JOINT SESSION
The Joint Session of the School Building Committee meeting convened at 6:05 PM. Those present included from the School Building Committee – Chair and School Committee member Sharon Gray, Vice Chair and Selectman Thomas Ulfelder, Superintendent David Lussier, Executive Director Meghan Jop, School Committee Chair Matt Kelley, Selectman Marjorie Freiman, Hunnewell Principal Ellen Quirk, PBC member Matt King, FMD Director of Design and Construction Steve Gagosian, Community members Jose Soliva (left at 6:45 p.m.) and Virginia Ferko; Project Manager Kevin Kennedy of the Facilities Management Department; Alex Pitkin of SMMA, and Jeff D’Amico of Compass Project Management; from the School Committee – Vice Chair Melissa Martin, Secretary Linda Chow, and member Jim Roberti; and from the Board of Selectmen – Chair Jack Morgan and members Beth Sullivan Woods and Lise Olney.

Absent from School Building Committee – Community members Joubin Hassanein, Ryan Hutchins, and Heather Sawitsky, Hardy principal Charlene Cook and Upham principal Jeff Dees.

At approximately 6:05 PM, Jack Morgan called the Selectmen to order. Matt Kelley called the School Committee to order.

Ms. Freiman made a motion to convene the joint meeting with the School Committee, the Board of Selectmen and the School Building Committee. Mr. Kelley seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Freiman made a motion to appoint Ms. Gray as chair of the joint session. Mr. Morgan seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Ms. Freiman made a motion to appoint Mr. Morgan as secretary. Mr. Kelley seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Gray noted that the SBC has recommended a building option (new construction) for the Hunnewell school, and is looking for the Selectmen and School Committee to affirm this recommendation. Mr. Morgan noted that the Selectmen do not plan to vote during this meeting.

Mr. McDonough opened with a discussion of the history of the Hunnewell project. Committees have been studying the Town’s elementary issues since 2012, when SMMA was hired to do a conditions assessment of the Wellesley schools.
Fiske and Schofield have since undergone significant renovations, and middle school work is ongoing. The HHU schools are the oldest and have the greatest need, and it has been determined by multiple committees that they need major renovations/additions or replacement. The Town began submitting Statements of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in 2013.

Ms. Gray reviewed some guiding principles from the School Committee, based on the HHU Master Plan Committee recommendation and adopted within the School Committee’s HHU Position Statement:

- New or substantially rebuilt facilities needed to meet educational needs
- Maintain neighborhood school model
- Rebuild two schools now with enrollment trigger for third school
- Schools should be 19 classrooms each and meet MSBA standards
- Build at Hunnewell and either Hardy or Upham, in an order to be determined after further study

Ms. Gray reviewed key portions of the Charge to the SBC for the Hunnewell project:

- Hire project team
- Conduct feasibility study
- Analyze swing space options, potentially independently
- Involve SC and BOS along the way
- Perform outreach & public engagement
  - General public, school community, neighbors
  - Affected boards and organizations
- Report to SC and BOS
- Supportive votes from SC and BOS required to move forward

Mr. D’Amico provided an overview of the feasibility study process and timeline.

Mr. Pitkin noted that the educational visioning process began in early fall with a visioning meeting that included educators, administrators, committee members, and parents. The concept of learning neighborhoods – grade-level clusters that allow for easier teaming among educators – came out of the visioning process.

Additional criteria resulting from the educational visioning included:

- Flexible spaces
- Indoor/outdoor connectivity
- Safety and security
- Sustainability
- Compact design

Mr. Pitkin reviewed the sustainability approach and preliminary energy modeling strategies during feasibility, and the goal of a “net-zero ready” new building.
He reviewed the specific components of the site, and how the new building relates to the quiet, active, neighborhood, civic, and welcoming sides of the site. More than a dozen options were discussed and considered.

The committee chose an all new building rather than an addition/renovation. The all-new building is the one that the committee determined more clearly meets the educational program. It also includes a Sprague-size gym for school and community use, with seating for up to about 100 people.

Mr. Pitkin reviewed the floor plans and various characteristics of the new building recommendation, including orientation of the learning neighborhoods, loading dock locations, the cafeteria/gym spaces, and art, music and library spaces.

Mr. Roberti asked whether a three-story option is still being considered, and Mr. Pitkin said after some discussion, there was strong consensus around keeping the building to two stories.

Ms. Martin asked about the emergency vehicle access, and whether it would interfere with children using the play areas. Mr. Pitkin said the access would not be open to regular traffic, and loading dock use would only be during certain times of day.

Mr. Morgan asked to look at the final addition/renovation option, and Mr. Pitkin discussed some of the aspects of that option and why the SBC considered it to be less favorable.

Ms. Sullivan Woods asked about the long-term flexibility of the design plan, and the newness of the learning neighborhood concepts. Mr. Pitkin said the benefit of the learning neighborhoods is additional, flexible space within the grade level, combined with the opportunity to use individual classrooms in a more traditional way.

Mr. Pitkin showed parking scenarios that would include from 72 to 85 total dedicated spaces, including 25 on the Cameron lot and library spaces. The scenarios also included preliminary pickup and drop-off plans for morning and afternoon.

Ms. Chow asked whether the new option meets the Town’s open space requirements. Mr. Pitkin said the lot coverage for these parking scenarios would not allow for meeting the 75 percent open space requirements outlined in the Town bylaws, and that it would be a town conversation during the permitting process.

Mr. Roberti asked about the report to Town Meeting describing the need to study traffic and parking options. Mr. Pitkin said that the SBC’s selection of the new option triggered the opportunity to re-engage the Beta Group, the traffic consultant for the study, and that work is in progress.

Mr. D’Amico reviewed cost estimates. Both the addition/renovation and new construction options have come in with an approximately $56 million total project cost. A funding request for design funds at a fall Town Meeting would be approximately $5 million.
Ms. Sullivan Woods asked about the parking needs at the site. Ms. Quirk said she had calculated the future needs for staff with a larger Hunnewell at about 55 spaces. Ms. Sullivan Woods asked where the parents would park. Ms. Quirk said parents often park in the Cameron Street lot or along Cameron Street. Ms. Sullivan Woods asked about accommodating 100 more students. Mr. Morgan pointed out that peak enrollment at Hunnewell previously was 368.

Mr. Kelley said Sprague has 100 spots, but one side of the parking lot is used to park vans for specialized programs. Ms. Sullivan Woods asked if Bates and Sprague could be a model for the parking needs at Hunnewell.

Ms. Olney asked about off-site parking opportunities for staff, as in urban settings, sometimes that is necessary to meet parking needs. Mr. Pitkin said off-site parking is not something that has been explored.

Ms. Martin said it is her understanding that the gym would typically be used in the evenings, when all the parking at Hunnewell would typically be open, and there would likely be additional space in the Cameron Street lot.

Mr. Roberti asked about how many cars the 100-person seating capacity at the gym would generate. Mr. Pitkin said he thought the plans would accommodate the gym users and were built on some of the evidence of how the Sprague gymnasium works.

Mr. Roberti asked if the addition/renovation includes the tree. Mr. Pitkin said that while the option included the tree, there is a recognition that the tree is distressed today and that the addition in the 1990s resulted in stress to the tree.

Ms. Martin asked about the challenges of creating an addition/renovation option that would allow for a more compact design. Mr. Pitkin noted that the parts of the building that need to be one story tall and the fact that the classrooms should be stacked for efficiency, combined with the location of the 1938 façade, drove the floor plan for the addition/renovation option.

Mr. Morgan asked about the schematic design process. Mr. Pitkin said there is further educational planning that happens, as well as the development of the full model of the building, massing, elevations and materiality. That process is overseen by the Permanent Building Committee.

Ms. Frieman noted that the placement of the learning neighborhoods in the new option allowed for more natural light. She also noted that the fixed location of the 1938 building added to the challenge of designing an optimal addition/renovation option.

Mr. Roberti asked whether the three options promised in previous materials had been developed. Ms. Gray noted that the SBC ended up having SMMA develop four options, two new and two addition/renovation.

Mr. King described the detailed process by which the parking and circulation plans would be developed through the design process under the PBC.
Ms. Sullivan Woods asked whether including the tree limited the development of options. Mr. Pitkin said many different ways to retain the 1938 building were investigated, and that retaining it would require saving the façade to be considered a top priority of the project.

Mr. Morgan mentioned that the HHU Master Plan Committee did an extensive survey that included specific questions about the 1938 building and about the tree, and only limited importance was given to either element of the site.

Ms. Gray said generally, most feedback has been positive for the new option. Mr. Gagosian said retaining the 1938 portion is very limiting given the site constraints.

Ms. Olney expressed concern about the way the new building might connect to the community. She said people care about character, and she would like to see a stronger case made for how the new construction option might connect to and welcomes the community, especially if the design does not include either the tree or the 1938 building.

Ms. Chow asked about whether a conceptual rendering was in the works. Mr. Pitkin said that would be developed before town meeting. Mr. D’Amico said the budget includes a high level of quality materials for the building.

The boards reached consensus to schedule votes for their next meetings.

**Adjournment:**

Upon a motion made by Ms. Martin and seconded by Mr. Roberti, the Committee unanimously VOTED to adjourn at approximately 8:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Chow
Secretary

**Documents and Exhibits Used**

- Compass Project Management and SMMA Power Point Presentation to SBC, SC and BOS 6/6/2019