

Horace Mann Elementary School Addition/Renovation Project

Horace Mann School Building Committee/DRC Meeting							
Date: Thursday, July 14, 2022							
Location: Zoom webinar							
Time: 6:00PM							
City Staff and Consultant Team							
Josh Morse	<i>Public Buildings</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gene Raymond	<i>RDA</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Alex Valcarce	<i>Public Buildings</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Christine Monaghan	<i>RDA</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Thomas Murphy	<i>NV5</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steve Watchorn	<i>RDA</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Melissa Gagnon	<i>NV5</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jade Cummings	<i>RDA</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
School Building Committee			Design Review Committee				
Alec Zimmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Liam Hurley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amy Mackrell	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peter Barrer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Alison Leary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mark Nardelli	<input type="checkbox"/>	Andrea Kelley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Robert Hnasko	<input type="checkbox"/>
Andrew Lee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maria Scibelli Greenberg	<input type="checkbox"/>	Barbara Lietzke	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tom Gloria	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ayesha Farag	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Feldstein	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carol Schein	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Christina Abele	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Chris Esmonde	<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Haueisen	<input type="checkbox"/>	David Gillespie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Chris Brezki	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maura Tynes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ellen Light	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Emily Prenner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Phil Grgurich	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jonathan Kantar	<input type="checkbox"/>		
John Oliver	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stephanie Gilman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mark Kaufman	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Jonathan Yeo	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tamika Olszewski	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marc Resnick	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Alex Valcarce, the City of Newton Public Buildings Deputy Commissioner, opened the meeting at 6:00PM. The following participating groups and individuals were represented: Public Buildings Department, HMES Working Group, HMES SBC, DRC, RDA (Architect) and NV5 (Owner’s Project Manager).

Tom Murphy and Melissa Gagnon from NV5 were recognized as the OPMs who were recently brought on board for the Horace Mann Elementary School (HMES) project. It was noted that Tom and Melissa are veterans in working with the City of Newton, well versed in both school and public projects. In addition to SBC members, Gene Raymond and Steve Watchorn were in attendance from RDA as well as Tom Gloria (co-chair), Peter Barrer and Carol Schein from the DRC.

The meeting was recorded and is posted on the project website: [2022 0714 Horace Mann School Building Committee and DRC Meeting Video](#)

Introduction

Alex Valcarce noted that whereas the HMES project is being planned as an occupied renovation, it is critical to create the best design and plan possible to meet the education while being able to be built in phases that are the least impactful to building occupants. The preferred design which will be created during this Feasibility Study phase option will need to have a solid phasing plan upfront, to avoid delays when construction begins.

Feasibility Study Update

Gene Raymond, of Raymond Design Associates (RDA), provided a design update which further studies Option D.8 which is the design concept that the SBC agreed at the last meeting on 6/23/22 as being the best option to focus further efforts to pursue. NV5 will be working with an estimator to provide a first pass at conceptual estimating.

A brief overview was provided of the overall project schedule which was prepared back in December 2021. The project is currently in the middle of Feasibility Study/Schematic Design phases. The schedule factors in schematic design and funding approvals next spring (2023), with Schematic and Site Plan approvals next spring/summer (2023) and Construction to be completed by the end of August 2026.

RDA provided a recap of Option D.8, the design option being pursued. The addition would be behind the existing gym with contractor access from the Wyoming Extension, off California Street. The construction area would be relegated to the NW side of the site while the school maintains operation on the other side, behind the existing building.

The D.8 option will include an L-shaped two-story addition with the following program areas:

- Ground Floor - Cafetorium/stage/kitchen, D.A.D. (Day after Day) office, support spaces and OT
- Upper Level - Kindergarten and first grade classrooms, custodial and receiving area

There will be three 3-classroom neighborhoods at each of the grade levels, from Kindergarten through 5th grades.

Most Recent Elevations and 3-D studies

The street elevation of the existing building will essentially remain as is. A small two-story (plus an additional story at the lower level) directly to the north will house the early elementary entrance and a stairway connecting all three levels. This volume will be tucked in between the main building and the exiting gymnasium. An L-shaped addition will wrap around the back of the gym and poke out slightly around to the front. The L-shaped addition is currently shown with a hip-roofed mansard to mimic the hipped roof existing school.

The elevation at the back of the existing building will remain as is. The new addition will block the existing gym from the rear, with the cafetorium at the forefront with lots of windows, at the lower level.

There are many trees between the neighbors on California Street and the school property. The façade will be fairly benign in terms of what will face the neighbors on California Street.

Preliminary Massing Studies

The addition was shown with a hip roof with a flat roof beyond, which will blend with the existing roof style as well as accommodate placement for AHU equipment. The roof style at the addition will need to be studied and developed however the style will contrast with the flat roof at the existing gymnasium. Strategies were discussed regarding water management at the flat roof area of the gymnasium, as well as at the addition that wraps around. The comment was made that the mansard on the addition may be removed to provide more roof area for photovoltaic panels.

Large translucent skylight will be provided to get light down to the ground floor level to the cafeteria.

From the new rear entrance at the playground grade, the path of travel inside the building will be to go down a half level to the cafetorium and gymnasium or go up a half level to the main level of the existing building and the upper level of the L-shaped addition.

From the rear of the building, the intent is to provide lots of natural light to the cafetorium as well as several means of egress to accommodate occupancy loads and access to exterior play areas.

Site Study D.8

The site is at two elevations/plateaus:

- Upper plateau – current little league field and existing playgrounds
- Lower plateau – current bb court and exit from music room

The intent is to maintain the slope and incorporate its topography into the design/program.

A rendered site plan was presented with building plan and various site program areas. The intent is to create free flow for play, with a lower plateau at the cafeteria level. Intent to maintain some of the hillside for sledding and sloped play, tiered seating, and outdoor classroom space. The final plan will need to incorporate a series of ramps from the upper plateau to the lower plateau to ensure ADA/MAAB requirements are achieved will full access across the site.

It was suggested that that the area closest to the rear of the building could be utilized as a plaza for dining/eating/gathering.

Merits of a new playground were discussed, with the possible mix of hard and soft surface areas. Athletic fields will need to be coordinated with Parks & Recreation and Newton Public Schools. The size of the little league field will need to be coordinated with Parks & Rec as well as NPS. Open field space will also be provided. Existing parking lots at the front and rear will remain, though may be subject to reconfiguration.

Additional information will be provided as building plans continue to be developed, as the playground layout takes shape and as the size and use of the lower-level field space is fine tuned.

A question was asked as to whether there has been consideration to flip the lower level athletic field with home plate (backstop) in the opposite corner, which could possibly open up field space. The design team will study merits of this option and what the impact would be to tiered seating and ramps (grade elevations).

Questions and Answers

Q: What is the plan for the smaller playground, closest to Linden Street?

A: Equipment has been ordered; a definitive delivery date is pending.

Q: How does the size of the new proposed playground compare with the existing playground?

A: Many components will be claimed as outdoor activity and play space, including playground, outdoor classroom, sloped play, open play and sledding hill.

Angier, Zervas and Cabot play areas are all different. Angier is divided into two grade levels, Zervas into three grade levels and Cabot. NPB/NPS can pull together area calculations that have rubberized vs. hard surface with comparisons and provide for reference.

Q: How will parking compare with existing parking?

A: Front parking will likely be the same as it is now whereas the rear parking area may increase by a few spaces.

Q: How will water be shed from the existing flat roof at gymnasium?

A: Typically, flat roofs have internal roof drains. Gutters and downspouts would be needed where a hip meets a flat roof. RDA noted the appropriateness of the hip roof strategy needs to be studied further with consideration of snow loads and solar panels. The L-shaped addition may end up having a flat roof and the small addition at the front would have a hip roof, to match the existing building. The roof line will be refined as the design is finetuned.

Q: Will there be solar panels?

A: The existing building has a VRF system and heat recovery units. Design options will be studied to incorporate solar panels at the roof of the new addition. The east/west roof at the new addition will face south providing good exposure for solar panels. Newton Public Buildings will study options as well.

Q: Could solar panels be installed at the back parking lot?

A: The City will study this option as an opportunity to provide solar canopies.

Q: Will all exterior doors have vestibules?

A: In terms of security, the appropriateness of vestibules will be studied.

Q: Will there be new fencing at the little league field?

A: There will be some perimeter fencing which will need to be studied, although fencing at the outfield is not typical or likely. There will likely be a backstop and fencing along 1st and 3rd base lines. The ball field layout will continue to be studied.

Q: Has there been discussion about flipping the ball field with home base in the back corner which would open the outfield area?

A: The ball field layout will continue to be studied with consideration of nearby activities and orientation relative to the sun and the batter as well as potential possibility of the playground being adjacent to large mature trees, which may not be desirable.

It was noted that the building addition will have robust insulation and will be entirely all electric.

The D.A.D. program would occupy the new cafeteria and gymnasium. The program would be accommodated, and the phasing is simplified. There will be three (3) classrooms per grade with all grades having a program area and breakout space.

The new addition will likely take 18 months to construct. The preliminary program and phasing was presented as follows:

Phase 1: Addition - March 2025 through August 2026

- The existing cafeteria will need to house two classrooms from September 2025 to June 2026.

Phase 2: Summer Periods

- July and August 2025 (Summer #1) Reconfigure Second Floor
- July and August 2026 (Summer #2) Reconfigure Ground and First Floor
- The building will be complete and ready for move in August 2026. Playgrounds will be available for use, however athletic fields may be restricted to allow the grass to grow in (three growing seasons are typically required).

A Preliminary School Program Layout was presented comparing existing conditions (utilization) with the program areas that will be available both during construction and at completion.

A Preliminary Site Organization Study as well as a Preliminary Programmatic “Phasing Test Fit” for all floors were presented to show how the school will function and maintain operations during construction. There will likely be need for a covered exterior stairway from the ground floor as a second means of egress. The extent of contractor access will need to be studied.

The final approved phasing plan will be incorporated into the contract documents for bidding including milestones which the contractor must achieve to ensure the phases are completed as designed. The contract will need to be very specific and clearly outline phasing requirements.

Phase 3: Renovate the Ground Floor, First Floor and Site Work

- Site work will take place during the summer of 2026 to be complete prior to the school resuming classes in September 2026.

Mark Nardelli will reach out to the staff for feedback regarding the site plan presented this evening.

Overall, there was consensus that the strategy and plan are solid.

Questions and Answers

Q: How critical is it for Phase 2 to be complete prior to school resuming in September 2026?

A: RDA noted that given the lack of swing space in the building and the extent of reconfiguring requiring to achieve required programming, the phasing milestones will need to be achieved. NV5 shall review the phasing plan with the project cost estimator this summer in terms of viability, logic, and constructability.

Q: Is the existing number of parking spaces sufficient?

A: Off street parking will be studied with the intent to preserve as much open space as possible. There are 60 – 70 spaces needed for full-time and part-time staff. Additional available space will be studied. The on-site parking area could possibly be reduced if playgrounds were reconfigured to be contiguous to one another.

Q: Is there a place for a temporary basketball hoop during construction?

A: Yes, the location will need to be coordinated to provide safe public access.

The next Community meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 25, 2022 at 6:00PM (via Zoom).

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 PM.

Prepared by: Melissa Gagnon, NV5 [End of 07/14/22 Meeting Minutes]