

DeValles School Building Committee (SBC) Meeting Minutesⁱ

Meeting Date: May 30, 2023, 4:06 – 4:57 PM

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

Also remote via New Bedford Public Schools website

Reported: Laura K. Neves, Executive Assistant for Finance & Operations, New Bedford Public Schools (NBPS)

Attendees:

Janet Barbosa, Director of Special Projects & Programs,
Designee of Mayor Jonathan Mitchell
Bruce Oliveira, School Committee Member and Chair
Doug Brites, Interim Director of Facilities
Mario Pires, Principal of John B. DeValles School Elementary
School Principal
Karen Treadup, Deputy Superintendent
Emily Arpke, City Auditor (remote)
Kevin Mello, President of AFSCME Union
Barry Rabinovitch, School Building Facilitator
Andrew O'Leary, Assistant Superintendent of Finance &
Operations
Shane Burgo, City Council Member (remote)
Jennifer Carloni, Director of City Planning

Darcie Aungst, Elementary Curriculum, Data & Assessment
Manager
Jillian Zangao, President of New Bedford Federation of
Paraprofessionals
Daniel Pallotta, P-Three, Inc. (P3)
Peter Turowski, Turowski2 Architecture, Inc. (T2)
Elizabeth Turowski, Turowski2 Architecture, Inc.
Timothy Brennan, Turowski2 Architecture, Inc.
Alison Paiva, Turowski2 Architecture, Inc.
Brian Fitch, Turowski2 Architecture, Inc.
Ralph Tella, LSP, Lord Consulting, UEC. (remote)
Suresh Bhatia, Atlantic Construction & Management, Inc.
(remote)

Mr. Bruce Oliveira called the meeting to order at 4:06 PM. Mr. Oliveira declared there was a quorum of at least 12 Committee members, as 13 members were present. Minutes from the April 11, 2023 meeting were reviewed. Voted unanimously on a motion by Dr. Barry Rabinovitch and seconded by Mr. Doug Brites to approve. A roll call vote was taken to approve the minutes.

Mr. Timothy Brennan presented and discussed the update on the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (FAS) meeting which occurred on May 25, 2023. Mr. Brennan indicated that the FAS gave no negative feedback and had minimal questions. Their recommendations include: character and scale of the building in relation to the surrounding neighborhood, opportunities to simplify the building envelope as design progresses, sheltered access to the building for individuals with limited mobility, school department leadership transition and continuity of educational vision, considerations associated with acute angles within the classrooms including supervision, storage, and furniture, and circulation on the first floor as it relates to connections between the classroom wing and access to the Media Center. The FAS appreciated the site plan layout, outdoor/play spaces, parking/vehicle circulation, and remarked that Ms. Darcie Aungst's education plan was a model for the state. There are no action items for the DeValles School Building Committee (SBC). Comments from the Preferred Schematic Report (PSR) submission are still anticipated. The MSBA staff will make its recommendation to the Board in 2 weeks and there should be no reason not to approve.

Mr. Brennan presented and discussed the update on Schematic Design. He presented 3 possibilities for the Goodyear site: 9B6 (an "L" shaped, 3-story design), 9B7 (a "T" shaped, 3-story design), and 9B8 (a "C" shaped, 2-story design), discussing their design features and floor plans. Mr. Brennan indicated that the MSBA liked Option 9B.6 in the circulation and green space incorporated in the landscape and school garden. Mr. Brennan explained that there is a transition in elevation slopes across the site of approximately 14 feet, which impacted the design plan. As such, Option 9B6 and 9B7 have a lower level, main level, and upper level. Mr. Brennan indicated that Geotechnical testing was being conducted at the site this very day. Option 9B7 includes a classroom wing with a step-down level, as the main entrance is on the main level and serves as a gathering space to connect floors. Option 9B8 is almost entirely a 1-story but includes a portion of a lower level. Mr. Oliveira questioned how the design would affect student education, to which Mr. Brennan responded that the design has already been previewed by the NBPS educators team who found no concerns.

Mr. Brennan asked the Committee to vote on the Schematic Design to choose 1 of the 3 presented options. Ms. Aungst indicated that as an educator, she preferred Option 9B6, as classroom neighborhoods are not too isolated, as seen in Option 9B8, and there is more flexibility than Option 9B7, as each wing only has one grade level. Ms. Aungst noted that Option 9B6 most compliments the neighborhood aesthetically. Ms. Carloni asked if T2 could provide the Committee with copies of the

¹ 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.

design drawings and floor plans, to which Mr. Brennan responded affirmatively. Mr. Peter Turowski indicated that the rough estimate cost for Option 9B8 is about half to \$1 million more than the others due to the spread-out footprint. A roll call vote was taken to select the best option. Voted unanimously to select Option 9B6.

Mr. Brennan presented and discussed the update on Goodyear Site Procurement. The proposal for the Goodyear site was received on May 12, 2023 and the plaza owners did not submit. On May 22, 2023, the evaluation committee met to review proposals and make a recommendation. On May 23, 2023, the recommendation was forwarded to the City Solicitor to send a formal response to the property owner. If the proposal is accepted, it moves to City Council to approve. If it is rejected, the SBC will need to vote to request the School Committee at the June 12, 2023 meeting to request City Council to acquire the land through eminent domain. On June 22, 2023, the City Council will refer it to the City Property Committee, who requires assessment of the property for purposes of eminent domain acquisition. On July 20, 2023, the City Council would vote to move forward with land acquisition by eminent domain through the Solicitor's Office.

Dr. Rabinovitch indicated that the Solicitor's Office contacted Goodyear site owner, Attorney John Williams regarding their offer and is awaiting his reply. The Solicitor's Office anticipates Mr. Williams rejecting the offer as it is below fair market value. As a result, the SBC must vote to ask the School Committee through the Mayor to the City Council to take the land by eminent domain. Mr. Dan Pallotta indicated that the timetable for meeting the Project Funding Agreement (PFA) and Schematic Design Process requirements is on track. Mr. O'Leary noted that the DeValles project is progressing faster than the most recent school building project at the Irwin M. Jacobs Elementary School, due in part by the efforts of Mr. Oliveira, Dr. Rabinovitch, NBPS Facilities Project Coordinator Mark Champagne to prepare ahead of known circumstances.

Mr. Brennan presented and discussed the update on Goodyear Site LSP. The results of water sampling conducted from the existing wells are consistent with earlier findings; there are no new reportable conditions or regulatory triggers. The company, Sage LSP has already issued an opinion to Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (Mass DEP) to change the use limitations, and there is no further action required at this time. In the future, a soil management plan will need to be developed for construction, and a final revision to the Activity and Use Limitation (AUL) will be recorded on the deed.

Mr. Ralph Tella indicated that the AUL will be revised or terminated, pending the final design which might reflect new findings following construction. The soils will be managed during construction and variances will be identified along the way. Mr. Pallotta asked if Sage LSP request to be approved by Mass DEP and if Mass DEP issues any documentation. Mr. Tella responded that there are no review limitations when submitted but that LSP (a Massachusetts licensed hazardous waste site cleanup professional) is a private system. Mr. Tella indicated that Mass DEP will only provide feedback if there is an issue. Mr. Pallotta indicated that in order to acquire the land, the project requires documentation from Mass DEP confirming use change and stating that the use limitation is permitted. Mr. Tella indicated he is going to contact the project manager at Mass DEP.

Mr. Brennan presented and discussed the update on Goodyear Site Survey and Geotechnical. The surveyor was on site May 10, 2023 through May 23, 2023 documenting conditions. A geotechnical investigation is being conducted May 30 – 31, 2023 regarding borings so that a bearing capacity and foundation estimate may be obtained. The report is expected to be received by late June 2023, depending on lab turnaround time.

Mr. Brennan presented and discussed the update on Room Data Process. The James B. Congdon Elementary School staff met with T2 for a project explanation and to provide information about individual spaces and preferences. The aim of the meeting is for T2 to obtain detailed checklist of requirements needed for each space by collecting information from teachers and staff. T2 will then create layout drawings based on the information given. The John B. DeValles Elementary School staff will meet with T2 on June 8, 2023 to discuss the same. On June 20, 2023 at 12:30PM, T2 will meet with both schools' staff for a project update presentation. Mr. Turowski remarked that the staff information is important because the Schematic Design has to contain project costs to submit to the MSBA.

Mr. Brennan reviewed the upcoming project schedule as follows:

- June 21, 2023 MSBA Board Approval
- June 27, 2023 SBC Meeting 4:00PM
- August 8, 2023 SBC Meeting 4:00PM

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- October 2, 2023 Estimate Due
- October 17, 2023 SBC Meeting 4:00PM
 - Approval of budget and submission to MSBA
 - Review/Vote on 311 Form and learn MSBA cost participation figure
 - Meeting anticipated to go over usual end time
- October 26, 2023 School Department Submission to MBSA
- December 13, 2023 MSBA Approval
- January 2023 City Funding Approval
- January 2025 Project Out to Bid
- Spring 2025 Construction Start
- Fall 2026 Construction Complete
- January 2027 School Opens to Students

Dr. Rabinovitch made a motion to vote for the SBC to request the New Bedford School Committee to ask New Bedford City Council to acquire by eminent domain the property known as the Goodyear site if acquisition of the property cannot be accomplished by purchase under the outstanding Request for Proposals. Voted 12 members in favor and 1 abstention. The motion was seconded by Mr. Andrew O’Leary to approve. A roll call vote was taken to approve. Ms. Molly Gilfeather asked Ms. Janet Barbosa if the Mayor is aware to which Ms. Barbosa responded affirmatively.

Dr. Rabinovitch moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:57 PM, seconded by Mr. O’Leary, and approved unanimously by roll call vote.



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

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