

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, July 22, 2015
School Administration Building, Lower Level Room 1
146 Maple Street

PRESENT: Chair Jessie Steigerwald, Vice Chair William Hurley, Alessandro Alessandrini, Judith Crocker, Margaret Coppe Superintendent Dr. Mary Czajkowski, Carol Pilarski (Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction), Pat Goddard (Director of Public Facilities), Ian Dailey (Interim Director of Finance and Operations)

The Minutes were taken by Jessie Steigerwald. The meeting convened at 9:06 pm.

Call to order and welcome: Chair Jessie Steigerwald called the meeting to order, and introduced committee members and lead administrators seated at the table.

Public Comments: There were none.

Superintendent's Announcements:

Dr. Czajkowski provided two handouts from Pat Goddard, Director of Facilities.

"Updated July 22, 2015 /Art. 2, 2015 Special Town Meeting Update: Softcost Actual, Encumbered, and Appropriated"

"Project Cost/Middle Schools; Project Cost/ School Committee Recommendation"

School Committee Member Announcements:

Steigerwald: Provided updated draft calendar for 2015-2016 and requested committee members reply by Friday to indicate whether they saw any conflicts. She noted the need for a quick reply on the proposed October 5th meeting to be held in Boston in order to confirm a location, and also asked members to indicate when they could be available in August if the committee needed to deliberate on anything related to capital projects.

Agenda:

Continued Discussion on Pre-Kindergarten, Elementary and Middle School Capital Projects

Steigerwald provided handouts of four adopted School Committee Policies: Attendance Areas, File JC; Assignment of Students to Schools, File JCA; Redistricting, File JCAA; Physical Education, File IHAE. She read aloud from the Redistricting policy to clarify that:

“The Superintendent shall review school building capacity and enrollment annually and any recommendations shall be brought to the School Committee. Redistricting may be used as a tool for long-range planning to avoid overcrowding. However, given its inherent disruption to the community, the School Committee prefers that redistricting not impact any street or home more than once in a five-year period.”

Bill Hurley, Dr. Czajkowski, and Judy Crocker provided an update from the 7:00 p.m. Ad hoc Redistricting Subcommittee meeting they had just attended. That group will continue to

meet during the school year and prefers to make recommendations after decisions were made about capital projects so they would know what capacity might be available.

Steigerwald distributed a handout "*July 22, 2015 – School Committee Project Review*" and outlined evening plan for deliberations around each of the school projects.

Each project was discussed separately. Members asked questions about aspects of the academic program for general and special education, English Language Learners program, art and music, physical education, and core spaces at each school. Committee members asked questions about sequence and timing for additional capacity. Mr. Goddard answered questions about the architect's plans. Dr. Czajkowski and Ms. Pilarski provided answers about the need for additional space for educational programming and shared views regarding an appropriate size and scale for an elementary and middle school.

1. New Hastings School

On the topic of whether Hastings should be built to be a 30 classroom school or larger, Dr. Czajkowski and Ms. Pilarski provided feedback about the challenges of an elementary school that was larger than 30 classrooms.

Committee would like additional information on timing if we fast-track Hastings and build it without MSBA financial support.

Consensus reached to advance Hastings and bring the new space online as soon as possible.

2. Brick and Mortar Additions at Clarke, Diamond and Fiske

A. Clarke and Diamond Additions.

Concerns around the appropriate size for a middle school student population. Dr. Czajkowski states middle school of 1,100 or more is not ideal, especially in facility that was not designed for that size. Hurley considering 968 and 1080 are similar student populations. Dr. Czajkowski also concerned about having space at one school and not the other. Pilarski described impact of transitioning from elementary school of 550 or 600 to middle school over 1,000. Crocker was concerned about parity. Coppe and Alessandrini supported split growth. Steigerwald requested that if consensus was to add at both Diamond and Clarke to then ask architects to study the café relocation so it would be appropriate for the larger number of students, and avoid work to the cafeteria space twice if we needed to later add additional students at Diamond.

Consensus to add capacity at both schools and study café relocation at Diamond to understand both the cost but also the possible benefits to addressing it now.

B. Fiske Brick and Mortar Addition.

Consensus reached to pursue the addition and to also ask DiNisco to review the possibility of designing the addition to maximize number of classroom spaces, whether that might be 25, 26 or 27.

3. New Lexington Children's Place as Stand Alone Facility

Pat Goddard advised that it could pause until spring. Consensus was to pause in design until the fall to be certain design work was addressing the right location.

4. Harrington School
 - A. Repurpose space left vacant if Lexington Children's Place vacates. Consensus reached to pause until fall 2015.
 - B. Pursue study of long-term brick and mortar addition. Members noted that it would be helpful to know the cost and the total classroom number that could be achieved with addition if the preschool program did not move back into that addition. Goddard said there was a commitment to pursue design work and it was still option on the table, but could be studied in the fall to allow DiNisco more time to address the projects that needed immediate attention to meet earlier deadlines. Crocker preferred to keep moving forward on this work now.
5. Prefabricated Modular Units at Bridge & Bowman
Committee focused on each school separately, beginning with Bridge. Bridge has 26 sections now and needs 26 sections of art and music. Six sections of each do not fit in the current dedicated rooms. Special education would also benefit from additional space. The partitioned spaces are shared by four teachers and one assistant. The ELL program has 56 students. They share two small spaces and share the literacy library. The current kindergarten enrollment looks like 20, 20, 20, 21 and new students may still be joining in summer weeks.

Bowman would add 2 general education classrooms and one room that would be shared for art and music sections. ELL program numbers are also increased, now at 90.

Coppe noted that recent renovations at Bridge and Bowman addressed lighting, mechanicals, windows and doors, plus added 2 classrooms, felt families were owed the appropriate spaces as it has been overcrowded too long. Alessandrini strongly in favor of adding the prefabricated spaces and the additional specialist space. Hurley notes that if add 2 classrooms it does add to capacity and school is already approaching 600 students. If there is no place to redistrict students, they require appropriate space. If the numbers could be reduced in the future, there may be an excess of classrooms. Asked about the cost of leasing standard modular spaces. Goddard reviewed costs. Crocker would like the information about Harrington's possibilities for brick and mortar addition, as well as the timeline. Expresses policy preference to invest in brick and mortar at the newer school buildings. Steigerwald would prefer to have smaller student enrollment at Bridge and Bowman to match appropriate core spaces. Seeks clarity around number of students who might be able to move to Harrington by fall 2016, or Fiske, and timing. If there is no way to redistrict students, options are limited, but concerned that adding space to these two schools may permanently keep the population too high for the cafeteria, gym and other core spaces if future committee members must accommodate even higher enrollment.

MOTION to request the Board of Selectmen to:

- Release \$42,705 for further design of a new 30 section Hastings Elementary School, completion to be as soon as possible;

- Release \$756,329 for further design of a brick and mortar addition to Clarke;
- Release \$835,742 for further design of a brick and mortar addition to Diamond with further study of the café relocation proposal
- Release \$432,206 for further design of a brick and mortar addition to Fiske, with further study of making the addition hold as many additional classroom spaces as possible (25, 26 or 27);
- Release \$183,200 to further prefabricated modular units at Bridge;
- Release \$151,664 to further prefabricated modular units at Bowman;
- To pause until fall 2015, then continue on the design work to repurpose space at Harrington that will be vacant when Lexington Children's Place relocates;
- To pause until a future date, then continue design work for a stand alone facility at a site to be determined to house Lexington Children's Place to provide pre-Kindergarten program space;
- To pause until fall 2015, then continue further design work to understand potential to add brick and mortar addition at Harrington.

(Alessandrini, Hurley) 4-1, Crocker opposed.

MOTION to authorize the Chair to work with the Superintendent to review the 3-year lease for Lexington Children's Place's new location and, if necessary, sign the lease.
(Hurley, Alessandrini)

The Motion was approved 5-0.

MOTION to adjourn.

(Coppe, Crocker)

The Motion was approved 5-0 and the meeting adjourned at 11:50 p.m.

Meeting Materials:

Agenda; "Updated July 22, 2015 /Art. 2, 2015 Special Town Meeting Update: Softcost Actual, Encumbered, and Appropriated";

"Project Cost/Middle Schools; Project Cost/ School Committee Recommendation"

"July 22, 2015 – School Committee Project Review";

Attendance Areas, File JC; Assignment of Students to Schools, File JCA;

Redistricting, File JCAA; Physical Education, File IHAE

Voted Approved by the School Committee August 25, 2015