

BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE
FINAL MEETING MINUTES
January 16, 2018
Chenery Middle School
7:00 PM

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Meeting #35

Committee Members Attending:

Chair Lovallo; Members: Adam Dash, John Phelan, Tom Caputo, Pat Bruschi, Phyllis Marshall, Bob McLaughlin, Joe DeStefano, Joel Mooney, Diane Miller, Chris Messer, Emma Thurston, Jamie Shea

Patrice Garvin (Town Administrator)

From Daedalus: Tom Gatzunis, Shane Nolan

From Perkins+Will: Brooke Trivas, Patrick Cunningham, Rick Kuhn

BHSBC Member Absent: Dan Richards

School Committee Members Attending: Catherine Bowen, [Tom Caputo], Andrea Prestwich, Susan Burgess-Cox [The SC called their meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.]

There were roughly 30 citizens in attendance at this meeting.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chair Lovallo. He briefly reviewed the evening's agenda and then introduced Belmont's new Town Administrator, Ms. Patrice Garvin, to the BHSBC, et al. Mr. Messer updated the BHSBC on the handouts that were prepared for tonight's meeting.

II. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Mr. McLaughlin moved: To approve the Minutes of 1/9/18.
The motion passed unanimously.

III. Comments from Belmont Residents

Ms. Anne Paulson, School Street, asked about pedestrian and biking access. Specifically, she asked when these issues, as they relate to the BHS project, would be addressed again by the Committee? Chair Lovallo provided some information on what would happen next, namely that the Traffic Advisory Committee will meet to discuss the traffic recommendations that were explored at the BHSBC meeting of January 11, 2018.

Ms. Tara Donner, Belmont parent and a teacher outside the Belmont school district, asked if the costs associated with turning the Chenery into an elementary school had been explored. She stated that the younger kids are not being given full consideration. Mr. Phelan provided some information, although he stated that he has not priced out a K-6 option for the Chenery. She stated that research has shown that additional school transitions negatively impact children. She said the information regarding grade

configuration options has not been presented to the public in an unbiased way. She said she hopes the issue is given more attention going forward.

IV. Update on Project Costs (Tom Gatzunis)

Mr. Gatzunis reviewed the three grade configurations (7-12, 8-12, 9-12) as well as the various options for the new project, e.g., major renovation, partial renovation, new construction, etc. He reviewed potential construction costs, noting that the construction rates are increasing about 4% annually. He said the average cost is \$550.00 per square foot of building construction, when considering current local MSBA school building costs on average, plus adjustments for specific building and site impacts, and adjustment for inflation. The MSBA will only reimburse up to \$326.00 per square foot of eligible building components. The 7-12 option will be the most expensive, as it entails the biggest size building.

He noted that the current MSBA agreement with Belmont is to reimburse for 36.89% of *eligible* costs. There are costs that are ineligible for reimbursement. He reviewed areas that might be deemed ineligible, as well as costs that might be capped. The estimated net cost to Belmont is about 74% of the total project cost, based on the anticipated final reimbursement rate from the MSBA and historical information from the MSBA.

Mr. Gatzunis's handout included the price to taxpayers for each of the various options.

V. Funding the Project (Floyd Carman)

Mr. Carman reviewed the tax impact ranges based on the various construction options. The total cost of the project ranges from a low of \$318.9M to a high of \$402.1M. Regarding tax impact from the Belmont High School Project only, the average assessed property value in Belmont is \$1M, therefore the low impact annual cost will be \$1,460.00 to a high cost impact of \$1,840.00 – per property owner. This is at an estimated 4% borrowing rate, over 30 years.

Chair Lovallo noted that better cost numbers will not be identified until this summer. Mr. Carman stressed the need for a cash flow report; the cash flow report, he said, will be important when the project is bonded.

Audience Comments

Mr. Charles Smart, 71 Elizabeth Road, asked two clarifying questions about the tax impact. It was determined that, if the home assessments go up, the amount of taxes paid for the Belmont High School Project stays the same. Mr. Carman agreed with that statement.

Ms. Heather Barr (?), asked about the bonding mechanism as well as the costs of upgrading the elementary schools. Will those costs be tied in to the high school? Mr. Carman stated that it depends how those costs are bonded. Chair Lovallo noted that the fiscal impact of the elementary school improvements that Superintendent Phelan presented on January 9, 2018 are not part of the Belmont High School Project and will have to be managed separately from the new BHS project. However, at this time there is no mechanism in place in Belmont to move those elementary school improvements forward.

VI. Costs for K-8 Schools (John Phelan)

Mr. Phelan reviewed costs, spanning several grade configuration options, for “right sizing” the lower grade schools. (The full PowerPoint slide set from January 9, 2018 is on both the BPS and BHSBC website.) Total project costs for the new building, *combined with* the right-sizing costs, is not a realistic summary because a plan to execute the right-sizing of the K-8 schools does not exist. Furthermore, funding has not been identified for any of the lower grade right-sizing projects.

Mr. Phelan added that, even with the 7-12 grade configuration option for the new building, there is still a \$18M-\$25.5M cost to right-size the elementary buildings (K-3) and to make Chenery a 4-6 school. Chair Lovallo asked: if the 7-12 solution for the HS is chosen, can the District execute the K-8 space needs without the cost of this right-size solution? Mr. Phelan responded that he can open the doors to the K-8 schools and accommodate the anticipated student enrollment in the remaining five school buildings should that 7-12 configuration be chosen, without the right-size solution being executed as described by SMMA.

VII. Preliminary Site Design Updates (Brooke Trivas)

Ms. Trivas began by reviewing the four main options for the new building:

- 2.1 Major Reno/Add
- 2.3 Reno/Major Add
- 2.4 Reno/Major Add
- 3.1 New Construction

She noted where the plans have been updated since the BHSBC meeting held at the end of November, based on comments received from the Committee and public. She briefly reviewed some of the pros/cons of the 4 options. For example, new construction does not take the pool into consideration.

Both Mr. Kuhn and Mr. Cunningham provided additional information on the four options, outlined above. They each discussed pros/cons as well as the impact on phasing during the construction process. Mark-up photos of the potential designs/site plans were reviewed. Bicycle and pedestrian access as well as landscaping possibilities were also reviewed. Gym, Auditorium, and Field House locations vis-a-vis class-room space, green space, and Concord Ave. were also explored for the various options.

Ms. Trivas noted that the options outlined above can be re-worked to keep the positive elements and attempt to eliminate the elements that are not liked. Therefore, it may be that an option that *combines* some of the above is what is ultimately moved forward. However, the basic design integrity would need to be maintained and the final design would need to be rational execution of the positive elements.

The BHSBC asked questions and offered comments on the various design options.

Selectman Dash asked process and timing questions related to the next steps and votes on design/site selection. He also stated his thoughts on the four proposed designs and site locations. Ms. Trivas stated that the traffic issues related to the project will not be decided by choosing a design or site location.

Chair Lovallo stressed that traffic flow, pedestrian, and bike issues will continue to be explored. Mr.

McLaughlin asked about the financial implications of the options, as well as the square footage, and he specifically asked when the information would be forthcoming concerning a particular design option's impact on the building's operational costs. Mr. Cunningham responded that he anticipates that the operational and maintenance costs for all four solutions appear to be cost-neutral.

Chair Lovallo noted that the BHSBC will continue this dialogue on Thursday morning.

XII. Next BHSBC Meetings

Thursday, January 18, 2018 at 7:30 a.m.
Tuesday, January 23, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

XIII. Other/New Business

Chair Lovallo noted that there is an Evaluation sheet pertaining to the design / site selection options. He requested that Committee members fill out the form and be prepared to discuss it.

XIV. Related Meeting Documents

1. January 9, 2018 Minutes
2. Summary of Potential K-8 Costs for Right Sizing Schools
3. PDP Site Strategies Matrix
4. Concept Cost Summary PDP
5. BHS Proposed Building Configurations
6. BHS Building Project (tax impact)
7. Evaluation Matrix

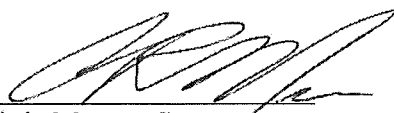
XV. End Meeting

The meeting ended at 8:55 p.m. by Mr. McLaughlin.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lisa Gibalerio

Approved:


Chris Messer, Secretary

Date 2/5/18