

Horace Mann Addition/Renovation Project

DRC Project Update		
Date:	Wednesday, February 14, 2024	
Date:	Zoom Meeting (online)	
Time:	7:30PM	

Attendees:

See attached Sign-In List for Design Review Committee, City Staff and Project Teams. The list below includes Horace Mann School Building Committee members as well as Community members who were in attendance.

Alex Valcarce opened the meeting at 7:36PM.

Raymond Design Associates (RDA), GGD (Mechanical Engineer) and NV5, the Owner's Project Manager were in attendance. Steve Watchorn (RDA) provided an overview of design developments and refinements which transpired since the DRC meeting last month. Agenda items were as follows:

Project Schedule

Prior to the next DRC meeting, on March 13th, RDA will send out a final summary presentation to the DRC committee for their review and approval during the monthly meeting. Information from previous meeting will be included in this final summary presentation.

Design Update

RDA mentioned that they have been working with NPS and the Working Group to continue to improve the design relative to the space program.

Ground Floor Level

- The PT room has been relocated to where the cafeteria storage room was, in that way the PT room will have access to natural light.

Committee members asked about the proximity of the new addition to the property line?

Josh Morse commented that there will be enough space to create a buffer in between the addition and the houses, approximately 50 feet.

In response to Committee questions about the design compliance with the space program square footages the design team and NPS responded that most of the spaces, specifically classroom and gym storage met the program goals.

Addition

Minor space changes were reviewed with the Committee as the overall design has been reviewed with NPS and the Working Group. RDA noted that they continue to work on finding the best balance between interior space ceiling heights and the length of the exterior ramp at the entry as the height of the first floor is modified. The ramp was changed to a straight ramp which was much preferred by the Committee members and NPS. The space(s) occupied for the Literacy Room are still being modified to best meet the program goals.

In response to a question about the size and capacity of the cafeteria Mark Nardelli explained that they need capacity for 2 grades (120 students) at a time, but they try to stagger the lunchtime, so those grade levels are in there for a short period of time, they will try to do the same with this new, larger space.

Exterior

RDA presented current proposed images showing the stair connection and the revised entry at the back of the building. The smaller stair connection was presented to the Historic Commission, and they were supportive of this solution. This option simplifies the stair visually and structurally.

The Committee discussed the existing depression in front of the existing Gymnasium, and asked if can anything can be done in that area in terms of tree planting or similar to use that green space? Josh Morse commented that there is just a depressed area and there is an existing drainage line running through that area, so tree planting could compromise it. The area will be studied more to see the possibility of landscaping improvements.

Schematic Design Summary

RDA gave the Committee an overview/summary of the design process as reviewed with the DRC over the past meetings and as reviewed with other city departments

Parking and Traffic

RDA explained that with the new addition there will be a very small impact on the existing traffic, the bus loop will not suffer any changes; of the 19 available parking spaces will be available at the front of the gymnasium they will be reduced to 16 parking spaces due to the creation of a new receiving area for the addition. The parking lot on the left side of the building will be increased from 27 to 30 spots, this allows to keep the net parking spaces as the current situation. The trash dumpsters will be relocated from being next to the left parking lot to the front side of the new receiving area next to the gymnasium. Screening of this area will be studied in the ensuing design phases.

Linwood Avenue Access Drive

An image was presented showing the current condition of the school with a narrow 2-way access road off Linwood Avenue. There is no existing sidewalk with a striped pathway guiding pedestrians from Linwood Avenue through the parking lot. At recent Working Group meetings, RDA presented four (4) different options with the preferred recommendation presented. This solution was generally acceptable to NPS, Newton traffic and NFD but will continue to be developed.

Stormwater Management

The stormwater engineer is proposing underground structures, one of them located at the back of the bottom plateau, receiving the water coming down of the sledding hill, and a second larger structure located where the existing baseball field is in the outfield. By locating the larger one on the field it means the parking lot can remain as it is now; there will be some utility work on the parking lot, and it will have a new surface and it will be repainted. The third underground structure will be located at the front of the building that will capture the water from the roof drainage from the addition. This proposal is being studied and under development by the stormwater engineer and review with Newton Engineering. The preferred solution is expected to be generally defined in the next few weeks.

Sustainability Goals and Requirements

RDA mentioned that this will not be a LEED building, but they are following a LEED checklist to make the building more efficient; this will be an all-electric addition and it will conform with the new stretch code and the specialized code as well. Thornton Tomasetti (Sustainability Consultant) has reviewed the building envelop and they have verified that the building meets the backstop calculations for the required thermal performance.

Alex Valcarce closed out the meeting with a summary of the community comments and noted the project will continue to move towards site plan review and approval. The City of Newton and NV5 are working on putting together the materials to get the approval from the DRC committee next month.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Hernandez - NV5, Inc.

[End of 02/14/24 Meeting Minutes]

Attachments:

- Sign In and Attendance List