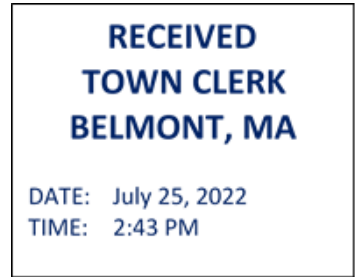


BELMONT MIDDLE and HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

**Final Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 23, 2022
Virtual Zoom Meeting
7:00 PM**



Meeting #145

Committee Members Virtually Attending:

Chair Lovallo; Members Joel Mooney, Ellen Schreiber, David Blazon, Kate Bowen, Chris Messer, Pat Bruschi, Bob McLaughlin, Mike McAllister, John Phelan, Emma Thurston

Also in attendance: Jennifer Hewitt (Belmont’s Finance Director)

Members Absent: Patrice Garvin, Jamie Shea, Tom Caputo, Joe DeStefano, Diane Miller

From CHA: Tom Gatzunis, Don White

From Perkins+Will: Brian Spangler, Vital Albuquerque

From Skanska:

From Solar Design Associates (SDA): Haskell Werlin, Steve Coffrin

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Lovallo. He thanked Jeff and the Belmont Media Center for their technical support. He noted the topic for this evening’s meeting is PV – solar panels. He explained the remote meeting protocol, e.g., state your name before speaking, mute computers, and he explained how the Committee will vote via roll call, etc. Meeting materials will be posted on the BMHSBC website, shortly after the meeting. He also advised residents that they can click into the meeting during resident comment time by “raising their hand” or by pressing #9.

Chair Lovallo took attendance via roll call, reviewed the agenda, and turned to the first item on the agenda.

II. Next Building Committee Meetings

Thursday	July 14, 2022	at 8:00 AM	Virtual	[146]
Thursday	August 11, 2022	at 8:00 AM	Virtual	[147]

III. Review and Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings

Mr. McLaughlin moved: To approve the Minutes of 6/9/22.
The motion passed via a roll call vote of 8-0-3. (Yes: Thurston, Phelan, Bruschi, Blazon, Mooney, McLaughlin, Schreiber, Lovallo; Abstain: Bowen, Messer, McAllister)

IV. Planting Proposal from BHS Climate Action Group

FINAL

Chair Lovallo introduced members from the BHS Climate Action Group. He reported that the BHS Climate Action Group will provide an update on proposed plantings for the Middle/High School campus. Ms. Audrey Brenhouse, BHS rising Junior, spoke to the goals of the Climate Action Club. She spoke about supporting sustainability in order to support the environment. Ms. Ellie Lesser, also a rising Junior, thanked the Committee for the Committee's continued support. Mr. Dan Moresco, Faculty Advisor, acknowledged the students for their work. Ms. Brenhouse spoke about climate change and its impacts as well as the importance of creating a native garden. Ms. Lesser spoke to the planting schedule and the phasing in of particular native plants. They are consulting with Jean Devine of *Devine Native Plantings*. Ms. Lesser spoke to the fundraising efforts as well as the educational purposes of the native garden. Committee members offered comments and asked brief questions. Mr. Iler noted that the town is *not* planting native trees. Mr. Maresco thanked the Committee and Chair Lovallo for their ongoing support.

V. Committee Updates for the Community

Chair Lovallo noted the areas for updates for the community:

- Select Board briefings
- Belmont Journal video segments (once a month) – Chair Lovallo described the process for taping the monthly video segments. He shared a list of potential video segment topics. Superintendent Phelan suggested including students in the video tapings.

VI. Town Meeting Article 13 Rooftop Photovoltaic (PV)

Chair Lovallo noted that Brian Iler had presented Article 13 at Town Meeting (TM), which helped to reassure the Committee that moving forward with PV is the right thing to do. Mr. Iler said that 91 percent of TM members supported this. He thanked the Committee for their efforts around PV.

VII. ARPA Funding for Committee

Chair Lovallo stated that the Select Board voted to provide up to \$1M (in two installments of \$500K) of ARPA funding to support PV placement on the roof of the Middle/High school. He said it was initially unclear if the ARPA funding would impact the MSBA grant money and the town approved funding (debt exclusion). Mr. Gatzunis summarized that the MSBA funding would not be impacted by this ARPA funding; it will be treated as additional funds and will not reduce the MSBA grant allotment. Ms. Bruschi reported that the \$1M will go to the town and then back to the Committee to fund PV (in two \$500K installments), once the Committee provides the town with PV invoices. Ms. Hewitt concurred.

VIII. Approval of ARPA Funding for Photovoltaic Installation

Chair Lovallo asked for a motion, which was tweaked several times.

Mr. McLaughlin moved: To thank the Select Board and accept the offer from the Select Board to use the ARPA funds of the purpose of Photovoltaic installation for a total of \$1M made through an allocation of \$500,000 for 2022, plus another \$500,000 for 2023.

The motion passed unanimously via a roll call vote of 11-0-0. (Yes: Thurston, Phelan, Brusch, Blazon, Mooney, Bowen, McLaughlin, Messer, McAllister, Schreiber, Lovallo)

Ms. Brusch thanked Ms. Garvin and Superintendent Phelan for their support in making this happen.

IX. Photovoltaic Schedule for Procurement and Construction

Mr. White reviewed the PV progress schedule for PV design, procurement, and installation. He discussed the process and timeline related to the design consultant proposals, the bid process, and the installment of the panels. The plan is to have the PV solar system in place by fall of 2023.

X. Alternate Photovoltaic Funding Considerations

Chair Lovallo explained how tax credits work and how this is different from power purchase agreements. He noted how much could be saved (16 percent, \$300,000-\$400,000). He suggested that this process does have risks and he explained why the bid process could be held up (with legal challenges via a bid protest), therefore creating project delays. He touched on the bid process and noted that tax credits are considered a high risk not only by himself, but also by Belmont's Town Counsel. He explained the impact of this on Skanska's role in PV procurement and installation under Ch. 149A versus bidding under Ch. 30B. Committee members offered comments.

Chair Lovallo noted that his opinion, as well as Town Counsel's, is that the Committee should no longer pursue this option for funding. Committee members did not disagree. Member McLaughlin noted that it's hard to give up a \$300-\$400 savings.

XI. Final Photovoltaic Design Update for Full Roof Coverage - SDA

Mr. Steve Coffrin, SDA, discussed the production goals of the PV. He showed a photo of the layout plans for the rooftop PV. He discussed the potential use rate, placement of panels, the impact on megawatt production, and other issues concerning the placement of PV (such as the high demand times). Committee members offered comments and asked questions, which lead to a discussion on the warranty and risk of the panels. Mr. Coffrin explained Tier One specifications and the likelihood of panels breaking during shipping (which the manufacturer replaces).

XII. Estimated Photovoltaic Project Costs for Current Design

Chair Lovallo added that the costs of PV have been in flux. Mr. Werlin, SDA, explained that retroactive tariffs have caused market volatility and cost escalation of solar panels. However, the tariffs have been temporarily removed (for the next two years) which has brought the price down. It was noted that costs are still expected to be in the \$2.00 to \$2.25 range per watt, which is within the budget established for PV on this project.

XIII. Bidding Recommendations for Photovoltaic Installation

Chair Lovallo discussed the bidding specifications that can be used in the bid process as well as bid add alternates.

XIV. Comments from Belmont Residents

FINAL

Mr. Beavers, Light Board, said that looking at “time of use rates” is useful; he also asked about rates and load profiles.

XV. Approval of Bidding Package for Photovoltaic Installation

Chair Lovallo asked for a motion to approve the package once it is finalized for bidding under Chapter 149A. CHA would manage the bid process, while installation oversight will be assigned to Skanska. A budget will be in place. The Committee will approve the (lowest) bidder. The schedule shows that approval of the selected bidder will take place by the Committee later in August 2022.

Mr. McLaughlin moved: To authorize BMHSBC Chair Lovallo to finalize the Photovoltaic Installation bid package, under Mass Law, Chapter 149A and send out to bid with Add Alternates to provide opportunities to have the bids presented within our PV budget. The motion passed unanimously via a roll call vote of 10-0-0. (Yes: Thurston, Phelan, Bruschi, Blazon, Mooney, Bowen, McLaughlin, Messer, Schreiber, Lovallo)

Chair Lovallo thanked the Committee for their efforts on PV.

XVI. New Business/Other

None.

XVII. Related Meeting Documents

1. BHS Climate Action Group – Native Gardens
2. Belmont Journal Schedule
3. Town Meeting Article 13
4. MSBA letter to Belmont May 17, 2022
5. PV Schedule
6. PV CD drawing set June 23, 2022

XVIII. Adjournment

The Chair ended the meeting at 9:08 p.m., following a motion made by Mr. McLaughlin.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lisa Gibalerio

Approved: 
Chris Messer, Secretary

7/25/2022
Date