

# Whitman Middle School Building Committee

## Meeting Minutes

Time: 4:30 PM

Place: Whitman-Hanson Regional High School

Date: Tuesday, April 30, 2024

### **Members Present:**

Frederick Small, *Chair*  
Kathleen Ottina, *Vice Chair*  
Mary Beth Carter  
Robert Curran  
Crystal Regan  
Rich Pulkinen  
Jeffrey Szymaniak  
John Stanbrook  
Justin Evans  
George Ferro  
Brandon Frost  
Beth Stafford (on phone)

**Building Team Present:** Mike Carroll, OPM – Colliers Project Leaders (CPL), Julie Rivera, Architect – (Ai3), Troy Randall, Principal Architect – Ai3 Architects (Ai3), Harani Kumaresh, OPM – Collier Project Leaders (CPL), Elizabeth Dagnal – Website maintenance

### **Absent:**

Don Esson, Josh MacNeil, Christopher Scriven

### **Call to Order:**

Mr. Fred Small, The Committee Chair, opened the meeting by calling it to order.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

*Mr. Fred Small asked if there was anyone for public comment.*

### **I. Public Comment**

No public comment from attendees.

### **II. Meeting Minutes**

*Mr. Small, entertained a motion to approve the March 26<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes as presented.*

*Motion made by K George Ferro.*

*Motion seconded by Jeffrey Szymaniak.*

*Roll Call*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

### **III. OPM Updated**

#### **A. MSBA Monthly Report**

Mike Carroll presented the standard monthly MSBA OPM report, providing a progress update as of 3/31/2024 and detailing encumbrances to date. He also presented the current overall schedule, which was attached with the monthly report, showing the project's status at the time of the OPM report submission.

#### **B. Financial Review**

Mike presented the project budget and cost summary sheet, explaining the different columns and sections briefly. He mentioned that there were no new budget adjustments or commitments for this month.

Next, Mike presented the expenditures along with the list of actual invoices, noting that they were not reflected monthly for the past few months but now they are up to date. The current expenditures included Ai3's invoices for the last three months and Colliers' invoices for the last two months. Mike mentioned that all the invoices were reviewed by John Stanbrook.

Mr. Fred Small asked John if he had a chance to review and concur. John confirmed and mentioned it's in the packet for review tonight. Mike ensured that all the invoices listed are completely expected and are the projected fees from Ai3, and Colliers' fees are under the projected budget.

Mike then presented the project cash flow versus the actual cash flow table and graphic. He explained that Collier's trend is slightly below expected. Ms. Kathleen Ottina had a question regarding the cash flow chart: if the red line is below the green, is the project doing well? Mike confirmed that it is a good indicator if the red line is below the green line. He also mentioned that when the contractor is on board, the graph starts growing much faster due to much larger bills, and at that time, if the red line is far below the green, it is an indicator that the contractor might be behind schedule.

### **IV. Designer update**

#### **A. Schedule Overview**

Next, Julie provided an overview of the construction schedule, stating that construction will begin in the spring of 2025 and will consist of two phases:

- Phase 1 – Construction of the new building
- Phase 2 – Demolition of the existing building and site work

The ground breaking is expected to take place at the end of spring or early summer once the contractor is hired. The construction of the new building is projected to take 18 months, with substantial completion slated for the fall of 2026. Julie mentioned that the anticipated move to the new building will likely occur in February 2027, ahead of the initial forecast. This early move will allow the start of Phase 2 in warmer months and will also enable the current 6th grade students to graduate from the new building.

Mr. Fred Small inquired about the timeline for the completion of planting and curbing by the spring of 2028. Julie explained that most of the work will be completed by then, with some additional tasks related to planting and utilities possibly extending into the summer of 2028.

## **B. Construction Phasing**

Julie presented the draft construction phasing drawings, mentioning that Ai3 and Colliers had met with district administration, consultants, and some representatives of the sports group to help inform the discussion on the construction phasing. She briefly explained the Phase 1 and Phase 2 draft drawings, noting the timeline for the activities throughout the construction and the different access points for buses, parent drop-offs, faculty, and contractors during the two phases. She then presented the drawing of the completed project, showing the various plazas and athletic fields, with the option for an additional softball field.

Julie provided a summary of add alternative 1, which involves reconstructing the 2nd softball field that was previously presented. She also noted that the phasing plans were implemented with the assumption of adding the 2nd field. Julie emphasized that the design development cost estimates included half a million dollars for transporting soil on and off site but did not cover the cost of reconstructing the 2nd softball field. With the add alternative, the net increase in the construction fee would be \$154,968.

Mr. Small inquired with the Ai3 team about whether the add alternative would ensure proper drainage and field dryness when renovating the softball field. Julie confirmed that the reconstruction would incorporate the same methods as those currently within the project scope.

Mr. Small mentioned that the special Olympics team uses the softball field, which is committed to the reconstruction. He inquired if there is a second field that could be combined with the softball field. Brandon Frost responded, stating that one option is available at Lower Town Park, and the recreation group will collaborate with the DPW to explore other options. Brandon also mentioned that an alternative option was suggested, which involves using the field at Whitman High School. Mr. Small asked if the finished field will be suitable for special Olympics, to which George Ferro noted that the outfield will be multi-use and the softball field will be combined with equipment enhancements. Mike Carroll summarized that during the construction phase when the fields are offline, Lower Town Park, JB field, and the Hanson field could be used as alternatives. Once the new field is operational and the turf is established, they will be fully functional softball fields available for use. Mr. Small noted that there is enough money in contingency for the additional alternative. Mike clarified that with the addition of the second softball field cost, the project is still within the overall project budget.

***Mr. Small, entertained a motion to add the 2<sup>nd</sup> softball field for the reduced cost of \$154,968 into the project.***

***Motion made by Kathleen Ottina.***

***Motion seconded by Brandon Frost.***

***Roll Call***

***Motion passed unanimously***

## **C. Introduction to Renewable Energy**

Julie Rivera presented the alternative No. 2, which is a renewable energy system that includes solar panels on the roof and two side canopies. She mentioned that the committee decided last spring to opt-in for the specialized stretch code as the MSBA offers additional reimbursement for those projects. This code requires the project to be all-electric and net-zero ready.

Julie presented the decision-making tree for energy goals and noted that the project has already committed to following the opt-in stretch code. It is currently being planned to be net-zero ready with a solar panel system. A solar designer consultant has been hired to assist with the solar panel system, and the committee will determine during the bidding process if the alternative add-on is required for this project.

Julie briefly explained the different options available for the solar renewable energy system, highlighting the pros and cons of each option. She mentioned that the Town would also need to conduct a financial analysis to choose the most relevant option. Julie then presented a graphic showing the location of the solar panels.

Mike Carroll clarified that when Julie mentioned "net zero," she was referring to net zero energy, not net zero cost. Julie confirmed that the amount of energy produced annually would offset the amount of energy used annually.

Julie summarized the next steps, noting that the upcoming milestone is the August 1st deadline for the next design submission. She also suggested having a community forum before the summer and recommended June 11th for the meeting. Mr. Small proposed having a joint meeting with the building committee first, followed by the community forum. Julie mentioned that the topics for the community forum would focus on summarizing the design updates from the new year and not anything related to the Building Committee meeting on the same day. Mike suggested holding the building committee meeting from 5:30 pm to 6:00 pm and the community meeting at 6:30 pm. Mr. Small confirmed that both meetings will take place at the Whitman middle school.

## **V. Payment of Invoices**

Mike Carroll presented documents listing the outstanding invoices for the committee to review. The building committee discussed various methods and outcomes for paying the invoices and concluded to proceed with payment.

***Mr. Small, entertained a motion to pay the total invoices \$2,138,867.98.***

***Motion made by Kathleen Ottina.***

***Motion seconded by George Ferro.***

***Roll Call***

***Motion passed with a 11 to 1 vote with the Mary Beth Carter the lone no vote.***

***The Next School Building Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 11th, at 5:30 pm.  
At Whitman Middle School***

## **IV. Adjournment**

***Mr. Small, entertained a motion to adjourn.***

***Motion made by Kathleen Ottina***

***Motion seconded by George Ferro***

***Motion passed Unanimously.***

To view the full recording of this meeting please visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1qCHy-9D4w>