

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, January 13, 2015
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Paul Ash, Chair Margaret Coppe, School Committee Members Jessie Steigerwald, Judith Crocker, Alessandro Alessandrini, William Hurley

The minutes were taken by Christine Ashness, Recording Secretary

The meeting convened at 7:33pm

Call to order and welcome: Chair Margaret Coppe called the meeting to order, and introduced committee members.

Public Comments:

Greg Moody, 135 Laconia Street, Representative of Lexington Lextended Day Program: Don't forget that children need care after 3:15pm, and as you are planning, think about that as well.

Superintendent's Announcements:

None

School Committee Member Announcements:

Jessie Steigerwald: The third mock town meeting for grade 8 Social Studies students will be on Monday March 16, at 1:00pm at Clarke Middle School. Thanks to Mary Barry for coordinating it. Since some School Committee members are not able to attend, teachers are welcome to volunteer to be a school committee member. Regarding email – when you send one to the School Committee email address, all members receive it, but the chair answers it. Members only have the authority to speak in open meeting. The Chair might forward it or direct you to someone who can answer it. During high volume times, you may not receive a quick response. Please be aware of how we are handling emails and please ask if you have questions. The Policy Subcommittee made progress on sections G and H and we will be working on them on the 27th. She will also do Monday office hours and will also hold them by appointment.

Margaret Coppe added that the School Committee norms say that emails are answered in a week.

Alessandro Alessandrini: For members of the public unable to attend during the day, all of our phone numbers are online and we are all available by phone.

Agenda:

Discussion of the Recommendation from the Ad hoc School Master Planning Committee

The Ad hoc School Master Planning Committee did vote to recommend option 9. Mr. Poinelli will review it following the presentation on Option 9.

The additional 16 classrooms would be: 2 at Bowman, 2 at Bridge, 6 at Harrington and 6 at Hastings.

A presentation of the high school was shown with an anticipated growth of just under 400 students. There was an analysis of the existing building and the undersized space by current MSBA standards. Many of the classrooms are undersized. Options were shown. The first option is in place and underway, prefabricated modular classroom. In the summer of 2015 the second phase of prefabricated modular classrooms will be put in place. These additions were critical in extending the capacity of the school. Option 2A would be construction of a new Science Building. Option 2b would be a freshmen academy. Option 3 would be significant renovations. Option 4 would be a new multi-story building. The cost of a new building would be approximately \$196 million in 2015 costs, and be 392,500 square feet.

Members discussed many different points and had questions:

The Hastings 59 million does include design costs, demolition of the old building, and is based on summer 2016 costs; if the Bowman and Bridge music rooms were to stay, they would still be good music rooms. Both of those communities are apprehensive about adding new classrooms; two standard modulars for Fiske would be \$980,000; Dr. Anton will look into other ways to provide space for music instruction at Bowman so as to not divide the gym; right sizing means different things at different schools – at Bridge and Bowman it is to get the population to a level that the core supports.

Margaret Coppe explained that the school committee needs to vote next Tuesday night on what they are sending to selectmen to be included in either a Special Town Meeting or Annual Town Meeting warrant. The Board of Selectmen are waiting for the school committee to make its decision. The Town Manager and finance person are working on a model that is a tool that will show the impact on average tax bills.

Judith Crocker showed her presentation on Determining School Committee's Long-term and Short-term Overcrowding Solutions. The Ad hoc planning committee will be meeting 2-3 more times. They voted on January 8, but did so to satisfy the Town Meeting warrant article schedule.

Following the presentation and some discussion, members agreed that Diamond and Clarke are musts. Hastings is also agreed to be new. Harrington is also agreed.

Judith Crocker explained that the reason the committee didn't recommend any construction for Fiske was due to costs. Dr. Ash agrees on the Fiske point, but if option 9 is the plan voted, the problem is Fiske. You would build beyond the 90 percent upper confidence level. If you bring it on in addition to Hastings and the other schools, you're bringing on too much capacity given the projection. It is more space than needed in a 5-year projection.

The discussion stopped for the public hearing.

8:55pm Public Hearing on the Recommendation of the Ad hoc School Master Planning Committee

Curt Barrentine, 100 Bedford Street: He is representing the Hastings site council. They support the town-wide plan of the rebuilding of Hastings. It is positive for Hastings and it addresses equity, relieving overcrowding. They support investing in the long-term, and it supports special education in the district. It is necessary

Patrick Mehr, 31 Woodcliff Road: He sent a model to the School Committee that by transferring just 2% of students to a different building than they're now assigned, you'd create 10% more

classrooms, saving 1.4 million dollars. He suggests strongly that you look at that kind of an option before spending all of this money. Rigid district lines should be done away with. Should any debt exclusion override be asked before these approaches are looked at, he will publicly oppose any override.

Jen Agne: She grew up here, attended Hastings, her kids attended Hastings, and she is now a teacher at Hastings. It is a very welcoming place however it is challenging to implement the curriculum in this facility. The library is too small, and space is limited for small group work. They are using hallways, and it is challenging to access laptops. It just isn't designed for this program. She has experienced an overcrowded classroom and there is nowhere to move in there. As much as she loves the old Hastings, it just isn't fulfilling the new curriculum.

Peter Kelly, member of the Board of Selectman and member of the Ad hoc School Master Planning Committee: He was the dissenting vote for Option 9. It is too much money, and far too complicated. He suggests we build Hastings new, on our own, as fast as possible. And until it gets online, we basically suck it up. He's looking to see his grandchildren attend school here in this community. There are ways to get it to work. As far as middle schools, Diamond is place to be. It is a campus with 2 entryways. You could go up to 900-1000 students. Leave Clarke the way it is.

Sharon Musto, 12 Augustus Road and Lin Jensen, 133 Reed Street: They are Hastings PTA co-presidents and feel building a new Hastings is important. It is a wise move now. The current building has no sprinklers, the modulars are at the end of their life lacking of foundation, there are moisture and mold issues, and the heating doesn't always work. Students wear jackets because it is too cold. It is not acceptable. In warm weather it is very hot. The nurse's office is very tiny with no privacy. Teachers are cramming too many adults in classes for meetings and PLCs. They have the largest special education program and they don't have enough room. They're using halls, corners in rooms and hallways, etc.

Meredith Applegate – 42 Reed Street: She is a Hastings parent and a member of the Lexington Parents Advocacy Group. She urges the committee to go full steam ahead for Hastings without going to the MSBA and they need to begin immediately to relieve other schools. You can't wait that long. She urges the School Committee to maximize Hastings and to design Hastings and Harrington in tandem. The time is now. The success of option 9 depends on moving children as quickly as possible. There is limited time to create space and redistrict. Working with the MSBA would delay. Move forward without state funding with a fast track for Hastings.

Jeanine Ferrick, 22 Burroughs Road and Kathleen Cardona, 2 Whitman circle: They are co-presidents of the Fiske PTO. They've done a survey at Fiske. 58% took it, and 86% said 1-2 modulars would be wanted at Fiske. Families are not in support of redistricting to Estabrook. Parents are willing to sacrifice but they hope you'll keep temporary modulars for Fiske on the table. Please don't overlook it. Please consider the Fiske community.

Alison Stevens, 1373 Mass Avenue: She is representing the Bowman School Site-based Council. She read a letter she had sent to the school committee. Thanks to the School Committee and the Ad hoc School Master Planning Committee for looking into the issue. They unanimously support option 9. It provides a long-term and an interim solution for the capacity bowman needs. Bowman's faculty, administration and parents are committed to not splitting the gym for the 15-16 school year. Prefab construction will provide the ability to right size the school.

Denite Netzer, 17 John Poulter Road: She has 3 kids, one at Hastings, one at Harrington, and one who was at the preschool. She serves on the Harrington PTA and supports a new Hastings. Very concerned about enlarging Harrington and making it a super school. It would mean crowded common spaces, congestion, traffic, etc. Enlarging Harrington will mean overcrowding Clarke.

Alyssa O'Shaughnessy, 6 Brookwood Road: She is shocked and disappointed to not see anything on Fiske in option 9. Fiske is currently overcrowded and the next 3 years won't just come and go for them. Temporary modulars will be 0.86% of operating budget. If nothing happens for Fiske, it will be the only elementary school in town to put art on a cart. It will have repeated and frequent redistricting and overcrowded classrooms. We are not willing to live with those conditions for 3 years.

Daniel Pan, 34 Balfour Street: He has a second grader at Hastings. He supports the rebuilding of Hastings and what struck him the most is that Hastings is 60 years old. The mechanical, electrical, etc. are not up to code. There are no sprinklers in the school. The current space used for education is 77 square feet per student, which is 44% lower than what is recommended by MSBA. They already use portable classrooms, which are close to or exceeding their life. We need to rebuild Hastings. Based on the enrollment forecast, the elementary won't go down, just up. Seriously consider moving the Hastings project forward.

Alex Havales, 77 Grant Street: He has a first grader at Fiske. Thanks for all the hard work you do. He was startled to see they weren't part of the plan. He is delighted to hear the mention of temporary modulars as they are far superior to art in a cart, etc. Please find a way to not let Fiske bear the burden while you figure out things.

Public Hearing closed: 9:15pm

Presentation of the Report from the Enrollment Working Group

Dan Krupka presented the report. He explained how the group came to their projections. The numbers were updated since the October 1st report. Use 87 not 43 percent. Possibility of further growth is very important to take into account after 2020. The proposal is now that they'll monitor the housing turnover. The work should now be turned over to the LPS staff.

Grade Group	Enrollment in FY2020	Growth over FY2014
Elementary (K-5)	3188 +/- 267	260 +/- 267
Middle School (6-8)	1830 +/- 70	171 +/- 70
High School (9-12)	2290 +/- 120	269 +/- 120
Total System	7279 +/- 410	671 +/- 410

Members had some questions and comments for Mr. Krupka and Mr. Pato. The Committee members thanked the enrollment group for the work they've done. They appreciate what has been done.

Dr. Ash noted that Director of Planning and Assessment Maureen Kavanaugh is completing her doctorate. He anticipates she will eventually take over this role and has attended many of the meetings. She's been very involved in this. She will learn how to do the housing model,

collecting census data, comparing with schools. This will be a big component of her job. We could not handle taking this over without her. He thanked the members of the working enrollment group. No one in the USA could ever do this work. This project became a true labor of love within this committee and he is very thankful.

Judith Crocker resumed her presentation.

Members had questions, comments and discussed the following:

Fiske is not on the chart being presented, and members agreed with it; members realized that a discussion needs to occur about not being able to build a new high school in the near future and it is time to commit to an approach; members would like to advocate that the Ad hoc Master Planning Committee group discuss the high school at their Thursday meeting; there will probably be a major redistricting in 3-5 years and parents need to realize it; members are concerned about bringing the plan to the community and are cognizant of the taxpayers concerns.

Chair of Board of Selectmen Joe Pato: he and the selectmen are looking for guidance on what the school committee is looking for, so they can see what the taxpayer would expect over the years. They need to know what the ideals are, enrollment expectations and what you need to have as capacity. Then we can turn around and see what the impact would be.

Discussion of Filing a Statement of Interest with the Massachusetts School Building Authority for Hastings School

Members discussed refiling the SOI or going to spring town meeting and ask for design money and construction documents. They would have to request 7% of project (4.2 million) for design and construction documents. The Board of Selectmen make the decision to put it on a debt exclusion vote. Members also kept in mind that the schools want other projects. The committee reached a consensus and decided they would like to see what it would be like to go ahead with Hastings on their own and informed Mr. Pato from the Board of Selectmen.

MOTION to adjourn (Hurley, Alessandrini)

The Motion was approved 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45pm.

Meeting Materials: Agenda; Ad hoc School Master Planning Committee Option 9; Letter from the LPS Enrollment Working Group; Five-year Enrollment Forecasts for the Lexington Public School: FY2015-FY2020 Report of the Enrollment Working Group; Determining School Committee's Long-term and Short-term Overcrowding Solutions handout

Voted by the School Committee February 10, 2015