

City Of Worcester
DOHERTY MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL PROJECT

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
July 15, 2019 - 6:30-8:00 PM

The following Agenda items were presented and discussed;

- **Introduction:** Russ Adams (CoW) welcomed all attendees and gave a brief overview of the project. He introduced Katie Crockett (LPA) and she introduced all project team members and elaborated on the various deadlines for the Feasibility Study schedule. She identified the new Chapter 74 programs that are being proposed to the School Committee. She also noted that the Advanced Academy for Biotechnology will start up in 2022. She said a new proposed building for the school would be about 400,000 sf. She introduced Christina Bazelmans who reviewed the past three educational Visioning sessions that were held in collaboration with David Stephen from New Vista Design.
- **Site Analysis:** Rob Para from LPA presented the process for the ongoing site selection analysis. Rob noted that approximately 13 acres would be needed for the educational program and another 13 acres for the athletic program, if all aspects of the requests were to be achieved. He presented slides showing approximately 30 sites district wide that could be considered, then narrowed to about 8 sites and then to a possible 3-4 sites for serious consideration. Rob noted criteria such as conservation lands, college sites and privately owned land as some factors that influenced eliminating possible sites. An attendee asked if the earlier list of sites could be re-reviewed and discussed. Rob noted that there are still no conclusions regarding site selection and a complete site comparative analysis will be presented at the tentative public meeting on August 19th.
- A question was asked if the MSBA would pay for the purchase of land. Russ Adams stated that was not included in their reimbursement. Russ also said there is a tentative meeting in August where further refinement of sites will be presented for further community input.
- A statement was made from an attendee that the Foley Stadium was donated to the City by General Foley for athletic use by the students in the City of Worcester. Rob noted that the Foley site was approximately 14 acres. A neighbor mentioned that the Beaver Brook site across the street from Foley was about 19 acres and is in the flood plain. This would have restrictive use for the site and need to confirm the route of the brook. The Harrington and Richardson site adjacent to Beaver Brook is approximately 7 acres including the paper streets. One concern raised about possible use of Foley Stadium was that there would need to be a guarantee to replicate the stadium elsewhere. Someone mentioned that this stadium is heavily used by the students. Russ mentioned that the site was brought to the attention of the project by a local newspaper article.

- Rob mentioned that the existing Doherty site is a 20 acre parcel, with approximately 8 acres of steep terrain and 12 acres developed. He stated that the Chandler Magnet site is approximately 22 acres however there are two significant grade changes one 20 ft. and another 70 ft. change in grade, plus heavy traffic in the area. A comment was made that there could be partnership with Worcester State University across the street from Chandler.
- The Big D site was ruled out due to topography and planned development, as well as being out of the quadrant. Someone mentioned the original site for Doherty was off June Street, and the site at the current location was the second choice.
- Rob mentioned there are several criteria that are being used to rank the sites and that further study will be required as the process continues. He noted the existing Doherty school building is approximately 170,000 sf.
- Parents asked about where their children would go to school during the construction and how would parents be notified. Russ mentioned that the best option would be no relocation of children during construction.
- The base line repair of the existing building suggests a significant investment would be needed by the City to update the school and yet would still not achieve the program requirements. This study is for comparison purposes to the other schemes, and is not a consideration.
- One parent noted that schools are important anchors for Worcester families. Another neighbor of the school commented that there was heavy traffic for about 20 minutes in the morning and afternoon during the school day.
- Someone asked what will happen to the Doherty site if the school is placed elsewhere. Russ said there are no plans as yet for that scenario.
- Russ noted that all the materials from the presentation today would be on the Doherty School web site. Additionally, the School Building Committee will vote on the preliminary design in September before submitting the project to the MSBA, and that is also a public meeting.
- Someone asked if the school and athletic fields could be located on two separate sites. Russ noted it could be possible to have two sites, but there would be no MSBA reimbursement for an athletic complex.
- One resident noted that it is a good thing to have a new High school, no matter where it gets located.
- One resident made comment about the impact of wireless vs wired technology. Katie stated that LPA is aware of these issues and will review the information when sent.

CLOSING:

Russ Adams thanked everyone for coming and stated there will be another meeting held in August.