

Groton-Dunstable Building Committee Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2020

Central Office – 344 Main Street – 6:00 PM

Building Committee Members Present/Absent *[7 voting members required for a quorum]*

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Late [time arrived]
Fay Raynor	✓		
Mark Haddad	✓		
Berta Erickson		✓	
Alison Manugian	✓		
Luke Callahan	✓		
Brian O'Donoghue	✓		
Laura Chesson	✓		
Colby Doody	✓		
Marlena Gilbert	✓		
Ryan McLane	✓		
Jake Lewon		✓	
Sherry Kersey	✓		

Guests: David Saindon [Leftfield], Brian Dakin [Leftfield], Meryl Nistler [SGA], Sylvia Mihich [SGA]

1. Call to order

Ms. Raynor called the Building Committee [BC] meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

2. Vote to Approve Meeting Minutes

MOTION

Mr. Haddad made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the 02/25/2020 Building Committee (BC) meeting; Ms. Manugian seconded the motion; and the motion passed unanimously by those present tonight and on 2/25/2020.

Groton-Dunstable Building Committee Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2020

Central Office – 344 Main Street – 6:00 PM

3. Vote to Approve Invoices and Commitments

Mr. Saindon presented an invoice log dated 3/10/2020 including invoices for Leftfield (\$10,853.00 for Feb. 2020 OPM services) and SGA (\$31,500 for Feasibility Study services) totaling \$42,353.00.

Mr. Haddad made a motion to approve the invoices as presented. Seconded by Dr. Chesson. Roll call, all that were there voted yes.

4. Designer/ OPM Updates:

a. MSBA Comments and District Responses

Mr. Saindon briefly summarized the responses to the MSBA comments on the PDP submission and noted that SGA and Leftfield were working on responses to a number of items that were directly addressable by the project team. He highlighted a few comments that relate to topics that require input by the Building Committee:

The MSBA is requesting more backup on how the Multi-Purpose room is required to support the Educational Plan. Ms. Nistler explained that this is a 1,200 square foot space that was understood to be used for indoor recess and general flex space. Dr. Chesson and Mr. O'Donoghue noted that they felt this space wouldn't work for indoor recess based on it not being large enough. Ms. Raynor noted that indoor recess space is already something the School has and that it's a priority to maintain. The Committee discussed ways of maintaining indoor recess in the cafeteria or gym and noted that a dedicated 1,200 square foot space is likely not necessary, and should be deleted from the MSBA Space Summary Matrix

Mr. Saindon noted that the MSBA is also seeking further explanation of the extended learning / small group areas and that Dr. Chesson was working on a response.

Mr. Saindon noted that the MSBA is questioning why a full sized (high school) basketball court is carried in the Health and Physical Education category. The Committee discussed the court size and noted that the design should trend

Groton-Dunstable Building Committee Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2020

Central Office – 344 Main Street – 6:00 PM

towards the MSBA guidelines and away from a full-sized basketball court. Ms. Raynor noted that it is worth considering whether bleachers should remain included with a smaller court.

Mr. O'Donoghue asked whether there was any single space planned within the facility where the entire student and teacher population could gather for an assembly. He noted this was of value because it will prevent the need to have students leave the building to go somewhere else on campus for such situations. Ms. Nistler noted this would be considered moving forward and would be discussed further via tonight's design options.

b. Designer/Floor Plan Development

Ms. Nistler and Ms. Mihich presented an updated timeline highlighting milestones through the planned May 5th issuance of the Preferred Schematic Report ("PSR").

Ms. Nistler and Ms. Mihich presented slides relating to floor plan development of the following options:

Option 3.2a – This is the original "H" scheme.

Option 3.2b – This is a variation of the "H" scheme with the cafeteria and gym located on the same side of the main entry and Admin located on the opposite side of the entry where the gym is located in 3.2a.

Option 3.2c - This shows further development of the original "H" scheme but connects the cafeteria and gym with a 2-sided stage.

Option 3.2d – This is a "Y" scheme that maintains the gym and cafeteria being on opposite sides of the main entry with Admin between them and the Media Center taking up a more central location on the first and second floors with adjacent stairwells connecting the levels.

Option 3.2e – This is an "L" scheme that's purpose was to attempt to lay out the program in as efficient manner as possible. Mr. Saindon noted that this scheme will always have lowest grossing factor as it compresses the academic spaces into a single wing with a double-loaded corridor.

This Committee discussed the presented options:

Groton-Dunstable Building Committee Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2020

Central Office – 344 Main Street – 6:00 PM

SGA was asked to study whether any space efficiencies identified via option 3.2e in the public and group spaces could be applied to other schemes with two academic wings.

The Committee discussed that the Media Center is not required to be centrally located as technology is more evenly distributed throughout the learning spaces. Mr. O'Donoghue stated that the adjacency of Media Center to Innovation Lab could be beneficial both for programming and staffing. It was agreed that Art and Music rooms could be moved to the second level to better balance the two floor plate sizes.

The Committee discussed the importance of being able to have an all-school assembly on the first floor.

After further discussion, Mr. Haddad made a motion to recommend Option 3.2c as the preferred scheme for further development by the design team. The motion was seconded by Ms. Manugian. There was further discussion: SGA was asked to investigate locating the media center and innovation space on the same floor and, if needed, distribute art and music spaces to the other floor to better balance the floor sizes and maximize square footage. SGA was asked to clarify the stair configurations for egress and building circulation via further development of the option. The motion was approved unanimously by those present.

c. Track size/location

Dr. Chesson provided an update regarding track use. Approximately 103 students participate in Spring track and Fall cross-country but the Athletic Director noted that it would be acceptable to have a smaller track than the current one in the new school configuration. It was noted that for the few events that benefitted from a full-sized track, students could be bussed to the high school at no additional cost since the bus currently travels to the High School. The Committee discussed the track and generally agreed that it is not a hard requirement for inclusion in the new schemes. SGA presented track test fits showing 400, 300 and 200 meter tracks overlaid with the current and

Groton-Dunstable Building Committee Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2020

Central Office – 344 Main Street – 6:00 PM

proposed new building locations and highlighting where retaining walls would likely be needed to create a level plateau for each option. Mr. Saindon noted that the 200m track option has an order of magnitude cost of \$600-650k and that others would be more expensive. It was noted that the track would not be eligible for reimbursement, so its cost would be entirely borne by the Project/Town. After further discussion, the Committee agreed that a track should not be included in further development of options.

d. Air Conditioning

Mr. Saindon noted that the project carried the \$770k premium for full building air conditioning in the PDP budget based on the understanding of how the school will be used year-round. Dr. Chesson confirmed that based on current projections the entire school will be used in the summer months. After further discussion, the Committee agreed that maintaining full air conditioning was required.

e. Pre-K Program

Ms. Gilbert noted that the Twomey Center has the ability to house the PreK program in its existing state or as a future addition/renovation.

f. Assembly Program Need

Refer to discussion below.

g. Cafeteria/Gym study

SGA presented an analysis of the gym and cafeteria occupant capacities which showed the MSBA guideline sizes yielding an occupant load of 386 for the (4,838sqft) cafeteria and 519 for the (6,000sqft) gym and 715 for the enlarged (8,237sqft) cafeteria and 695 for the enlarged (7,700sqft) court. The Committee agreed that it was essential to have a single space where the entire staff and student body could have an assembly. Ms. Gilbert and Ms. Raynor noted that it was important to clarify that such a space is intended to be sized for all-school use and not for any proposed community use. After further discussion, it was noted that 650 people is the target number that a single

Groton-Dunstable Building Committee Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2020

Central Office – 344 Main Street – 6:00 PM

space in the new building should be able to accommodate for an all-school assembly.

h. Outline of April 8th School Committee Presentation

Ms. Nistler presented an outline of the proposed update to the School Committee and indicated that SGA was seeking feedback on what should be presented.

i. CM-R vs. Design-Bid-Build

The Committee noted they had reviewed the presentation on this subject matter that was sent by Leftfield. Mr. Haddad noted that the design-bid-build process was used three times for Town projects in the last number of years and twice have resulted in bad experiences with low bidders. He indicated that, after review of the information, he recommends that the Committee pursue a Chapter 149a CM-at-Risk process for this project. The Committee further discussed members' previous experience on design-bid-build projects and how many of them were challenging. It was noted that the public would need to be introduced to CM-at-Risk as it will be new for most people. Mr. Saindon noted that with either procurement type, the project still must follow filed-sub bid processes for the trades mandated by the State and reiterated that it is Leftfield's belief that this project should proceed with CM-at-Risk. Mr. Dakin noted that one primary difference with CM-at-Risk is the ability to pick the CM firm based on meeting the specific teams who will be working on the project and selecting the preferred contractor via a qualifications-based process, not via a low bid. It was noted that the CM-at-Risk process tends to be more complex. Mr. Saindon indicated that Leftfield will condense some of the presentation info, document some pro's and con's and look to review this information at the future meeting.

5. Tax Exempt Analysis

Mr. Haddad summarized the attached debt service impact of the proposed project.

6. Look-ahead project schedule/work plan for the preferred schematic report

[PSR] phase:

Groton-Dunstable Building Committee Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2020

Central Office – 344 Main Street – 6:00 PM

Covered in Item 4.b above.

7. **Communication / outreach update:**

The Committee discussed protocol and strategy related to communication of project progress and decision-making. It was noted that, as the largest project the Town has undertaken, there is a need to track decisions so they can be explained in as straightforward a manner as possible. Ms. Raynor noted that new ideas could be covered in general at an initial meeting, then revisited with more detail at a subsequent meeting prior to taking action. She explained that this could prevent decisions from being construed as lacking in due diligence. It was stressed that the project must design to the Educational Plan and not seek to expand the scope or budget beyond what is needed for the fully functional school. The Committee discussed refinements to the Ed. Plan such as the high-school sized gym and it was agreed that these items should be further refined prior to the PSR submission. Dr. Chesson indicated she would follow up on reviewing the Ed Plan for space efficiencies such as this one. Ms. Raynor indicated that if there are any changes they can be discussed with the Committee and documented for the public.

8. **Public Comment**

None.

9. **Next Steps**

Mr. Haddad noted that he recently met with the Town's Financial Advisor and that one topic of discussion was what entity was going to finance the project: the District or Town of Groton. At the time, he indicated, it was assumed that the Town would. He indicated that just before tonight's meeting the Financial Advisor and Bond Counsel emailed him and explained that in their due diligence they determined that, due to the way the Regional School District agreement is written, the project would need to be approved by both Towns. He added that the Town can secure better borrowing rates than the Regional School District and indicated that one way to solve this issue will be to amend the Regional School District agreement (which needs to be done by both Towns, but would mean the project then only needs to be approved

Groton-Dunstable Building Committee Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2020

Central Office – 344 Main Street – 6:00 PM

and borrowed for by the Town of Groton). Mr. Haddad indicated that he'd follow up on this topic and present an update at a future meeting.

10. Adjournment

MOTION

Mr. Haddad made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Manugian seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously by those present. The meeting concluded at 8:32 PM.

FLORENCE ROCHE DEBT SERVICE

Town Meeting Action in April, 2021

	Fiscal Year <u>2022</u>	Fiscal Year <u>2023</u>	Fiscal Year <u>2024</u>	Fiscal Year <u>2025</u>
Total Authorization - \$90,000,000				
Anticipated Town Share - \$60,000,000				
Anticipated MSBA Share - \$30,000,000				
Borrowing Schedule				
Total Authorization	\$ 35,000,000	\$ 70,000,000	\$ 90,000,000	\$ 60,000,000
Town Share	\$ 23,450,000	\$ 46,900,000	\$ 60,000,000	\$ 60,000,000
MBTA Share	\$ 11,550,000	\$ 23,100,000	\$ 30,000,000	-
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Annual Debt Service	\$ 351,750	\$ 703,500	\$ 900,000	\$ 3,445,000
Estimated Tax Rate Increase	\$ 0.18	\$ 0.35	\$ 0.45	\$ 1.76
Estimated Increase to Average Tax Bill	\$ 89	\$ 172	\$ 221	\$ 866
Tax Bill Increase Per \$100,000 of Valuation	\$ 18.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 176.00