

Andover High School Building Committee
Thursday, January 26, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Chairperson Mark Johnson called the meeting of the Andover High School Building Committee of Thursday, January 26, 2023 to order at 6:32 PM in the School Committee Conference Room of the School Administration Building.

Roll Call: Mr. Webber - Present, Ms. Nicosia – Present, Dr. Conoscenti – Present, Ms. Brown – Present, Mr. Johnson – Present, Mr. Flanagan – Present, Dr. Parvey – Present, Mr. Prout (via remote participation) - Present. Ms. Scully arrived at 6:34 p.m. and Dr. Kimelman arrived at 7:08 p.m.

Other participants: Keith Taverna, Assistant Superintendent of Finance, Joe DeSantis and Kevin Nigro from PMA Consultants, Inc., Lori Cowles and James Liebman from HMFH, Inc., and Cathy Offenberg from Arcadis.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Dr. Conoscenti seconded by Mr. Flanagan the committee approved the meeting minutes of January 12, 2023, as submitted.

Roll Call: Mr. Flanagan - Yes, Ms. Brown – Yes, Ms. Nicosia – Yes, Dr. Parvey – Yes, Mr. Webber - Abstain, Mr. Prout – Yes, Mr. Johnson – Yes, Dr. Conoscenti – Yes, Ms. Scully - Yes. Vote: Passes (8-0-1).

Discussion of Decision Timeline

James Liebman of HMFH, Inc. reviewed the Draft Feasibility Study and Schematic Design timeline. Two designs will be moved on to cost estimating in March. Mr. Liebman noted that Committee has been provided with evaluation criteria. The issued and priorities of the evaluation criteria will be discussed at the next meeting. The Committee should also think about the weighting of each criteria.

Feasibility Study Progress

Cathy Offenberg, a Landscape Architect with Arcadis reviewed the site program for each design.

The site program for circulation and parking is:

- Separation of bus and car circulation
- 720 parking spaces (excluding parking south of Lovely Field)
- Maximized car queuing

The site program for athletics is:

- Lovely Stadium remaining
- Varsity softball field – grass
- Softball field – synthetic turf outfield (New)
- Seven Tennis Courts
- Two multipurposed full-sized competition synthetic turf fields (New)
- Varsity baseball field – grass
- Baseball field - synthetic turf outfield (New)
- Plateau field turf enlarged to competition size

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Other aspects of the site program are as follows:

- Dedicated middle school space
- Views of Green from school building
- Sustainable measures such as on-site storm water management
- Generous green arrival sequence
- Outdoor learning opportunities

Ms. Offenberg noted that accommodating West Middle School's ability to have its own campus is very important. Sustainability is also a paramount goal and synthetic turf fields are not considered sustainable. For circulation, the goal is simplification of the process. The buses will enter off of Shawsheen Road and travel counterclockwise while cars will follow a clockwise route on a different internal road. It has yet to be determined if buses that currently enter from Moraine Street will be re-routed to Shawsheen Road. This concept will go through further study with traffic engineers to determine if this circulation pattern is best or if a two-way pattern will work better.

Mr. Johnson noted that circulation is very important, and this project needs to solve any current issues. He asked if this would change the middle school drop off in any way. Ms. Offenberg stated that buses will offload middle school students at a different location and there will be an enhanced car arrival experience. Mr. Liebman added that students at the middle school will no longer have to cross the driveway when being dropped off. Ms. Nicosia noted that after morning drop off the one-way bus exit could be gated off like it is at Doherty Middle School to allow the students to travel safely from the school to the fields without having to cross a roadway.

Ms. Offenberg stated that field and open space layouts are still being adjusted. The field layouts do not all have the proper orientation. Decisions will need to be made on which fields will have priority for proper orientation for players' experience with the sun, or if fields should be eliminated so that all fields have proper orientation. A request has been made that all varsity sports play on a natural turf field. Every design with the 4 story parking garage includes 7 tennis courts on the roof.

Ms. Offenberg noted that four designs out of the 10 under consideration do not deliver the full athletic program. Campus 2 with a Garage and Auditorium allows for a bonus field. The following designs can support the full requested athletic program:

- Add/reno with parking garage
- Campus 2 with Auditorium and surface parking
- Campus 2 with Auditorium and parking garage
- Stand-alone with surface parking
- Stand-alone with parking garage
- Stand-alone with auditorium and parking garage

Dr. Kimelman asked what else the bonus field space could be used for. Mr. Liebman stated that it could be open space, outdoor classroom space or an amphitheater. Ms. Brown noted that field space is always at a priority at the high school due to the number of sports programs that need fields for both games and practices, and the marching band. She added that some sports teams right now have to go off-site for practices, and other teams are too large to travel off-site for

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practice. It is safer to be able to keep these teams on-site and a bonus field would also be able to be opened up for community use later in the day. Dr. Kimelman asked if an additional field could be achieved if more stories were added to the building. Ms. Cowles stated that additional floors would provide more space on the site, but not enough space for an additional field.

Mr. Johnson asked about the advantages and disadvantages of the circulation for the Campus 2 and Stand-alone designs. Ms. Offenbergl stated that more will be known once a traffic engineer is on board. The bus queuing is much more generous in the Campus 2 design. Ms. Brown noted that the buses are not all queuing at once because they come in waves due to the fact that some are coming from the middle schools. Right now buses and cars are kept separate. Mr. Liebman stated that the Standalone design keeps the cars and buses separate. The Committee discussed the importance of buses coming from the southern part of Andover continuing to use the Moraine Street entrance. Dr. Parvey asked when in the process a traffic study would take place. Mr. Liebman stated that it would be early in the schematic design phase. Ms. Scully questioned if it would make more sense to have one bus drop-off location for both the middle school and the high school. Ms. Brown stated she could discuss that with the principal of West Middle School.

Ms. Scully questioned if the skate park should be moved on the site or if it makes more sense to move it somewhere else in town. Mr. Flanagan agreed that the skatepark warrants an internal discussion regarding the use of it and its current state as well as what the proper footprint is for a skatepark.

Ms. Scully noted that she previously considered a parking garage as solely being considered to help with the site space constraints. She noted that the parking garage also has environmental benefits such as reducing the impervious area on the site. Ms. Nicosia added that in the winter a parking garage does not require road salt or plowing. The 4 floors equal 1/4th of the impervious surface and there is less stormwater runoff. Ms. Cowles added that a parking garage consolidates the location of parking and provides parking equity.

Ms. Offenbergl reviewed the Collins Center. The deficiencies identified in the Collins Center are as follows:

- Does not meet ADA or Massachusetts Accessibility Board requirements
- Mechanical noise
- Viewing distance (120' from back to stage)
- No cross aisle behind the stage (travel from stage right to left is around the entire house)
- Deficient lighting positions (additional catwalk desired) and acoustics

The Collins Center has 1,200 seats, but it has been determined that a theater of 1,000 seat would meet the needs of both the school and community. A new theater with a balcony would resolve all of these deficiencies whereas, a renovation may not be able to address everything.

Ms. Scully noted that the Collins Center will be a critical community discussion. The more she thinks about and understands the deficiencies, the more she can lean towards an auditorium. She noted that in the tour of Arlington High School, when standing in the balcony, you can feel connected to the stage and hear the people on the stage. Ms. Nicosia added that the entire floor of

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the Arlington theatre was at an ADA slope and people can walk anywhere without difficulty. Those in a wheelchair can choose where they sit. Dr. Conoscenti added that even if the Collins Center were to be renovated, it would still have the performance crossing problem. Dr. Kimelman suggested that the Committee reach out to the local arts community to see if they would be supportive of the change.

Review and Vote to Approve Invoices for HMFH and PMA Consultants

On a motion by Ms. Scully seconded by Dr. Parvey the Committee approved HMFH, Inc. invoice number 3587 in the amount of \$191,250.00.

Roll Call: Mr. Flanagan - Yes, Ms. Brown – Yes, Dr. Kimelman – Yes, Ms. Nicosia – Yes, Dr. Parvey – Yes, Mr. Webber, Yes, Mr. Prout – Yes, Mr. Johnson – Yes, Dr. Conoscenti – Yes, Ms. Scully - Yes. Vote: Unanimous (10-0).

On a motion by Mr. Flanagan seconded by Mr. Webber the Committee approved PMA Consultants invoice number 04667.00-2 in the amount of \$40,385.00.

Roll Call: Mr. Flanagan - Yes, Ms. Brown – Yes, Dr. Kimelman – Yes, Ms. Nicosia – Yes, Dr. Parvey – Yes, Mr. Webber, Yes, Mr. Prout – Yes, Mr. Johnson – Yes, Dr. Conoscenti – Yes, Ms. Scully - Yes. Vote: Unanimous (10-0).

Budget Summary

Mr. Flanagan stated that he would be requesting the Committee vote to sponsor and support an article at Annual Town Meeting requesting additional funds. He noted that the initial funds for the project came from a reappropriation of funds from the Bancroft School and from an appropriation of funds at the last Town Meeting. There have been additional costs to the project due to the timeline of the project being extended from November 2023-January 2024, and the Owner's Project Manager being brought on earlier than anticipated. An article has been placed on the draft warrant to increase the budget by \$1,300,000. He requested that the Committee vote to sponsor that warrant article and to vote to recommend approval of the warrant article at Town Meeting. He noted that these votes can be taken at the same meeting or separate meetings.

On a motion by Mr. Prout seconded by Dr. Kimelman the Committee vote to sponsor the Town Meeting warrant article.

Roll Call: Mr. Flanagan - Yes, Ms. Brown – Yes, Dr. Kimelman – Yes, Ms. Nicosia – Yes, Dr. Parvey – Yes, Mr. Webber, Yes, Mr. Prout – Yes, Mr. Johnson – Yes, Dr. Conoscenti – Yes, Ms. Scully - Yes. Vote: Unanimous (10-0).

Mr. Johnson stated that the Committee will discuss recommending Town Meeting approval of the warrant article at their next meeting.

Discussion of Public Outreach and Website

Ms. Scully thanked PMA Consultants for their work on the project website. She noted that the website address is www.andoverhighschoolbuildingproject.org. Representatives from the

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Committee are willing to speak to any organization that would like to learn more about the project.

Dr. Kimelman asked if it is possible to know how many people have visited the website. Mr. DeSantis stated that the Facebook page has reached 3,000 individual people in the last 30 days. Ms. Scully stated that there have been 150 visitors to the project website in the last 7 days.

Dr. Kimelman asked if anyone has reached out to The Robb Center. Mr. Johnson stated that they will be meeting with The Robb Center and the Rotary. He added that he is looking for volunteers to attend the West Elementary School Mini-Golf event on March 18th.

Schedule of Upcoming Meetings

Mr. Johnson stated that the next Community Forum will be held on Monday, February 6th at 7:00 p.m. at Memorial Hall Library. The Committee's next meeting will be held on February 9th at 7:50 a.m. The Committee's February 23rd meeting will need to be rescheduled due to the February vacation week.

Public Comment at Discretion of the Chair

Bill Haskell of 8 Ivanhoe Lane stated that the Committee should take into account that skate parks can be very noisy. Some of the field designs show outfields in the multi-use fields, but outfields are often fenced, so you may want to avoid that. In his opinion, the parking garage frees up a lot of space on the property.

Andrea Stidsen of 38 Canterbury Street asked if it would be possible to extend the Collins Center stage out more. Mr. Liebman stated that it is possible, but it would be difficult and expensive.

Carole Somma of 99 Shawsheen Road requested that the Committee consider the lifestyles and property values of those who abut the high school when they are placing buildings and fields on the site. She noted that fields often have lights that may shine on properties and traffic patterns need to be approached with the understanding that those who live in the neighborhood have to get to work in the morning. She loves the idea of improvements to the high school, but she would like the neighborhood to be considered. Ms. Cowles noted that there is a line item in the evaluation criteria specifically on neighborhood impact.

Mr. Johnson asked for the lighting to be addressed. Ms. Cowles noted that they have not received direction yet from the Athletic Director on which fields will be lit. She added that building codes require that lights include items such as shields that keep the light off of neighboring properties. Ms. Brown added that she has had a conversation with the Athletic Director about the impact of lighting on the neighborhood. She noted that there is new technology in both the brightness of lights and the ability to control the lights remotely.

Patrick Somma of 99 Shawsheen Road noted that in the designs show the entrances located north of the current entrance. He felt that an entrance or exit is put any more north of the current exit it will be an issue with vehicles being able to take a left onto Shawsheen Road safely due to a slight incline in the road.

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Ms. Somma noted that many of her neighbors did not know about this project. Ms. Brown stated that she would be happy to meet with her and her neighbors, as well as residents of Moraine Street to discuss any concerns.

Adjourn

On a motion by Ms. Scully seconded by Mr. Flanagan, the meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Roll Call: Mr. Flanagan - Yes, Ms. Brown – Yes, Dr. Kimelman – Yes, Ms. Nicosia – Yes, Dr. Parvey – Yes, Mr. Webber, Yes, Mr. Prout – Yes, Mr. Johnson – Yes, Dr. Conoscenti – Yes, Ms. Scully - Yes. Vote: Unanimous (10-0).