

**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
School Building Committee (SBC) Approved Minutes**

RJ Grey Junior High School Library  
16 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720

December 13, 2017  
7:00 p.m.

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*Members Present:* Mary Brolin, Amy Krishnamurthy, Dennis Bruce, Bill McAlduff, Marie Altieri, Peter Berry, Jason Cole, Adam Klein, Lynne Newman, Maria Neyland, Katie Raymond, Mac Reid.

*Members Absent:* Rob Bukowski, Bob Evans, Brian Griffin, JD Head, Ted Kail, Steve Mielke, Damian Sugrue, Chris Whitbeck.

*Other:* Dave Verdolino, Karen Coll, members of the public.

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1. Mary Brolin called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.
2. Marie Altieri moved, Amy Krishnamurthy seconded, Maria Neyland abstained, and the minutes of the November 8, 2017 School Building Committee Meeting were unanimously approved.

### **3. Recap of Special Town Meetings and Outreach Efforts**

Mary reported that no one had spoken out against the building project at the Boxborough Town Meeting, and that Bill McAlduff had effectively addressed questions. The motion passed in Boxborough on an overwhelming voice vote. The motion also passed by an extremely wide margin in Acton despite a very lengthy delay in starting the meeting and a glitch with the Douglas tour video. The moderator, Peter Ashton, managed the flow well, and there was very little opposition.

There was a great deal of civic engagement in both towns. In Acton, there were 1,300 attendees, including 1,100 voters, who were primarily drawn by the school building and marijuana issues.

Marie went to a Town Meeting follow-up with the Acton town moderator, who discussed the lengthy delay and plans for improving the logistics at future meetings. In addition to changing the overflow areas and check-in process, the suggestion was made that they look at the tight parking situation and consider using a shuttle from an offsite lot.

Members noted that the outreach effort had been very successful, and that the social media program was terrific. The video was also powerful; Marie suggested making videos of Gates and the preschool as well, allowing people to visualize the challenges these buildings face. Adam Klein agreed, adding that we could also make video 'showings' of the feasibility and building process.

### **4. Discussion of Building Committee Membership**

Some members have not been regularly coming to meetings. Mary will reach out to them, and ask if they want to remain on the committee. If not, we will identify alternative members. Mary will assume those who come regularly plan to remain unless they tell her otherwise.

### **5. MSBA Update**

Certified copies of the Town Meeting votes have been sent to MSBA. They have asked for additional information, including floor maps and classroom assignments of all schools.

Bill said that the \$1.3MM approved at the recent Town Meetings will take us through the first five modules of the MSBA process. We still have two remaining requirements to complete *Module 1*, the Eligibility Period: certification of design enrollment and execution of the Feasibility Study Agreement. The MSBA board will vote on the design enrollment at their February 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Once *Module 1* is complete, we will enter *Module 2*, hiring an OPM and designer and putting together a project team. We can't begin this phase until after the MSBA board has approved our project at the Feb. 15 meeting, although we can have a draft Request for Services (RFS), using the MSBA template, ready to send them that same day. The timing of the process, assuming everything goes smoothly, is:

- February 15 – MSBA approval of our project and submission of our draft RFS
- March 1 – Begin to advertise for a designer/OPM, at least two weeks after project approved. MSBA has specific sites to advertise. We must advertise for a minimum of 3 – 4 weeks.
- March 28 – End of advertising period; we will need a screening committee to look at proposals. We need to develop a ranking document, describing the criteria and how projects will be ranked. A short list of candidates to interview will be developed, and then a top choice will be selected based on the rankings. MSBA can request to be included on the OPM review panel.
- Mid-April – OPM selected, subject to MSBA approval.
- May 7 – OPM contract signed (Note: that is the first day of the Boxborough Town Meeting). The OPM will assist in the process for hiring a designer, a process similar to hiring the OPM.

A difficulty of working with MSBA is that they have very prescribed processes and timelines. If we don't follow their guidelines, we could risk losing their funding for our project. Given the MSBA required procedures, we might not have a designer on board and be able to start the feasibility study until mid to late summer. It is not likely that MSBA would allow us to speed up the process.

Once the OPM is on board, we should discuss the two options of a construction manager at risk versus a design-bid-build process. Given the size of our project, Bill thought that a manager at risk might be better for us.

When *Module 2* has been completed, we progress to *Module 3*, the feasibility study. The Building Committee will then select a preferred option from among several choices, and MSBA will have to sign off. *Module 4* is the schematic design. MSBA expects a very robust (about 75% complete) schematic design to result from this process, in order to provide detailed cost estimates. When the design has been approved, we enter *Module 5*, the project scope, budget and funding agreements. It is this set of agreements that will form the basis of the request we bring to Town Meetings for construction funding.

MSBA reimbursement percentages are defined by law; they will pay for a percentage of a project, up to a maximum dollar limit. If our costs go higher, they won't increase their funding. Reimbursement is based on 'allowable costs' – for example, site cost should be no more than 8% of total construction cost, and there are defined per-pupil costs for furnishings and equipment. Allowable costs for technology may be tight. We will need legal counsel to review all contracts and documents. MSBA contracts are fairly standard, so the legal costs should be minimal.

## **6. Getting Input on AB Twin School Experience**

Members discussed revisiting the process of building the Parker Damon Building, to identify what had gone well and issues that had cropped up. Adam suggested waiting until we have a designer on board, who might have a better sense of the questions to ask. Marie said that we have a lot of information about our experience building that twin school from many sources.

It may not make sense to spend a lot of time gathering information about twin school experiences until we know what the MSBA will approve. They will also require us to look at options for renovating our current facilities. Members noted that we have been clear about our preference for a twin school. Hopefully, MSBA will recognize the advantages of a twin school, which will allow us to address multiple issues at once:

- Since several schools in the district are in need of replacement or major repairs, it may be more attractive to MSBA to support construction of one twin school than multiple single schools;
- Construction of a new twin school would enable us to address enrollment and capacity issues, in addition to meeting building code requirements, which renovations alone would not correct;
- A twin school is the best response to the community's desire to improve our facilities as quickly as possible.

However, we won't know until after the feasibility study is complete what type of project MSBA will approve. We should contact PDB faculty and families later in the process to ask them about their experiences, what they like and what they would change. We can have some data available for the design team when they come on board.

Lynne Newman noted that there will be some shared elements in a twin school, and we may not be able to choose everything we want. We may not be able to avoid all the issues we encountered with the PDB; there are likely to be constraints based on what MSBA will approve and reimburse.

## **7. Next Steps Given Approved Funding**

There is not a lot of work to do until the MSBA board meets on February 15<sup>th</sup> to vote on our project. We want to have the RFS prepared by that date, but much of that document is boilerplate that can be found online.

Mary Brolin left the meeting at 7:45pm; Amy Krishnamurthy took over as chair. Members decided to combine the planned January 9<sup>th</sup> and February 14<sup>th</sup> Building Committee meetings into one meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Karen Coll will identify a location and notify the committee. In the meantime, updates and news can be shared. Amy notified the committee that she would be temporarily stepping back from the Building Committee to focus on the Superintendent search.

## **8. Social Media Updates**

Adam said that the domain name 'yes4ab.org' had been registered. We probably won't be using it much for the next 12 – 18 months, but the name is generic enough that it can be used for multiple purposes in the future. In the meantime, we can use existing social media to provide ongoing updates. We may also want to do a number of community update meetings throughout the process.

The December votes were relatively easy because we weren't asking for money. For an override, we will need to start communicating at least a year in advance. We should start thinking soon

about an override committee; because there hasn't been an override in either town for many years, it may be more difficult to organize for that vote.

9. **Adjourn** – Members of the public were asked if they had any questions or comments; as there were none, Mac Reid moved, Maria Neyland seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Next Building Committee Meetings (In RJ Grey Library unless otherwise noted):

January 31 (Note: Meeting will be in Superintendent's Conference Room)

March 14 (Note: Meeting will be in Superintendent's Conference Room)

April 11

May 9

June 13 (Note: Meeting will be in Superintendent's Conference Room)