

Whitman Middle School Building Committee

Meeting Minutes

Time: 4:30 PM

Place: Whitman-Hanson Regional High

School Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024

Members Present:

Frederick Small, *Chair*

Kathleen Ottina, *Vice Chair*

Beth Stafford

Robert Curran

George Ferro

Brandon Frost

Crystal Regan

Rich Pulkinen

Justin Evans

Jeffrey Szymaniak

Mary Beth Carter

Christopher Scriven (on phone)

Don Esson (on phone)

John Stanbrook

Absent: Alisa Santos, OPM – Colliers Project Leaders (CPL)

Building Team Present: Mike Carroll, OPM – Colliers Project Leaders (CPL), Julie Rivera, Architect – (Ai3), Ms. Ashley Cullen, principal at (Transverse Landscape Architect)

Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair asked if there was anyone for public comment.

I. Public Comment

None

II. OPM Updates

A. OPM Report

Mr. Mike Carroll from Colliers Project Leaders presented the monthly OPM report dated 1/31/24. He mentioned that another report will be submitted ten days from the School Building Committee meeting date. He also mentioned that the current report shows the old contract values because the signed contracts have yet to be returned and entered into the system. The signed amendment values for Ai3 and Colliers will be reflected in next month's report.

Chair Mr. Fredrick Small asked a question regarding the payment of invoices. If the payments are in with the proper prudent and confirmed that the amendments have been submitted to Mr. John Stanbrook, Director of Business and MCPPO, for which Mr. Carroll replied yes. Mr. Stanbrook recommended that invoices be paid.

***The chair entertained a motion to approve the payment of invoices as presented
Motion made by Ms. Beth Stafford and Mr. George Ferro
Motion was seconded by Mr. Brandon Frost.
Unanimous vote to approve.***

B. Project Schedule

Mr. Carroll presented the overall project schedule to the committee. Mr. Carroll explained that the yellow box in the schedule shows where the project is currently in February. He elaborated that the design development is ongoing, with the cost estimate documents being sent out recently. The cost estimates will be discussed next month, with the submission to the MSBA at the beginning of April. The next step in design development would be 60% construction documents with similar estimation and submission project, followed by 90% and bidding in the Spring of 2025.

The Chair had a question about tweaking the plan during the design development phase. Is that the committee's opportunity to tweak something like using one coat of paint instead of two?

Mr. Carroll explained that they would be going through the value engineering process at the end of each cost estimation, whether we are on a budget or not. The value engineering process will be carried out until we are buying it out with the contractor during bidding with final numbers,

The vice chair had a question regarding the MSBA submissions. Is it the MSBA's position to review the submission and then give us feedback, as they have in every other document submission?

Mr. Carroll explained that the MSBA protocol technically requires the team to submit and go on hiatus for five weeks until we get the responses back. However, due to the process needing to be more practical, the design team will continue working through the following phases because time is of the essence. Once we get the MSBA comments back, the OPM and the design team will review the comments and reach out for answers from the committee, OPM, and Design team and ultimately submit a formal response to all the MSBA questions. Mr. Carroll then stated that some of the answers from design development will be accounted for and addressed at the next review as it has yet to be fully developed and also to make sure it is going to be developed in the next level.

III. Project Website

Mr. Jeffrey Szymaniak announced that the district had hired Ms. Elizabeth Dagnall as the website manager. Ms. Dagnall posted to Mr. George Ferro and Mr. Szymaniak's district posting for the position and was recently onboarded.

She will now take care of the website until the project is completed. The Chair welcomed Ms. Dagnall and noted that the website will be done nicely and artistically. Mr. Jeffrey Szymaniak thanked Ms. Dagnall. Further, the Chair requested that Ms. Dagnall make sure that the website is updated with the meeting minutes and videos as published by WHCA for public involvement. He also mentioned that there would be a public forum at the middle school similar to the previous one, which would be more informative and keep the public aware of what is happening.

IV. Middle School Fields

The Chair wanted to address the Middle School fields. It was brought to the Chair's attention that the fields were dug out for the test borings, which might potentially affect the Soccer team. Mr. George Ferro toured the fields on 2/17. The Chair mentioned that the test borings were filled out and will be patched appropriately as they are part of the project, and the soccer team will be able to use the fields as stated and laid out in the project timeline. Also, the Chair wanted to take this as a learning experience and have greater communication with the town and the recreation department with Ms. Mary Beth Carter as a conduit between the public and the project team to make sure they are responded to nicely when we get the picture and emails as promised to the public to mitigate the wetlands plans. The Chair asked if that was a good action plan moving forward, and all were in agreement.

V. Design Team Updates

A. Project Schedule Overview

Ms. Julie Rivera from the Ai3 team presented a brief overview of the schedule. She mentioned that we are midway through design development, which indicates that we are designing with more consideration for materials and constructability per space. She then pointed out that March is designated for the cost estimating exercise, with 3 to 4 weeks for the estimators to price the documents for the design team to deliver and how that is stacking up against the total project budget.

Ms. Rivera then presented the activities, which are mostly completed, pending, or initiated, and the design team is continuing to develop their documents as they push forward toward the design development submission to the MSBA in early April. She then pointed out that the yellow highlighted items correspond with the cost estimate. She further mentioned that all the items have been submitted to the cost estimators and additionally to the design consultants as a check-on the design in regards to how it is performing acoustically, per code, ADA, and energy to ensure that the design is meeting both the standards and the needs of Whitman.

B. Phase II Investigations & Review

Ms. Rivera reminded the committee that the design team mentioned in December that Phase II would commence at the beginning of 2024 and mentioned that the Geotech and Phase II have begun. Test pits and boring started during the week of 2/19 as scheduled to be continued for 2 to three weeks and will be rehabilitated by the sports season. She also mentioned that the test pit and the boring locations have been moved from the playing areas to make the rehab easier.

For the Site survey, Ms. Rivera mentioned that similar to the Geotech and Phase II, and there are some stakes out in the fields, mainly around the perimeter, to identify the boundary for the site and to locate the utilities for the civil engineer to know where the new building will tie into the existing utilities. Traffic study and wetlands delineation will continue on an as-needed basis

C. Scheduled Reviews

Ms. Rivera mentioned that the civil engineers have set up a meeting with the building inspector and the Department of Public Works for next month to review the project as a courtesy and keep everyone informed.

D. Recap of the January Meetings

As mentioned by Ai3 in December, the Ai3 and their professional team met with each staff specific to a space, like the art and music teachers, to better determine their need for power, fixtures, furniture, and equipment. Ms. Rivera shared a graphic showing a pair of classrooms with red markups indicating the comments and the constructive feedback received from the teachers. She also mentioned that the discussion was very productive and helpful for the Ai3 team to take that information to reflect on the cost estimates, which are currently estimated. Ms. Rivera reminded me that his committee has voted to move forward with an \$1800 per student for the FFE budget; the MSBA carries \$1200 per student as a reimbursable. Closer to the completion of the CDs, the Ai3 team will be able to bring in physical samples of the furniture for the staff and administration to see if it aligns with their needs and budget.

Additionally, the Ai3 team met with the members of the Whitman police and fire departments to discuss the safety and security around the site. They also met with the District's facilities and technology departments. Each party reaffirmed that the design is progressing and is well-suited for operations in the current District. Ms. Rivera mentioned that continuing to get their feedback has been constructive for the Ai3 team.

E. Design Updates

Ms. Rivera presented a brief design update and mentioned that the Design Development cost estimation submission is a very important midway milestone. The cost estimation submission is more detailed than what was submitted during the schematic design, with project manuals, drawings, including technology and solar design, and narratives to help inform the scope of those professional drawing sets.

Ms. Rivera introduced Ms. Ashley Cullen, principal at Transverse Landscape Architect, to present the landscape design included in the design development set. Ms. Rivera also mentioned that Ms. Cullen was present during the January focus group meeting and can speak to how some of the concepts and ideas were integrated into the site.

Ms. Cullen then presented the Landscape design, noting her excitement about the percentage of the green space vs the building and parking space as shown in the 3D design, which sets up a beautiful entry progression into the area. She then quickly recapped the design with the site plan. She then narrated the 3D images to understand the area's scale better; she discussed the view of the entrance from the car loop, with close proximity to the bus and car drop off, as both groups can enter the school together. She then presented the entry plaza with the school entrance with simple scaled planting for easy maintenance and focused on the lawn areas/ shade trees. She explained the bird's eye view of the entry plaza that shows the spatial breakdown of the plaza space with islands with shaded trees and lawns and how the kids have a fantastic space to walk underneath the canopy of the building. The landscape design of the

small plaza space right outside the auditorium has a simple small seat wall with planting behind to buffer from the parent drop-off, which could also act as a great space for outdoor classrooms for music bands. The Landscape team had been discussing the emergency drive in the back with the safety and facilities. We are required for a 20ft emergency driveway, and the design team's recommendation is to have a 10ft asphalt paved lane that acts as an access to the students with reinforced turf, which is drivable during an emergency. The outdoor classroom in the back is a fully covered and flexible space with outdoor furniture. The Courtyard design incorporates feedback from the user group meeting to have a larger outdoor classroom, amphitheater space, vegetable garden, and wellness space connected to a wellness classroom. Ms. Cullen then presented different views of various spaces around the building.

Ms. Cullen opened the floor to the committee for any questions. The Chair asked the question about the loading dock: Is it going to accommodate an 18-wheeler to deliver larger deliveries, and what is the proximity from the loading dock to the kitchen, freezer, etc.?

Ms. Cullen explained that the design was reviewed and tweaked after the facilities group meeting and confirmed that it has been designed to accommodate an 18-wheeler for access to that loading dock, as well as trash removal and a dumpster.

The Chair asked if the vehicle would be able to go in easily. Ms. Cullen explained that the 18-wheeler would go around the bus loop, back up, and turn right in at that radius to hit the loading dock from behind. Ms. Julie then explained they have reviewed with the staff during the discussions, and the receiving area is immediately adjacent to the custodial and the kitchen with a very short delivery route.

The Chair asked a question regarding snow removal. As far as the plazas go, have they been structured wide enough to accommodate snow removal? Whether it be a small bucket or even a snow blower.

Ms. Cullen confirmed that they were all taken into account, and the material used is simple and highly durable, focusing on exposed aggregate, finished concrete that can really hold up.

Ms. Beth Stafford really liked the emergency access drive and said it was a great idea. It gives the illusion of a walking path but can be used by anybody, which is excellent. Ms. Cullen is excited to see students loving the great connections to all the fields around.

X. Next Steps

The team is targeting April 4th for MSBA submission and working backward from that in conjunction with the cost estimated to pinpoint when the building committee would want to meet next. Ms. Rivera mentioned that March 14th is when the cost estimates are due back from the professional estimators and then set up the cost reconciliation call, which is when both the design estimator and the OPM estimator get on a call to reconcile those costs and see how they stack up against the total project cost that has been submitted to the MSBA during the schematic design phase. Ms. Rivera then mentioned that there would be a Value Engineering exercise, if necessary, prior to that reconciliation. Ai3 is recommending March 26th for the following building committee meeting so the committee can have a chance to review the cost estimate together and also review the DD submission documents.

The Chair mentioned that anyone with questions can directly, without any violations of the open meeting laws, ask questions through him or Mr. Carroll during the review meeting. The Chair then confirmed with everyone if the 26th sounds accommodating. Ms. Rivera then

mentioned the time following that meeting would be to complete the report and share a draft ahead of time for the committee to review.

Mr. Carroll summarized the steps before the meeting on the 26th. He mentioned that the documents reviewed during the committee meeting will be closer to the final and not at 100% and the team will share the final document when it is complete. He also mentioned that the team would send the cost estimate prior to the value engineering, as it takes a day or two, and send the value engineering results when received.

Mr. Carroll introduced a new Colliers team member, Ms. Harani Kumaresh, assistant project manager, who has been helping the team behind the scenes with project coordination and website.

The Chair Mentioned www.wmsproject.org to look for updated material and information for the project. The Chair also mentioned scheduling a public forum similar to the previous meeting at the middle school.

Mr. Brandon Frost asked for a recommendation regarding the timing of the public forum, and Ms. Rivera mentioned that the following forum would be in the Spring, precisely in May, which puts the team between the milestone deadlines. Mr. Frost mentioned that he would like to get the word out to the public regarding the public forum.

I. Adjournment

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motion made by Mr. George Ferro

Motion seconded by Mr. Justin Evans

The motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous vote

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