Building Department supports the Building Commission, in accordance with Article 3.7 of the Town By-Laws, and participates in the selection of design consultants, reviews and approves plans, receives proposals and maintains supervision of the Town's capital program. The Project Administrator, Project manager and Project Representative serve as agents of the Building Commission. The project team works with various Town and School departments for the design and construction of new projects and major renovations.*

*The three member staff is responsible for implementing the Town and School CIP program. Currently there are many ongoing projects funded in the current and previous fiscal years including Devotion School, Municipal Service Center, Roof Repair/Replacement Program, Building Envelope Program, Elevator Repairs, Reservoir Gate House, Devotion House, Pool repointing shower repair, Fire Station repairs to name a few. In FY17 new projects will be funded and staff will initiate work. As projects progress toward completion others are bid and construction commences on new projects. The project schedules vary depending on the type of work, time of year, using agency operations and many other factors.*

*The Department has been monitoring staffing levels over the past few years due to an aggressive CIP, the school overcrowding and how this issue would be addressed. During six months in 2015 the department hired a temporary full-time employee to assist staff with the work load on an as needed basis. This approach worked well and satisfied our needs on a temporary basis without committing to a full-time hire.*

*In order to prepare for the upcoming demands on staff, we reviewed current project schedules and future projects. This summer Devotion School will be in the early stages of abatement, site enabling work and demolition; it will then move to full construction. At this time the Project Manager (OPM) and Project Representative (Owner Rep) will devote all of their time to this project. This leaves the Project Manager (PM) available to carry out and implement current and new CIP projects. As of now, the schedule of some ongoing projects and understanding the current timeline of future projects we are anticipating hiring a temporary full-time employee (TFTE) on an as needed basis into FY17. The work load for the PM and TFTE would be monitored periodically. If there are indications the hours should be increased, we would adjust as needed.*

*Looking further ahead, we would monitor the progression set forth in the timeline dated March 3, 2016 and other factors including the implementation of the CIP and the two school feasibility studies. If there is clear progress and advancement we can revisit staffing and hire accordingly. If progress stalls or there is slow progress due to some unforeseen circumstances we can wait until the appropriate time to look at staffing.*

#### **4) Update on Brookline High School Expansion Planning**

The Superintendent and Headmaster have convened a small group that is working together and with the Visioning Study consultant SMMA to finalize the Visioning Study and prepare for the Feasibility Study. Ms. Holman will be meeting with staff to discuss education options for a 2,500-3,000 student high school. We will be considering buildings on the campus as well as off campus sites such as Old Lincoln School and Baldwin. The working group will be meeting several times including on April 28, 2016. There will be a faculty meeting on May 5, 2016 to get feedback from staff and then a community presentation in early June.

The educational leadership at the high school will be coming up with viable options for pedagogical delivery that would encompass different models. Questions include the following.

What are the options that BHS can imagine for 2,500 to 3,000 students? What is the tipping point where the site doesn't work for a single campus?

The conversations shouldn't focus too much on the physical locations. We want to provide a program to the designers to start feasibility that is open and multi-pronged. There are different ways we could expand depending on physical plant opportunities, limited by cost, traffic, scheduling, etc. We don't necessarily want answers to these issues at this point; that will be undertaken as part of the feasibility study. The administration has feasibility study templates from other districts.

Designer selection for the feasibility study will be over the summer, and the feasibility study will begin in the fall and conclude in the spring. The study will then be able to be presented and reviewed in the spring and presented to Annual Town Meeting in conjunction with an F16 funding request to proceed into Schematic Design for the project. Assuming Schematic Design could be completed in the fall it would allow for a possible override/budget vote in November 2017 (or possibly later). Once project funding was in place it might take a year to finalize construction documents and two years for construction.

The 9<sup>th</sup> school is anticipated to be on a similar schedule, with site selection completed by sometime in November, 2016. The 9<sup>th</sup> school feasibility study should be less complicated than the high school feasibility study. Both projects could be ready for a vote in the fall of 2017. The real schedules for each project will be highly dependent on the sites and complexity of the building programs.

Ms. Stone felt that we shouldn't be looking at this as trying to figure out the "least bad" option; rather, we should look at this as an opportunity to provide a really good experience. We could consider possibilities like a common 9<sup>th</sup> grade experience and a separate campus magnet model for grades 10-12, perhaps specializing in STEM, STEAM, or the Arts. A 9<sup>th</sup> grade campus for 700 would not fit at Old Lincoln School. Is there a program that BHS is already familiar with and values that we could scale up?

The Committee discussed how the 111 Cypress Street property fits into the process. It's a highly interesting property that may offer one option of addressing the Brookline High School (BHS) expansion project; however, we won't drive pedagogical solutions through real estate decisions that are this speculative. We need to proceed through the planning/feasibility process for BHS. We need to be clear that we are not at a point where the town can say they are acquiring the property for the schools. The Committee discussed asking the School Committee to vote on a statement that indicates there is potential interest on the part of the schools, but that we could not commit to using this property until we understand the pedagogical direction of the high school and understand the basic question of whether we could fit 2,500-3,000 students on the campus's footprint and the implications for issues such as parking and traffic.

Ms. Stone stated that she does not believe that having 2,500 students plus staff on that campus is a good option. Other members felt that we don't have enough information and don't know the best approaches for one campus and a split campus. We could look at the possibility of underground parking and possible re-use of the Tappan Street gym buildings.

There was consensus that the Committee should ask the School Committee to vote on a statement that we are interested in the site, but could not commit to using it without more planning.

Mr. Masak stated that SMMA will complete the traffic study that is part of their Visioning Study contract based on enrollment of 2,400 students. It will not be an extensive traffic study. There

may need to be a follow-up study that is more robust and looks at parking options and other issues, perhaps as part of a feasibility study.

The Capital Improvements program (CIP) includes placeholder funds for the expansion of the high school. It was suggested that we should make a statement indicating that we would not want to commit these funds to 111 Cypress Street at this time and why. It was noted that there may be potential to free up rental funds by relocating uses.

Several additional questions were raised relating to the 111 Cypress property: If we need a more robust congestion study, should that happen other than through the services of the high school consultant as part of feasibility? What are the studies the School Committee needs to see completed before we could consider using this site for school purposes? It suggested that the town should independently evaluate how the building could be used for town purposes.

#### **5) Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Update.**

The proposed CIP for school projects has an approximately \$1.2 million anticipated shortfall in FY 2018. The town administration is aware of this and is considering how to line up the funding.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 AM.