

<b>Wilmington High School – Wilmington, MA</b>	<b>Public Forum Summary</b>
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High School Building Committee Public Forum	May 12, 2011
Location:	Wilmington HS Auditorium
Time:	6:30 PM

Presentation: See Dore & Whittier Presentation, May 12, 2011 (posted on the project website).

Public Comment/Response Summary:

Mr. Kevin MacDonald expressed that he didn't agree with the need for a new school. He referred back to Dore & Whittier's response at a prior HSBC meeting that the existing school is not structurally deficient. He suggested that there were problems with two of the new buildings the Town had built. Mr. MacDonald also questioned the Town Meeting vote's applicability to design versus a feasibility study.

Response: The Town Manager clarified that Schematic Design was included in the original Town Meeting vote for the Feasibility Study, as Schematic Design is the second part of an MSBA Feasibility Study.

Ms. Judy O'Connell asked whether there were acoustical concerns associated with stacking program over the cafeteria in one of the building options.

Response: Dore & Whittier responded that there are concerns but that the architectural team would address those concerns by using mass and distance to isolate the noise. Dore & Whittier indicated that they would similarly address acoustical separation between classrooms.

Ms. Judy O'Connell inquired about how SPED would be integrated in a new school.

Response: Dore & Whittier responded that they would work with DESE to integrate SPED students within the school, and would address this in more detail at the next forum. Dore & Whittier also noted that a new school will be fully handicapped accessible.

The Superintendent noted that there is not enough room in the existing school for SPED programs – e.g. SPED utilizes the former teacher's lunchroom. She indicated that the program is expanding at the lower grades. She also indicated that the high school has received a grant for a school store, to be utilized by SPED.

Mr. Paul Calzo inquired about the design population of 960 students and whether there were any projections for whether this was an appropriate number.

Response: The Town Manager noted that projections were done both by the Town and by the MSBA. The projections show a decline in high school students, based on demographics and attrition rates.

Dore & Whittier noted that the capacity of the school is based on teaching spaces.

The Superintendent provided statistics from the projections forecasting 940 students when a new school could open in 2014, declining to 927 students in 2017.

Ms. Anne Linehan inquired about how the project would affect the tax rate.

Response: The Town Manager indicated that the project team is still working on costs. He indicated that the project likely would be funded via a 25 year bond offering and that the Town expected a favorable rate. This issue will be addressed more fully at the next Public Forum.

Ms. Anne Linehan inquired about plans for the Roman (sic) House and the District Offices. She expressed that in her opinion the Roman House was not historic and in poor condition. She expressed support for the project—“It’s time for a new school.”

Response: The Town Manager responded that the Roman House would remain in its current location in Option 2A and the District Offices would remain at Roman House with the possibility of relocating in the future if needed. In the renovation Option 4B, the Roman House would have to be moved and there likely will be no MSBA reimbursement for this building relocation.

Mr. Mike Champoux asked why there would be more space in a new school with a smaller student population.

Response: Dore & Whittier responded that there are undersized spaces now across the program in the existing school (154,000 sf), and that those spaces are smaller than the current standards.

The Superintendent responded that educationally many things have changed since the existing school was built, including the advent of computer labs and technology classrooms, more SPED classrooms, and a larger music program. She emphasized that the current classrooms are not large enough to accommodate 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.

Mr. Mike Champoux inquired whether a remodel takes longer than new construction and which costs more.

Response: Joslin Lesser responded that labor is a big component of construction cost and costs increase over time (escalation). Also, the cost of modular classrooms, which would be needed for a phased renovation, is not reimbursable by the MSBA.

Mr. Karl Sagal inquired about the Visioning sessions, who was involved in them, and how others might get involved.

Response: Dore & Whittier indicated that the Visioning sessions had primarily included school focus groups, including staff and students, but that community is very important.

The Town Manager indicated that those interested in the Visioning sessions should contact the Superintendent.

Mr. Karl Sagal asked whether there is a different reimbursement rate for a renovation.

Response: Joslin Lesser reviewed the different categories of incentive points available, including 5 points for different degrees of renovation.

Mr. Karl Sagal asked if moving the Roman House was reimbursable.

Response: The Town Manager indicated that demolition of the Roman House likely would be reimbursable.

Ms. Randi Holland asked about the learning clusters and how these worked with the number of students per grade and scheduling of classes.

Response: The Superintendent indicated that that not all of the classes were in the pods, for example, art and music.

Ms. Randi Holland commented that the proposed 700 seat auditorium would not fit the whole student population.

Response: Joslin Lesser responded that there is a 2/3 design population limit per the MSBA guidelines and that building bigger likely would not be permitted even if the Town fully funded the additional.

Mr. Robert Hayes commented on his strong support of Option 2A, a new school. He reminded the audience that the “50% off coupon from the State” comes with an expiration date, and Wilmington HS could face loss of accreditation if nothing is done.

Response: The Superintendent commented that the District must show proof of making progress to maintain accreditation.

Mr. George Lingenfelter inquired about the language offerings in the high school program.

Response: The Superintendent indicated that Spanish, French, Italian and Latin are offered.

Mr. George Lingenfelter commented that previously more languages were offered. He expressed that Russian and German also are important languages to be taught.

Response: The Superintendent responded that the District is trying to increase its language offerings.

Mr. George Lingenfelter commented that the AUL may have significant remediation costs associated with it. He suggested that the AUL document may be deficient and should be reviewed by DEP.

Response: The Town Manager indicated that the AUL will be reviewed and figured into the costs.

Mr. John Bonish asked if Option 2A included the existing gymnasium.

Response: Joslin Lesser responded that a new gymnasium replicating the size of the existing was included. He noted that the MSBA had recently increased their guidelines for gymnasium size.

Mr. John Bonish noted that Woburn HS has a much larger gymnasium and asked if any consideration had been given to increasing the size of the gymnasium.

Response: The Town Manager responded that the MSBA limits the size of the gymnasium; however the project team is trying to increase the usability of the gym by possibly adding an indoor practice track above the gymnasium.

Prepared by: Lisa Matey Bergeron, Joslin, Lesser + Associates, May 23, 2011

End of Minutes