

Agenda  
Farmington High School Building Committee  
Communications Subcommittee  
Monday, January 9, 2017  
Conference Room A  
3:00 PM

- A. Call to Order.
- B. To approve the attached November 22, 2016 minutes. **(Attachment 1)**
- C. To review and approve various marketing materials.
- D. To review and discuss the attached frequently asked questions for the FHS Building Project Website. **(Attachment 2)**
- E. Other Business.
- F. Adjournment.

cc: Subcommittee Members  
Paula Ray, Town Clerk

Minutes  
Farmington High School Building Committee  
Communications Subcommittee  
Tuesday November 22, 2016

**Present:**

Kathy Eagen, Town Manager  
Kathy Greider, Superintendent  
William Wadsworth, FHS Renovation Committee Chair  
Jean Baron, Subcommittee Member  
Justin Bernier, Subcommittee Member  
Kathryn Howroyd, Management Specialist  
Kurt Lavaway, Colliers International  
Suzy Schuck, Kaestle Boos Associates  
Kris Dargenio, Kaestle Boos Associates

**A. Call to Order.**

The meeting was called to order at 3:34 p.m.

**B. To approve the Town Newsletter for the December 8, 2016 FHS Tours & Community meeting.**

The subcommittee had general discussion regarding the terminology of "FHS Building project" vs. "FHS Building Committee." It was determined that "project" is appropriate, as the website will provide updates to the community as the project progresses. The Town Newsletter will be sent to the printing company upon approval and it is anticipated that they will hit mailboxes on November 29<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup>. A copy of the Town Newsletter is recorded with these minutes.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Baron/Bernier) it was unanimously VOTED: to approve the Town Newsletter.

**C. To review and approve the FHS Building Project website and Facebook page.**

- 1) Existing Conditions**
- 2) Resources**
- 3) FAQ**

Kat Howroyd and Suzy Schuck presented the website and Facebook page. The subcommittee had general discussion regarding the content of the website and what will require additional updates. It was decided to modify the "Welcome Page" to include the message from the FHS Building Committee. A copy of this document is recorded with the minutes. The "Existing Conditions Page" will be modified to include the project's

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"message," once that is approved by the subcommittee. The map of the school on the "Existing Conditions Page" will also be updated to accurately reflect the renovation dates, including the cafeteria renovation in 2003. The subcommittee decided to hide the FAQ page until each question has been reviewed and approved by the subcommittee. A copy of the FAQ section will be distributed to the committee for review via email.

Both the website and Facebook page will be "live" on Monday, November 28, 2016.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Bernier/Baron) it was unanimously VOTED: to approve the committee website and Facebook page.

**D. To review and approve the FHS Building Project "message".**

Kathy Eagen explained that the project "messaging" is an opportunity to create a cohesive message about why we are doing this project. A copy of the draft "message" is recorded with these minutes.

Justin Bernier expressed his concern with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) warning for the accreditation standard on Community Resources for Learning listed first on the message. Jean Baron explained that she believes the NEASC warning is extremely important and should be included in the message because FHS was put on warning as a result of the facility issues. After general discussion from the subcommittee, it was determined to include the NEASC warning as a bullet under the issues.

Town staff will incorporate the subcommittee's comments and provide another draft for the subcommittee to review.

**E. Other.**

None.

**F. Adjournment.**

Upon a motion made and seconded (Baron/Bernier) the meeting adjourned at 4:56 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathryn Howroyd, Management Specialist

**1. What is the project?**

The Farmington High School (FHS) Building Committee was formed in January 2016 to address significant facility issues including accessibility, security, building sprawl and inefficient energy performance. These deficiencies are outlined in the "Statement of Need" that was approved by both the Farmington Board of Education and Town Council. The committee has been charged with completing an extensive review of Farmington High School's existing conditions and developing a recommended project scope and cost estimate to address and prioritize the high school facility needs. Three concepts for the school will be developed and thoroughly reviewed, including one (1) new facility and (2) renovation options. . The goal is to develop a preferred solution to bring before the Farmington voters at a referendum on April 27, 2016. The project is very early in development and will be updated as new information is available.

**2. Why does Farmington High School need to be addressed?**

As a result of the numerous additions over the years, students travel large distances between classes, often traveling outside to shorten travel times, creating a security risk (insert picture of additions). A number of areas throughout the school are undersized including the auditorium, cafeteria, media center, and hallways. In addition, the existing Farmington High School does not support the delivery of a 21<sup>st</sup> century educational program.

Here is a summary of the identified needs of the Farmington High School facility:

- **Security:** 23 separate entry points, sightlines, lack of private/public separation, inadequate lighting (interior and exterior, difficult building orientation even with signage)
- **Lack of ADA Compliance:** Music spaces, media center, some classrooms, bathrooms, weight room, auditorium, stage, orchestra pit, 2nd/3rd floors of 1928 building, outdoor athletic facilities, culinary spaces, various spaces throughout the building are not ADA compliant.
- **Existing Conditions:** FHS is a well maintained, but it is an aging building and the building envelope needs improvement (insulation, façade, windows, etc.)
- **MEP (replace a majority of MEP systems except 900 building):** Age (systems are approaching end of useful life), code compliance concerns (comfort/controls, need improvement in compliance with Life Safety and energy efficiency)
- **Infrastructure:** The sprawling building has multiple infrastructure issues (building envelope, major repairs to ceilings and roofs, aging systems, etc.)
- **Undersized Spaces:** The media center, cafeteria and auditorium some science rooms are undersized creating issues with scheduling as well as maximum use of these spaces to effectively implement curriculum and programming
- **Facility Sprawl:** Several additions since 1928 creating sprawling building, 30% "unused" hallway space, and crowded hallways (need to use circle to get students to class on time), and lack of space to add educational programming. The additions have primarily addressed enrollment increases, but have resulted in a very large, inefficient facility footprint impacting not only energy costs, but security, insufficient student classroom space, a need for students to travel outside the building to travel to classes (696 student cross intersection between classes 9 times per day and 1070 feet from one side of the building to another), significant hallway congestion, inadequate use of space (30%

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unused space), a lack of space for robotics, lack of space for whole school staff professional learning and collaboration as well as constraints on educational programming for students (FHS Statement of Need)

- **Parking:** Inadequate parking for the size and use of the building
- **Educational Programming:** With current and emerging educational requirements and demands on comprehensive high schools, FHS is in need of an efficient, functional, flexible learning facility that meets state and federal requirements and serves the diverse needs of all students.
- **NEASC Accreditation:** Farmington High School received “Warning” on the Community Resources Standard of their NEASC Report due to the conditions of the facility.

To read the full Statement of Need, [click here](#).

To view a more detailed summary of the existing conditions, please [click here](#).

### **3. The school has received a number of additions over the years. Why do we need to do anything to the high school?**

While the additions addressed enrollment needs at the times, all of the additions have been single story resulting in a sprawling, building with an inefficient footprint. The additions did not address any code compliance, undersized learning spaces, and aging mechanical and electrical systems.

### **4. What reviews or studies have been conducted to determine the Statement of Need?**

The following reviews and studies have been conducted to determine the FHS Statement of Need:

- Acoustic Study, May, 2013
- Auditorium Study: November 2013
- Office of Civil Rights Review: April 2014
- FHS Acoustic Study: May 2015
- TECTON FHS Facility Review: January, 2015
- NEASC Review and Report: Sept. 2014 (visit) and Feb. 2016 (report)
- Enrollment Report: March 2016

All reports can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

### **5. How is the plan for the high school being developed?**

Representatives from the Farmington Board of Education, as well as Farmington High School administrators, teachers and students participated in a 2-day “visioning” session with renowned educational planning consultant Dr. Frank Locker and our architectural consultant Kaestle Boos Associates, Inc. During the sessions, participants examined educational trends, best practices, and issues affecting the delivery of a rigorous, well-rounded middle school education, and addressed overarching themes as identified by participants. As a result of these sessions, participants conceived a preliminary diagram of the desired overall organization of Farmington High School which best represented agreed-upon values and themes. These themes included flexibility, small learning communities, collaboration, and innovation.

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On the third day, a session was held at the Farmington Senior Center to allow the Farmington community to participate in the visioning session, reviewing what had taken place the previous two days and identifying community goals for the Farmington High School project. Prevalent themes at this session included multipurpose use of the facility, cost control, flexibility for the future, customization, energy efficiency and a need to serve the needs of all students.

Moving forward, Kaestle Boos will review all of the information gathered over the three days to develop design concepts which represents the Farmington community's vision for Farmington High School. A summary of the visioning workshops can be found by [clicking here](#). The full visioning report will be uploaded to this web site as soon as it is available. To view photos of the visioning sessions, please click [here](#).

**6. Are you going to build a new facility?**

At this time, there is no decision on what the design solution for Farmington High School will be. We are looking at all options with the architect Kaestle Boos Associates, including demolition/new addition and renovation or a new facility. All options will be presented to the public for feedback once available.

**7. What is an Owner's Project and why do we need one?**

The Owner's Project Manager (OPM) is an independent agent who will serve as a representative of the Town throughout the design and construction of the new middle school. The OPM will serve as the "eyes and ears" of the Town, acting in the Town's best interest, and seeing that the Town receives the best service and value for its money. The Town of Farmington has hired Colliers International to serve as the OPM for the Farmington High School building project.

**8. What is a Construction Manager and what is the role of the Construction Manager?**

The Construction Manager is hired by the Farmington High School Building Committee to plan, coordinate, budget and supervise the FHS construction projects from beginning to end. They are often brought in to a project during the planning and design phases to review plans for constructability, make recommendations to the architect to improve construction efficiency, and provide cost estimates for the project. The Construction Manager for the FHS Building Project is O&G Industries, Inc.

**9. How are school construction projects funded?**

School construction projects are funded through a grant provided by the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services Office of School Construction and authorization of funds at the local town level.

The Office of School Construction document describing the School Construction Grant Process states:

"The state school construction grants pay upon a 20% to 80% sliding scale, a percent of eligible expenditures in accordance with a relative wealth rank. Percentages are assigned to a project based upon date of grant commitment.

Reimbursement rates for projects are determined based upon the date that funding is locally authorized in an amount sufficient to at least cover the local share of the project. Local share is

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defined as total project costs less the state school construction grant. School construction projects are typically *authorized* for the full amount of project costs but *financed* for only the local share.”

To view the entire document, please click [here](#).

## 10. What is Farmington’s reimbursement rate from the State of Connecticut?

Farmington’s maximum possible reimbursement rate of eligible project costs is as follows:

Project Type	Reimbursement Rate
New construction or replacement of a school building	19%
Renovations, extensions code violations, roof replacements, and major alterations of an existing school building	29.29%

The actual reimbursement rate will be determined by the preferred design solution (addition/renovation vs. new facility) and the date that funding is locally authorized.

While we will not know the exact reimbursement rate until the very end of the project (after auditors review the final project), the Building Committee is working with the architects, OPM, and Construction Manager to receive the maximum allowable reimbursement.

## 11. What is the timeline?

The FHS Building Project is currently in the preliminary design phase. Conceptual options are being developed in anticipation of selecting a preferred concept to bring a debt exclusion question before the Farmington voters in April 2017. The following is a preliminary timeline of this process:

Presentation of Preliminary Design Concepts	
To Renovation Committee:	November 30, 2016
Community Meeting to Review Concepts:	December 8, 2016
Conceptual Design Phase Completed:	January 24, 2017
Selection of a Preferred Concept:	January 25, 2017
Begin Schematic Design Phase:	February 3 7
Community Meeting to Review Selected Option	February 9, 2017
Special Town Meeting:	April 17, 2017
Referendum Vote:	April 27, 2017

To view upcoming meetings and events related to the FHS Building Project, please check the event calendar located on the Welcome page of this web site or click [here](#).

## 12. What is a Learning Commons and how is it different from a library?

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A **traditional library** was primarily designed for quiet, independent research and reading from the collection of books housed in the space. More recently, libraries have also included a bank of desktop stationary computers that allowed for internet access. The traditional library was also used as a teaching space for whole class instruction. During these lessons it was often necessary to essentially close the library space to other students looking to do independent or small group work.

A **Learning Commons** is often referred to as the “heart” or “hub” of the school. It is a space designed to be open and inviting with flexible and adaptive space and furniture to accommodate multiple purposes.

- **Research and Reading** - With ubiquitous access to digital resources and information, there is less of a need for hardcover texts as primary sources for informational reading or literature. A Learning Commons will however, continue to house a collection of texts that students may use on site or check out to bring home.
- **Small Group Study** - Given the emphasis on collaborative work and project-based or inquiry-based learning, students will use the Learning Commons to meet together in small group conference rooms or clustered seating areas. They will have access to white boards, technology and flexible seating in order to facilitate productivity and critical thinking.
- **Independent Quiet Study** - Students will be able to find spaces in the Learning Commons where they can read, write, and think without interacting with others. Students of this generation are accustomed to working independently in public spaces within an academically stimulating environment. Soft seating and comfortable work surfaces are dispersed throughout the space.
- **Teacher Collaboration** - A Learning Commons is designed to encourage teacher to teacher and teacher to student interaction that is more spontaneous in nature. There is typically an open space or “café-like” area that encourages conversations and informal meetings among adults and students with high top tables and stools or longer tables and benches.
- **Classroom Space** – There is a continuing need for direct instruction and as well as the possibility for whole class learning through videoconferencing, webinars, and other multimedia learning opportunities. The classroom is outfitted with the necessary technology and flexible furniture to adapt to multiple learning modalities.
- **Exhibitions and Presentations** – The Learning Commons is often used to showcase and celebrate student work. Display panels, wall hangings, showcases and LCD screens are used to make learning public and to facilitate a core instructional practice of using models and critique to enhance learning. There may be an amphitheater space for guest experts or student panels to present their work to an audience of faculty and/or students.

### 13. Why have we chosen a “cluster” concept for the academic classroom spaces?



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As an architectural feature of all 3 designs, the clustering of classroom spaces into 6 clusters with adjacent breakout spaces is intended to maximize light and an open concept feeling. These clusters do not represent a teaming structure for students.

Smaller clusters create a sense of community as opposed to long stretches of hallways or corridors with classrooms on both sides. The cluster design keeps the building compact and efficient, avoiding a sense of sprawl. As students move among the clusters from class to class, they will not encounter “bottleneck” intersections of corridors as traffic patterns are varied to facilitate a better flow.

Programmatically clusters can be used in different ways as models of teaching and learning evolve and change over time. For example one cluster might become a freshman academy or a senior year experience cluster, etc. These flexibilities are preferable over a fixed department-based model only.

We currently envision students moving about all 6 clusters depending on where their classes are scheduled as they do now. We are NOT planning to have students grouped by teams as they are in middle school.

We do see an advantage to scheduling classes from different disciplines in every cluster to encourage multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary teaching and learning. Synthesizing subject matter content and skills across disciplines enhances critical thinking and creativity and also reflects the nature of real world problem solving. It is this kind of learning that Farmington’s Vision of the Graduate reflects.

Teachers will not be assigned to the teacher prep space by discipline. We already have structures to support discipline-based collaboration through monthly department meetings and course-based teams of teachers who meet twice a week. We are seeking to promote innovative inter-disciplinary curriculum units and course offerings. In our current department-based structure, it is likely that a World Language teacher would rarely interact with a Social Studies teacher because their offices and classrooms are in opposite corners of the building and they typically spend most of their time in that one location.

The visibly collaborative work going on in the clusters will enhance a culture of learning and a strong sense of self-direction and resourcefulness. Students will be working independently or in small groups utilizing the breakout space between classrooms or in the small group work areas. An emphasis on making work public will invite student discussion and feedback in ways that walled classrooms and empty hallways do not.