

Capital Subcommittee
Public Schools of Brookline FY 20 CIP Requests
April 2, 2019

The Capital Subcommittee held a public hearing on March 21st in Room 103 of Town Hall, beginning at 5:00 p.m. Attending were subcommittee members Cliff Brown, Pam Lodish, Harry Friedman, Amy Hummel, John Van Scoyoc, and Carla Benka; Advisory Committee members Bobbie Knable and Michael Sandman; Town Meeting members Linda Olson Pehlke, Jesse Gray, and Lisa Cunningham; School staff MaryEllen Dunn and Matt Gillis; School Committee members Susan Wolf Ditkoff, Julie Schreiner Oldham, and David Pollak, and Brookline resident Kate Thurmond. Also attending was attorney Steven Wald.

The Subcommittee discussed six requests, voted to recommend five of them and voted to table the sixth CIP request (Baldwin School) until after May 7.

55. SCHOOL FURNITURE

Outdated and worn school furniture in all schools is replaced on an annual basis. When an individual school is completely renovated or expanded, most or all of the furniture gets replaced as part of the project. Under such circumstances, furniture that is still in good condition is allocated to other buildings, as appropriate. Furniture/furnishings for science and art rooms as well as gymnasiums is often significantly more expensive than traditional classroom furniture. Some furniture becomes obsolete before wearing out.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$110,000 (Property Tax / Free Cash)

68. SCHOOL REHAB/UPGRADE

This is an on-going school-wide program for the repair and upgrade of school facilities in between major renovation projects. Items funded under this program include large-scale painting programs, new flooring, ceilings, window treatments and bathroom/toilet upgrades.

Given the amount of funding needed for such work (there was a backlog of approximately \$15.7 million two years ago), a decision was made in 2017 to establish a “mini CIP” program to relieve pressure on the operating budget of the School Department.

In FY 19, \$230,000 was appropriated, with a significant portion of the funds to be spent on painting, shades, and flooring at the Heath School and the Lynch Center. The remaining funds were to be directed to Baker (gym pads, painting, new flooring in the hallways and on the stairs); Driscoll (gym pads); Lawrence (removal of old wallpaper and painting); New Lincoln (new window screens, removal of wallpaper, painting, gym

pads, new flooring); and Pierce (new sink in the Art room, and carpeting in various areas).

As of now, the backlog has been reduced to approximately \$15.3 million, and preliminary plans for FY 20 include new flooring for several classrooms at the Baker School; new flooring for the principal's office at the Heath School; painting, carpeting and new stair treads at the Lawrence School; the replacement of 24 whiteboards system-wide; installation of gym pads at New Lincoln; and carpet replacement at the Pierce School. Final confirmation of the proposed work is needed by the School Department.

Some of the funds to address the work will come from the balance of FY 18 funds in the School Department's Rental Revolving Fund that was returned to Free Cash and certified by the State. These funds will be made available for School Rehab Projects on July 1, 2019.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$198,000 (Property Tax / Free Cash)

70. DRISCOLL SCHOOL

Since 2005, the public schools have experienced a growth in enrollment that has led to the need to expand educational facilities at both the K-8 and high school levels. Over fifty classrooms have already been added by building 23 new classrooms (Coolidge Corner School, Lawrence, Heath, and Runkle), renting space in privately-owned buildings for Pierce's 7th and 8th grade program and for BEEP, adding two modular classrooms (Baker), and creating 31 new classrooms from existing common spaces such as libraries and by splitting rooms within the eight K-8 schools.

While class sizes have, with few exceptions, stayed within School Committee guidelines, the increase in enrollment has put pressure on common or core spaces such as gyms, cafeterias, libraries, and even hallways. Inadequate nurses' offices, outdated science classrooms, and lack of small meeting rooms and small classrooms in seven of the eight K-8 schools have also been identified as deficiencies. The projected decline of over 190 students in K-8 enrollment between FY 19 and FY 24 may help to improve system capacity over time, but the intent to address the current situation in the K-8 schools by building new capacity now has been supported by Town Meeting, most recently with its December 2018 votes to demolish the existing Baldwin School and replace it with a "2+++” model and to demolish the existing Driscoll School and replace it with a 4-section school.

The renovation and possible expansion of the Pierce School has also been proposed as a mechanism to deal with existing enrollment numbers. A Statement of Interest was filed with the Massachusetts School Building Authority in early April 2018 and eight months later the Town was invited to enter the Eligibility phase of the project.

To answer the question of how expanding Driscoll helps with the overcrowding situation in the other schools, the following information has been provided on the School Department's website:

1. Adding capacity at Driscoll has a positive impact on overcrowding at Lawrence.

- Driscoll shares a buffer zone with Coolidge Corner. By expanding capacity at Driscoll, Coolidge Corner students can shift there.
- Because Coolidge Corner and Lawrence share a buffer zone, the seats opened up at Coolidge Corner provide relief for overcrowding at Lawrence.

Baldwin and Driscoll benefit Pierce.

- Driscoll shares a buffer zone with Pierce. By expanding capacity at Driscoll, Pierce students can shift there.
- Music classes could return from the Teen Center and be taught at Pierce
Note: planned renovation will fully address all the remaining issues

Baldwin and Driscoll help BEEP

- Combined, the Baldwin and Driscoll would add five new classrooms for BEEP.
- These new classrooms could either reduce the number of BEEP classes in rental spaces, or they could be used to increase the enrollment for BEEP.

Source:

<https://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01907509/Centricity/Domain/722/Baldwin%20and%20Driscoll%20-%20Addressing%20Overcrowding%20and%20Substandard%20spaces.pdf>

At the end of last year, Town Meeting approved \$1.5 million to further develop the “Modified Star Design” for the new Driscoll School building. This particular design was selected by the Driscoll Building Committee and approved by the School Committee because of its limited physical impact on the neighborhood (siting the building closer to Washington Street and away from Westbourne Terrace); its potential greater energy efficiency coupled with lower long-term operating costs; an increased ease of traffic flow; and its greater internal flexibility for educational programming. At the same time, Town Meeting supported an amendment to make the new building fossil fuel free.

According to the architect's most recent estimates, construction costs for the new Driscoll School total \$87.2 million. Total project costs total \$108.8 million. Of that amount,

structured parking is estimated at \$3.4 million (\$2.8 million for construction plus an additional \$.6 million); the play area is estimated at \$2.5 million (\$2.0 million for construction plus an additional \$.5 million); and the fossil free “allowance” is estimated at \$6.5 million (\$5.0 million for construction plus an additional \$1.5 million).

Also included in the bottom line are allocations for Legal Fees (\$100,000); Security (\$100,000); and Moving Expenses (\$90,000). The Subcommittee was informed that these expenses are considered standard. The construction of the new school will utilize the Owner’s Project Manager model, which is budgeted at \$3 million. Contingency is budgeted at \$6.2 million.

When asked at the subcommittee hearing whether the Town could build a K-8 school for less money without sacrificing quality of education, School representatives pointed out that structured teacher parking, Town Meeting’s fossil fuel free requirement, “really cool” outdoor play space, and performance space all added to the total cost of the project. The architect’s list of “cost drivers” include the Boston Metro Area Cost Index (identified as approximately 20% higher than less developed areas of the State); structured parking, fossil fuel free systems, the Pre-K program, which requires additional square feet per student and increased staff to student ratio, and Brookline’s K-8 standard Multipurpose Room which adds additional square footage and double height. Further discussion about the need for performance space led to the statement that this type of space has been requested by the community, including at least one non-profit organization, and that all Brookline school buildings are designed to house facilities for community use.

By a vote of 2-0-4, the Capital Subcommittee recommends \$108,800,000 for further design and construction of the Driscoll School.

72. 9TH SCHOOL AT BALDWIN

Since 2005, the public schools have experienced a growth in enrollment that has led to the need to expand educational facilities at both the K-8 and high school levels. Over fifty classrooms have already been added by building 23 new classrooms (Coolidge Corner School, Lawrence, Heath, and Runkle), renting space in privately-owned buildings for Pierce’s 7th and 8th grade program and for BEEP, adding two modular classrooms (Baker), and creating 31 new classrooms from existing common spaces such as libraries and by splitting rooms within the eight K-8 schools.

While class sizes have, with few exceptions, stayed within School Committee guidelines, the increase in enrollment has put pressure on common or core spaces such as gyms, cafeterias, libraries, and even hallways. Inadequate nurses’ offices, outdated science classrooms, and lack of small meeting rooms and small classrooms in seven of the eight K-8 schools have also been identified as deficiencies. The projected decline of over 190 students in K-8 enrollment between FY 19 and FY 24 may help to improve system capacity over time, but the intent to address the current situation in the K-8 schools by building new capacity now has been supported by Town Meeting with its December 2018

votes to demolish the existing Baldwin School and replace it with a “2+++” model and to demolish the existing Driscoll School and replace it with a 4-section school.

The renovation and possible expansion of the Pierce School has also been proposed as a mechanism to deal with existing enrollment numbers. A Statement of Interest was filed with the Massachusetts School Building Authority in early April 2018 and in December 2018 the Town was invited to enter the Eligibility phase of the project.

To answer to the question of how building Baldwin helps with the overcrowding situation in the other schools, the following information is provided on the School Department’s website:

Adding capacity at Baldwin can provide overcrowding relief at Baker, Heath, Lincoln, and/or Runkle.

- Building Baldwin will reduce Baker to a 4 section school; removing between 2 to 4 classes of K-8 students.
- Heath and Lincoln students who live in the Baker/Heath/Lincoln buffer zone could move to Baldwin, reducing over enrollment at Lincoln and maintaining capacity at Heath.
- Building Baldwin could alleviate overcrowding at Runkle through a two step process:
 1. Baldwin takes on some Heath students who already drive or ride the bus to Heath.
 2. Runkle students who now walk to school could then move to Heath and continue to walk to school.

Building capacity at Baldwin for the RISE special education program helps Runkle.

- Moving 30 students from Runkle’s RISE program to Baldwin makes space available for small classrooms for special education and math or literacy interventions.

Adding a Native Language Support Program at Baldwin directly relieves at least one of the North Brookline Schools that has a Native Language Support Program (NLSP).

- Lincoln, Lawrence, Pierce, and Driscoll, Coolidge Corner School all have district-wide Native Language Support Programs for students whose first language is not English. The Native Language Support Program at Baldwin would help address the overcrowding at least one of these schools.
- For example, 45 of the 100 students in Lawrence’s Japanese program, 45 of the 96 students in the Pierce’s Chinese program, the 50 student in Lincoln’s Japanese

program, **OR** half of the 78 students in Baker's Korean program could move to Baldwin.

Source:

<https://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01907509/Centricity/Domain/722/Baldwin%20and%20Driscoll%20-%20Addressing%20Overcrowding%20and%20Substandard%20spaces.pdf>

At the end of last year, Town Meeting approved \$1.5 million to pursue further development of the "Solar Harvest" design for the new school. Selected by the Baldwin Building Committee and approved by the School Committee, "Solar Harvest" optimizes the opportunity to use rooftop photovoltaic panels to generate electricity.

Also in December Town Meeting approved an amendment to make the Baldwin School fossil fuel free and authorized the Select Board to acquire three town homes on Oak Street for \$4.7 million to provide for additional parking and/or greater flexibility for the siting/design of the building.

According to the architect's most recent estimates, construction costs for the new Baldwin School total \$66.9 million. Total project cost totals \$82.9 million. Of that amount, structured parking is estimated at \$3.4 million (\$2.8 million for construction plus an additional \$.6 million); the play area is estimated at \$2.5 million (\$2.0 million for construction plus an additional \$.5 million); and the fossil free "allowance" is estimated at \$3.1 million (\$2.5 million for construction plus an additional \$.6 million).

Also included in the bottom line are allocations for Legal Fees (\$100,000); Security (\$100,000); and Moving Expenses (\$50,000). As with the Driscoll project, the Subcommittee was informed that these expenses are considered standard. Also like Driscoll, the construction of the new Baldwin school will utilize the Owner's Project Manager model, which is budgeted at \$2.3 million. Contingency is budgeted at \$4.4 million.

The architect's list of "cost drivers" included the Boston Metro Area Cost Index (identified as approximately 20% higher than less developed areas of the State); structured parking, fossil fuel free systems, the Pre-K and RISE programs, both of which require additional square feet per student and increased staff-to-student ratio, the "Small School Premium", neighborhood improvements (sidewalks, crossing signals, etc.), soil conditions (i.e. ledge) and Brookline's K-8 standard Multipurpose Room which adds additional square footage and double height.

Regarding redistricting plans to populate the new school, both School staff and School Committee members stated at the public hearing that redistricting was a multi-year process and that redistricting information would not be available in the near future. School Committee members also stated that there was no "Plan B", should the debt exclusion override question fail to be approved in May.

Open Questions

Transportation plans: According to statements made at the hearing, discussions with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (which has jurisdiction over the Horace James Traffic Circle and West Roxbury Parkway) and with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (which has jurisdiction over Route 9) are going well.

It was subsequently determined that proposed changes to Horace James Circle are not part of the Baldwin project and as of now, have neither a timetable nor an identified funding source. Giles Ham, traffic consultant for the Baldwin School project reported that he had met with the State Department of Transportation in mid-March. In a March 25th email to Ray Masek, Mr. Giles wrote “The state is in support of pedestrian enhancements to Route 9 but they need more detail during the design phase. Number of (sic) student crossings and where. We will be conducting warrant analysis for pedestrian signals as well as consideration for RRFB or Hawk signal.”

Lawsuits: According to Town Counsel’s Office, Discovery is underway in the lawsuits and the hearing(s) on the Plaintiffs’ motions for injunctive relief was scheduled for March 27th at Norfolk Superior Court.

National Park Service determination of conversion: No further communication has been received since January 30, 2019.

By a vote of 6-0-0, the Subcommittee tabled further discussion and a vote on the Baldwin School project until after the Override vote on May 6th.

73. PIERCE SCHOOL

According to School Department data, K-8 student enrollment at the Pierce School has grown from 546 students in FY ‘06 to the current enrollment of 865 students. Spaces in privately owned buildings are currently being leased and used for classrooms and physical education. The two buildings that comprise the school date from 1854 and 1974, and despite the millions of CIP funds that have been spent to upgrade and maintain the buildings and adjacent playground, both buildings are in need of major renovation, if not actual replacement.

On April 3, 2018 the Select Board authorized the Superintendent of Schools to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), seeking to partner with the MSBA on the renovation and possible expansion of the Pierce School. Included in the SOI were the following objectives, all of which are MSBA priorities: 1) Elimination of Severe Overcrowding; 2) Prevention of Severe Overcrowding due to Increased School Enrollments; 3) Replacement, Renovation or Modernization of School Facility Systems; and 4) Replacement of or Addition to Obsolete Buildings. The April 2018 SOI anticipated a FY 22 projected population of 958 students (the equivalent of a five section school). Whether that number needs adjustment

based on the revised enrollment projections issued by the School Department in November 2018 has not been determined. The Capital Subcommittee was informed by School Committee members that the MSBA would use its own enrollment projections to guide decisions relative to the size of the renovated/expanded school.

On December 12, 2018 the Pierce School was invited into the MSBA's 270-day Eligibility Period, during which time preliminary requirements are to be completed. These requirements are intended to "determine the District's financial and community readiness to enter the MSBA Capital Pipeline" and include the formation of a School Building Committee, completion of an Educational Profile Questionnaire, certification of a design enrollment for the proposed project, and confirmation of community authorization and funding to proceed. According to the MSBA website, the "design enrollment" is critical to "position the district to efficiently meet space capacity needs throughout future enrollment variations." A baseline projected enrollment, generated by the MSBA "using a data-driven methodology, will be shared, reviewed, and discussed with the District and ultimately used to develop the total square foot of the proposed project as informed by the MSBA's space guidelines and the district's educational program." (https://www.massschoolbuildings.org/building/prerequisites/enrollment_methodology).

The current request for Feasibility/Schematic Design funds for Pierce is \$2 million, a percentage of which may be reimbursed to the Town by the MSBA. The scope of the Pierce Project is currently not well defined, consequently Town Hall staff have based the \$2 million figure on costs associated with the High School project and percentages recommended on the MSBA website. Assuming a \$200 million project, the cost of the feasibility/schematic design phase would be \$1,420,000 and the cost of the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) would be \$420,000. Rounded up, those numbers total \$2 million, and are considered to be a "best guess" at this point in time.

The Capital Subcommittee recommends \$2 million (General Fund Bond).

74. CLASSROOM CAPACITY

Student enrollment growth has required the expansion of three K-8 schools, the construction of an almost entirely new school, the purchase of modular classrooms, leasing space in privately owned buildings, and the renovation and expansion of the High School.

The FY 20 Classroom Capacity request covers the leases for spaces in privately owned buildings, including Temple Emeth and Temple Ohabei Shalom (BEEP classrooms), 62 Harvard (Pierce School classrooms), 24 Webster Place (School Department offices), the Brookline Teen Center (Pierce School physical education space).

Because lease negotiations were underway at the time of the Capital subcommittee's hearing, no breakdown of the total amount of the CIP request is available.

Regarding space for BEEP offices and classrooms, plans for locating both at 127 Harvard Street are no longer viable. The Newbury College site, should the Town acquire it, is a possible option, although School Committee members have only indicated interest, not commitment.

By a 4-2 vote, the Capital Subcommittee recommends \$1,450,000 (Property Tax / Free Cash)

For additional information on the School Department's FY20-FY25 CIP, see <https://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01907509/Centricity/Domain/51/CIP%20Preliminary%20FY2020%20FY2025%20Budget.pdf>

Note that some of the information, including projected student enrollment growth and the status of 127 Harvard Street for BEEP Classrooms and Offices, needs to be revised.