



Chairman Stone call the meeting to order at 4:00PM.

Committee Present: Chair Steven Stone, Phil Thibault, Dennis Piendak, Dave Martin, Nicholas Botelho, Stefanie Fields, Andrew Graham, Mike LaCava, Marybeth Veilleux, Linda Trouville, Rebecca Duda, Rob Sheppard, Renee Young

Absent: Barbara O'Connor

Mount Vernon Group: Frank Tedesco, Al Cuevas, Bill Peters, Susan Taylor
LiRo-Hill: Paul Kalous, John Abbott

Minutes

Ms. Young made a motion to approve the minutes of March 19, 2025 as presented. Mr. Sheppard seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Present & Review Design Options – Conceptual Design, Estimated Costs

Chairman Stone stated that if the Committee wanted to hear the presentation from Mount Vernon Group again they could do that. Mr. Stone questioned if anything has changed on the presentation? Mr. Cuevas stated nothing has changed. Mr. Sheppard stated that if nothing has changed he was comfortable with not going through the presentation again.

Chairman Stone asked whether MVG or LiRo-Hill would like to give a debrief from the meeting they had with the Town. Mr. Tedesco gave an overview of the meeting and stated they did the full presentation with the Chairs of the Planning Board, Conservation and Zoning Board. The Vice Chairs were also present. The meeting went smoothly and nothing seemed to shoot out at the Chairman. There was nothing of this project that they had not dealt with before on other projects brought before them. Conservation couldn't render any opinion until there is a definitive plan brought before them. Mr. Martin stated that the more questions are answered on this project his feeling is the better it will be received and may be easier to pass.

Superintendent Stone asked if anyone of the committee members had any questions on the options being presented?

Mr. Thibault asked about the costs of addition/renovation of 860 as it compares to the new construction square foot costs. The cost makes up 25% and wondered if there was a breakdown of the square footage number.

Mr. Tedesco explained that trying to predict future costs for two years, construction around a completely occupied school, safety factor costs, phasing the construction due to no swing space, and all of these things extends the construction duration. New construction is faster and does not have to consider phasing or carrying tradesmen for so long during renovation. Mr. Cuevas added there are also the new energy codes that add to the cost as well.

Mr. Piendak asked about the construction number and it getting adopted at the MSBA and how accurate the number is. Mr. Tedesco stated it's pretty close. They also do estimates throughout the project to stay on track. They do one during design development, and then again at 60%. They make sure they stay within the number. If necessary will value engineer the project along the way. Mr. Tedesco cited an example being Maynard, MA. They had planned that school two years ago and the estimates were on the money. There was a discussion on the tariffs being proposed and they may have an effect on the project. Mr. Tedesco stated if they do an early site package this can save money and time as well. There was a discussion as to a project like in Lowell at their High School and the cost overruns. Mr. Tedesco stated some of that is in the design. That design included metal panels and curtain walls. These are very costly and you have to be exact. Masonry is forgiving.

Mr. Sheppard asked about the wetland crossing on the Option 4D design. Mr. Cuevas stated it would be more of a drainage culvert but it will be looked at in more detail. Mr. Tedesco added after speaking with the civil engineers there may also use underground tanks for stormwater management.

Superintendent Stone asked if there was anything further on the options. If not, he asked if someone would like to make the following motion: That the Dracut School Building Committee select design option 4D: A new building for an enrollment of 860 students grades K-5 plus Pre-Kindergarten at the existing Joseph A. Campbell Elementary School site located at 1021 Methuen Street. Mr. Sheppard made the motion, Ms. Trouville seconded the motion for discussion. Superintendent Stone commented that he feels this is the best option after going through the construction at the high school. He stated that renovation is very difficult and it cause the district to lose students. At the elementary level there are a lot of autism programs which would be very difficult on the student population and he has serious concerns about these programs. The other sites they looked at were limited and this option shows good separation of the construction from the existing school. Ms. Trouville echoed Mr. Stone and stated she had grandchildren at the High School when that was being renovated and she heard about it everyday from the students. The motion moved to a vote by roll call vote: Mr. Thibault – no, Mr. Piendak – yes, Mr. Martin – yes, Mr. Graham – yes, Ms. Fields – yes, Mr. Botelho – yes, Ms. Veilleux – yes, Ms. Duda – no, Ms. Trouville – yes, Mr. LaCava – yes, Ms. Young – yes Mr. Sheppard – yes, Superintendent Stone – yes.

Superintendent Stone asked for the second motion: That the Owner's Project Management team submit the Preferred Schematic Report as prepared by Mount Vernon Group Architects stating the selection of Design Option 4D by Dracut School Building Committee to the Massachusetts School Building Authority upon the Reports finalization pursuant to the selected Design Option 4D. Ms. Young made the motion Ms. Trouville seconded the motion. By roll call vote as follows: Mr. Thibault – yes, Mr. Piendak – yes, Mr. Martin – yes, Mr. Graham – yes, Ms. Fields – yes, Mr. Botelho – yes, Ms. Veilleux – yes, Ms. Duda – yes, Ms. Trouville – yes, Mr. LaCava – yes, Ms. Young – yes Mr. Sheppard – yes, Superintendent Stone – yes.

Schedule

The Committee discussed the next meeting date for the Committee. It was determined that there would be no meeting on April 9 and that the next meeting will be April 16. This meeting will have an invoice from LiRo-Hill and the vote that happened tonight will need to be certified by the Town Clerk.

Superintendent Stone was concerned about having a public forum before they have the parcel to the south of the lot figured out. May meetings will be determined possibly May 14, May 21.

Superintendent Stone also mentioned that Ms. Curtis and Mr. Graham met with the Town Clerk relative to the Town Meeting and special election dates. They will be having one more meeting on these dates.

Public Comments

There was no one present for public comment.

Adjournment

Ms. Young made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:36pm. Mr. Sheppard seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.