



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Permanent Building Committee

Killam School Building Committee

Date: 2024-03-25

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Town Hall

Location: Select Board Meeting Room

Address: 16 Lowell Street

Session: Open Session

Purpose: General Business

Version: Final

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Vice Chair Karen Gately Herrick, John Coote, Kirk McCormick (remote), Sarah McLaughlin (remote), Ed Ross, Nancy Twomey

Members - Not Present:

Chair Carla Nazzaro, Greg Stepler, Pat Tompkins

Others Present:

Colliers Project Director Mike Carroll, Colliers Project Manager Suzanna Yeung, LBA Architect Leigh Sherwood, LBA Project Manager Jenni Katajamaki, Traffic Consultant Rebecca Brown, Facilities Director Joe Huggins (remote), Assistant Facilities Director Kevin Cabuzzi (remote), Molly Pike - RMLD (remote), Nicole Rogers - GPI (remote), Town Manager Matt Kraunelis, Tom Ollila - RMLD (remote), Operations Director Jayne Wellman, Killam Principal Lindsay Fulton (remote), School Finance Director Derek Pinto

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Jacquelyn LaVerde

Topics of Discussion:

This meeting was held in-person in the Select Board Meeting Room of Town Hall and remotely via Zoom.

Call to Order

Vice Chair Karen Gately Herrick called the meeting to order at 7:02pm, as Chair Carla Nazzaro was not in attendance.

Public Comment

There was no comment from the public.

KSBC Liaison Reports

Karen Gately Herrick shared that LBA Project Manager Jenni Katajamaki set up a meeting with National Grid to let them know about the Killam project and that the town would like help with their rebate program. She also noted that Superintendent Dr. Milaschewski scheduled a time to present the Killam project at the Pleasant Street Senior Center, and she invited Senator Jason Lewis to the event. Lastly, Ms. Herrick shared that she and Town Manager Matt Kraunelis met with RMLD General Manager Greg Phipps to provide him with an update on the project.

School Tours

Colliers Project Director Mike Carroll stated that he reached out to Watertown to schedule a site visit for the Committee to tour their two new net zero energy schools. Watertown

asked what the Committee's goal is for the tours. Mr. Carroll let them know that the Committee is interested in net zero, what lessons they learned, what they like about the new buildings, and what they do not like about the new buildings. They would like Facilities staff available to talk about the technical aspects of the buildings. The tours will likely be the week before or the week after April vacation. Mr. Carroll will report back to the Committee with dates. Acton also has a net zero school that the Committee would like to tour, which Mr. Carroll stated could be scheduled for a different day.

Designer Report

Tasks Completed

LBA Project Manager Jenni Katajamaki reviewed the tasks completed since the last meeting including: traffic study completed, traffic community meeting held, and summary of existing conditions assessment completed. Tasks ongoing and upcoming include development of preliminary alternatives, educational programming, geotechnical investigation, and cost estimating.

Existing Conditions Assessments Report

Ms. Katajamaki explained that the existing conditions assessment reviewed the following disciplines: environmental, civil, structural, building systems (mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire protection systems), building envelope (walls and roof), interiors, code compliance, hazardous materials inside the building, and geotechnical (currently pending). The process included reviewing existing documents, site visits, questionnaires, discussions with the Facilities Department, reviewing records from the Health Department, Fire Department, and utility companies, database searches of various state and federal resources, and sampling and testing of potentially hazardous materials.

There were no environmental problems detected, as the land was previously undeveloped prior to its use as the school. There was an underground oil tank, but documentation showed proper disposal. However, soil tests have not yet been conducted.

For stormwater and sanitary conditions, there is a crushed pipe that is supposed to drain to a storm main on Haverhill Street, and there is a soggy depression in the northeast corner that is not properly draining. There were also reports of overflow from the Killam property to the neighbors to the north. Part of this project will entail a whole new storm water management system that will detain all the water on the site and let it drain out slowly. The current sanitation system has transite, an asbestos material. LBA recommends assuming replacement of the whole sanitary piping system underground, due to its age.

The site is not in the 100-year floodplain, and there are no wetlands or protected wildlife habitats. There is a parking requirement of one parking space per staff member, plus one parking spot per seven children, resulting in an estimated total of 211 spaces. Regulatory reviews that will be required include Site Plan Review, Zoning Board of Appeals (if a parking variance is needed), stormwater management permit, and there will be EPA permitting required for construction, for which the contractor will be responsible.

The structure is typically concrete-filled, hollow, structural steel columns with CMU (cinder block) filling in between the walls. Some structural issues include some settling of the foundation, and some differential movement between two wings that has caused cracking. The school was built before seismic codes, and if the building is renovated, would need to be brought up to meet the codes, which would entail rebuilding all of the masonry walls.

For fire protection, the building does not have sprinklers. The primary problem with plumbing is lead in the water, and the source of the contamination is not known. LBA would recommend total replacement of the plumbing system due to the contamination and age of the system.

The mechanical system has reached the end of its expected life. In a renovation scenario, LBA would recommend a full replacement of the mechanical system. They make the same recommendation for the electrical and fire alarm systems.

The building envelope has an air space between the exterior brick and the backup CMU block, and no insulation. Walls are in good condition, except for one area of deterioration on the north façade that may indicate a blocked wall cavity. LBA recommends assuming a full reclad would be needed. Windows and doors need to be replaced. The roof is ok, but given the level of renovation needed, LBA would recommend replacing the roof with proper flashing and insulation.

There are no issues with egress compliance. Accessibility issues are minor, as the building is only one story. However, toilet rooms and door hardware need to be made accessible.

On hazardous materials, there is asbestos present in the building, which would need to be disposed of properly in any renovation, and areas that will be pre-school will need lead mitigation.

Existing program space is approximately 60,500 square feet, including portable classrooms. To include a partial RISE program with four classrooms, 103,000 square feet would be needed, and with twelve RISE classrooms 123,000 square feet would be needed.

In summary, in the existing building, program spaces are undersized, building systems are at the end of their life and should be replaced, the building envelope does not meet seismic or energy efficiency requirements, the interiors are at the end of their life, and there is a site space issue if the entire building is retained. Given these factors, LBA's recommendation for a renovation option includes only retaining the classroom wing and tearing down the front part of the building that contains the cafeteria, gym, and administrative offices, and a gut renovation with all new interiors, exteriors and building systems.

Traffic Study Report/Traffic and Site Community Meeting Recap

Rebecca Brown of GPI provided a detailed review of the traffic study. The study area included the area and intersections immediately around the school. They looked at on-site circulation, parking, and accessibility, and conducted observations of traffic counts at intersections, pedestrians using crosswalks, and bicycle information.

Data collection and observations included morning arrival and afternoon dismissal observations, conducted roadway inventories, conditions of the roadway, accessibility of the sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, collision history, and traffic counts and speed counts.

Arrival issues include the queuing of vehicles, crossing guards constantly stopping traffic, limited site lines at crosswalks, queued vehicles obstructing crosswalks, parked vehicles obstructing sidewalks, and vehicles not slowing down in the school zone.

In the afternoon, only buses are allowed onto the site. Parents must park on the neighborhood streets and walk to the school to pick up their kids. At peak time there were 115 cars parked on the street, constricting traffic flow, and obstructing site lines at crosswalks and intersections.

In the surrounding area, there are several crosswalks with poor site lines, no advance signage or dynamic signage signaling crosswalks are in use, long crosswalks, missing ADA detectable warning strips at the edge of crosswalks, and in some cases no ramps at all.

Crash history data was reviewed and showed two high-crash locations in the area: Wakefield Street and Charles Street intersection, and on Charles Street from Boswell Street to Haverhill Street, with 60% of the crashes with parked vehicles, and 50% during school arrival and dismissal times. Speeds on Haverhill Street were 39 to 42 miles per hour even when school zone flashers are activated. Ms. Brown recommended moving the main access to the school to Charles Street, where speeds are typically lower, and implementing speed mitigating measures such as flashing beacons.

Sarah McLaughlin left the meeting at 8:01 pm.

Feedback from the public included desire to address the safety, speeds, and sidewalks where cars are parking. There's also a need to balance the needs of the school and the needs of the neighborhood.

Goals of the traffic study include improving pedestrian visibility and safety, alleviating some of the off-site parking and queuing, improving the street access and circulation flows, and developing strategy that will work for Pre-K and K-5. When considering alternatives for the school, considerations include pedestrian safety and accessibility, how much parking could be accommodated for staff as well as parents, how much queuing could be brought onto the site, and trying to optimize the layout to get as much play space as possible.

Ms. Brown provided several possible site circulation layouts for a renovation addition, and a new building, and their associated impacts on pedestrian safety, parking, queuing, and play space. She also presented possible off-site recommendations for existing deficiencies including reconfiguring a section of Charles Street to add marked parallel parking spaces, upgrading ramps, crossings, and intersections, upgrading school zone signage, and adding an all-way stop at the Wakefield Street and Charles Street intersection.

Next Steps/Future Agenda Items and Next Meeting Dates

At the next meeting on April 8th, the Committee will review floor plans and preliminary alternatives. At their following meeting on May 6th, the Committee will hear about square footage cost estimates. The next community meetings are scheduled for April 1st, to review site planning options, and April 11th to review preliminary alternatives with the community. Cost estimating will happen between April 15th and May 3rd, and the PDP submittal to the MSBA is on track for May 20th.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Nancy Twomey, seconded by Ed Ross, the Killam School Building Committee voted 5-0-0 to approve the meeting minutes of March 11, 2024 as written.

Roll call vote: Kirk McCormick – Yes, Ed Ross – Yes, Nancy Twomey – Yes, John Coote – Yes, Karen Gately Herrick – Yes.

On a motion by Nancy Twomey, seconded by Ed Ross, the Killam School Building Committee voted 5-0-0 to adjourn at 9:01 pm.

Roll call vote: Kirk McCormick – Yes, Ed Ross – Yes, Nancy Twomey – Yes, John Coote – Yes, Karen Gately Herrick – Yes.