

City Of Worcester

NELSON PLACE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES

Nelson Place School Feasibility Study – June 2, 2014 - 7:00 PM

School Building Committee Members Present; (See attached Vote Registration Sheet)
Mayor Joseph Petty; DPW Commissioner, Paul Moosey; City Manager, Edward Augustus, Jr.; CoW CFO, Thomas Zidelis; City Councilor, Tony Economou; DPW Architect, Julie Lynch; Superintendent, Dr. Melinda Boone; WPS Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Marco Rodrigues; WPS Chief Financial Officer, Brian Allen; Acting Facilities Director, Jeff Martin; NPS Principal, Monica Poitras; SC Member, John Foley; Neighbor, Phil Giarusso; Parent, Pam Landry; VP Assumption College, Peter Wells; Neighbor, Jessica McGuire; NPS Staff, Elizabeth O’Connell; Parent, Alision Vigeant; NPS Staff Bethany Emery; Parent, Palmira Padilha;

The following Agenda items were presented and discussed;

- **Introduction:** Mayor Petty welcomed all attendees and thanked everyone for coming and provided a brief summary of the status of the Project.
- **Project Overview:** Paul Moosey noted that the Mayor provided a good update and that he appreciated all the hard work by the WPS personnel. He stated that the purpose of the meeting tonight was to vote on the “revised” Preliminary Design Program (PDP) and the Preferred Schematic Report (PSR) being submitted to the MSBA on June 12, 2014 once the SBC votes to approve the scheme.
- **Project Activity:** Julie Lynch also stated that the School department worked hard and recognized several members of the School Department including the Superintendent Melinda Boone. She also noted that LPA would provide a brief presentation on the PSR scheme and emphasis on the scheme being recommended for approval. Ms. Lynch reviewed the concerns expressed by neighbors and parents at prior Public Hearings, including the last held on May 19th. These concerns included:
 - The designation of a neighborhood school, in this case meaning that the school is serving the Nelson Place neighborhood, as well as the Indian Hill community. The existing school is for 525 students and the new school is approved for 600 students, with the majority of the increase from Pre-K students.
 - Land takings: partial land takings for grading purposes and to widen the site at the existing “bottle neck” on the property, will include four properties along Hapgood Rd. to the east of the site, totaling approximately 1 acre. Additionally, a corner of the abutting property at 51 Nelson Place will be taken. Assumption College, with property to the south, will provide the City with an easement for grading, as well as an easement for an emergency access road to Romola Rd.

- Wetlands: Isolated lands subject to flooding and associated 15 and 30 foot setbacks are being maintained.
 - Parking is being provided for 140 cars to accommodate full-time staff, itinerant staff, and visitors. Presently there are 40 spaces for the 65 staff. Event parking was being planned to accommodate up to 200 vehicles utilizing the new site roadways.
 - Playground areas are also being included at the front and rear of the building.
 - Emergency Access Road: an access road is being planned for emergency, pedestrian, and cycling use only. LPA and DPW will meet with CoW public safety officials to discuss the requirements and/or need for this roadway.
- **Preliminary Design Program (PDP) and Preferred Schematic Report (PSR):** Rob Para from Lamoureux Pagano Associates (LPA) presented the revised PDP as well as the PSR design options and floor plans of the preferred solution, C-2. The building is being designed to LEED Silver with basic and enhanced features. There will be separate parent and bus drop off/ pick up. The options included:
 - A) Addition to and Renovation of the existing school
 - B) Existing Nelson Place site with no additional land and
 - C) Existing Nelson Place site with additional land includes three sub-options C1, C2 and C3:
 - C1) Two adjacent classroom blocks with atrium divide and Administration block at the south end
 - C2) Central Administration block with one classroom block on each side. This is the option that has been review and approved by WPS, the CoW and DPW and is being recommended to the School Building Committee, as it best satisfies the site and educational program requirements.
 - C3) design similar to C1 with classroom wings at 90 degree to the Administration block. Mr. Para noted that all options had similar construction costs at approximately \$40 million. A scoring matrix was used and established option C2 as receiving the most points. This proposed solution provides the most options for development in schematic design of site options including grading, parking, and parent drop off / pick up arrangements. Additionally, C2 provides the greatest buffer areas to abutters.
- **Questions and Answers:** Numerous questions were asked by both the SBC members and the general public attending as follows:
 - Verification that the footprint of the building was to be very similar as show in option C2.
 - Boundary setbacks at the Hapgood side were noted as 300 ft. from the rear of the house to the school building and approximately 90 ft. from the proposed property line to the house. At the abutting property on Redwing Drive the distance from the house to the proposed building is approximately 220 ft. and from the property line to the house 80 ft.

- Following the eminent domain process where land is taken from abutters, the City will provide monetary compensation, as appraised, as well as appropriate landscaping where grading easements are utilized.
- Concern was made that the parking shown at the wetlands near Redwing should not be constructed and the land should stay as green space.
- Strong consideration will be given to appropriate landscape design option to minimize the visual site lines.
- The use of grading easements rather than retaining walls was part of the reason for taking land.
- The access road was strongly opposed by the neighborhood and concern over student safety, when utilized as a pedestrian way, and becoming a place to “party” were some main objections. The project team will confer with the public safety officials including the WFD to determine the best option for an emergency access road. The road is shown at approximately 550-600 ft. long.
- Off-site parking for teachers was suggested. The cost of shuttling teachers was stated by others as a drawback. The corner lot at Nelson Place and route 122 was also suggested to accommodate parking. It was noted by Ms. Lynch, that although the detail on the cost to obtain this property are not yet know, it is suspect that the cost to obtain it would be substantial.

CLOSING:

Julie Lynch performed a role call vote for each SBC member present for the revised PDP, and followed with a role call vote for the PSR. All members present voted YES for both schemes (see attached Vote Registration sheets).

Ms. Lynch noted that Public Hearings would follow during the final phase of the feasibility study. The dates and times would be posted on the Nelson Place School website, as well as emailed to the Nelson Place Interest Group.