

## DeValles School Building Committee (SBC) Meeting Minutes <sup>1</sup>

Meeting Date: December 13, 2022, 3:05 – 4:45 PM

Location: Paul Rodrigues Administration Building, 455 County Street, Room 224, New Bedford, MA 02740

Reported: Andrew O’Leary, New Bedford Public Schools (NBPS)

### Attendees:

Barry Rabinovitch, School Project Manager

Molly Gilfeather, Purchasing Director

Rebecca Kanter, Interim Purchasing Director

Bruce Oliveira, School Committee Member and Chair

Rebecca Gay Barnes, retired architect and NB resident

Kevin Mello, Union President

Ryan Pereira, City Council Member

Jennifer Carloni, Director of City Planning

Jonathan Carvalho, neighborhood resident

Janet Barbosa, Director of Special Projects & Programs

Daniel Pallotta, P-Three, Inc.

Peter Turowski, Turowski2 Architecture, Inc.

Elizabeth Turowski, Turowski2 Architecture, Inc.

Mr. Oliveira called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM.

Minutes from the November 9, 2022 meeting were reviewed. Voted unanimously on a motion by Mr. Oliveira and seconded by Mr. Carvalho to approve.

Mr. Turowski presented and discussed a review of existing conditions. Existing floor plans include: a 6-foot-deep basement which holds restrooms for staff and students, a gymnasium, a kitchen, Special Education learning spaces, a music room, and has unfinished concrete floors; the main floor is comprised of classrooms-and the auditorium; the upper floor is comprised of classrooms. The exterior needs repairs including repointing and masonry reinforcement for cracking and roof, window and doors replacement, as current conditions are noncompliant with ADA and energy code. The interior requires replacements including ceiling, walls, floors, door hardware, stair treads, guards, and handrails. The landscape consists of a 2.5-acre site of which 18% is building, 14% is lawn/planting, 64% is pavement, and .04% is other. The landscape contains onsite parking for staff and visitors and trash/deliveries open to parking and play areas, but no off-street parent/bus drop off or play structures. Overall compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Architectural Access Board (AAB) is poor: there is currently no accessible entrance, toilets, elevators, and door hardware, handrails, and guardrails are all non-compliant. Structurally, there is settlement, masonry cracking, primarily at interior walls, water damage, and areas of failing ceiling. There is no fire protection. Plumbing, HVAC, electrical service, and data and communications all need replacement. Security needs to be upgraded for emergencies and lockdown. Food service area is open to student areas, causing health code concerns, sinks are close to electric panels, causing safety concerns, and there is limited storage.

Mr. Turowski indicated that geotechnical exploration is scheduled for January 5 and 6, 2023, and hazardous materials assessment is in progress. He indicated that this would be a gut renovation project. Mr. Mello inquired about the exterior condition. Mr. Turowski responded that the structure is viable, the exterior bearing walls are solid, and the renovation would consist of stripping down to the bones and reorganizing space. Ms. Turowski indicated that a gut renovation keeps the envelope, and it may be possible to salvage and reuse interior cabinetry or woodwork. Ms. Gilfeather inquired as to the percentage of districts that select a gut renovation as opposed to a new building project, to which Mr. Turowski responded that 90% of districts select new buildings, however, the best long-term educational project is what is considered. Ms. Carloni stated that it is important for New Bedford to preserve its buildings for historical purposes and that elements of the old building should remain as much as possible. Mr. Oliveira stated that the Committee should evaluate based on preservation and funding. Mr. Pallotta explained that the Preliminary Design Program (PDP) Phase outlines all options and that the Committee will need to narrow down their selection. Ms. Carloni inquired if it would be possible to tour a school that had a gut renovation and Mr. Turowski stated that he would investigate.

Mr. Turowski presented and discussed a review of existing and Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) space summaries. He presented the MSBA’s spreadsheet formula which calculates how large the building may be based on the number of students.

Mr. Turowski presented and discussed an update on the Educational Visioning Workshops. The first session, held on November 21, 2022, included 26 participants (NBPS leadership, school administrators, teachers, and community members)

<sup>1</sup> The **Open Meeting Law** requires public bodies to create and approve minutes in a timely manner. A “timely manner” is considered to be within the next three public body meetings or 30 days from the date of the meeting, whichever is later, unless the public body can show good cause for further delay.

and discussed top priorities, including: effective communication, curiosity and imagination, critical and inventive thinking, collaboration and leadership, emotional intelligence, multicultural awareness, and mastery of core academics. The second session, held on December 5, 2022, included the same participants as the first session, and discussed top 10 design patterns including: engaged outdoor play, breakout and pull over spaces, classroom neighborhoods, push-in special education, security and welcome, wayfinding and streetscapes, flexible furniture, professional work areas, gathering hubs and presentation spaces, and good storage/cubbies. Mr. Turowski indicated that the next session will be on December 19, 2022.

Mr. Turowski presented and discussed the summary of the school tours, which included Shaw Elementary School in Millbury, MA (550 students), Irwin M. Jacobs Elementary School in New Bedford, MA (430 students), Carver Elementary School in Carver, MA (780 students), and Minot Forest Elementary School in Wareham, MA (1120 students). Mr. Pereira requested holding a second tour of the Jacobs School and Mr. Turowski later scheduled it for January 27, 2022. Regarding the schools that were toured, Mr. Turowski presented and discussed views, natural light, connections to culture and history, terrazzo flooring, color wayfinding, outdoor classrooms, varied seating café and classrooms, sensory/calming lunchrooms/lunch bunch areas, libraries, multi-use storage, classroom neighborhoods/grade level wings, reading nooks, small group break out and sensory spaces, STEM/STEAM labs, gathering spaces, storage, and teacher work/planning areas. Square footage must be considered as the MSBA only allows so much.

Mr. Turowski presented and discussed his meeting with Mayor Mitchell, Mr. O'Leary, Mr. Oliveira, Ms. Barbosa, and Mr. Robert Todisco of P-Three, Inc. on December 6, 2022. Mayor Mitchell would like to preserve the DeValles School building, consider site expansion options, and confirm that a building holding 760 students is not too big. The mayor would like to either preserve the building for the school or housing. Mr. Turowski indicated that the MSBA is inflexible regarding enrollment and that building design approach would play into the question of size, scale and suitability.

Mr. Turowski presented and discussed potential sites/options. Site 1 is the DeValles School only, with 6 options: base repair, 400-student renovation, 400-student addition/renovation, 760-student addition/renovation, 400-student new building, or 760-student new building. Site 2 is the DeValles School plus claim Katharine Street with 4 options: 400-student addition/renovation, 760-student addition/renovation, 400-student new building, or 760-student new building. Site 3 is the DeValles School plus 486 and 0 Es Orchard Street, with 4 options: 400-student addition/renovation, 760-student addition/renovation, 400-student new building, or 760-student new building. Site 4 is the DeValles School plus 550 Orchard Street and Camara Field, with 4 options: 400-student addition/renovation, 760-student addition/renovation, 400-student new building, or 760-student new building. Dr. Rabinovitch inquired if Site 4 was legally possible under Article 97. Mr. Turowski indicated that the City must officially confirm, but that it is under planning consideration. The cost of acquiring is something to consider. Site 5 is the Goodyear site, with 2 options: 400-student new building and 760-student new building. Dr. Rabinovitch indicated that there are currently 7 150+-year-old school buildings in the district that will require renovations or new buildings and that the MSBA school building projects take about 5 years to complete, so cost comparison must be considered when determining the building's student count. Mr. Turowski questioned whether 400-student options should be considered on options that have site acquisition costs. Altogether, there are 18 site options.

Mr. Turowski presented and discussed the upcoming schedule. The next SBC meeting on January 10, 2023, will discuss vision summary, final space summary, and scheme diagrams. The January 24, 2023 SBC meeting will discuss final schemes and cost estimates, select schemes for review in Preferred Schematic Report (PSR), and a vote will be required for approval to submit. January 27, 2023 is the deadline to submit the PDP to the MSBA.

Mr. Bruce Oliveira moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:45 PM, seconded by Mr. Ryan Pereira, and approved unanimously by voice vote.



Andrew B. O'Leary,  
Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations

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