



Business, Finance and Planning

TO: School Committee

FROM: Liam Hurley, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Financial & Administrative Officer
Stephanie Gilman, Director of Planning, Project Management and Sustainability

DATE: March 13, 2023

RE: Facilities Update
Newton Early Childhood Program
Lincoln-Eliot Elementary School
Countryside Elementary School - initial meeting for sustainability
Franklin Elementary School
Horace Mann Elementary School
Underwood and Ward Elementary Schools Facility and Enrollment Study
Cabot MSBA Post Occupancy Survey
Other Updates

This report includes updates on major school building projects and other significant school facility matters. This report also includes brief updates on transportation, sustainability, and school-related Parks, Recreation and Culture projects.

I. Newton Early Childhood Program (NECP)

The NECP project was successfully completed in December 2022 and families, staff and students were welcomed into their new home at 687 Watertown Street in January 2023. Public Buildings and Facilities are working closely with Director, Kathleen Browning, to address any outstanding punchlist items and IT is also working on a few final punchlist items. We continue to monitor traffic and parking at the building, particularly at arrival and dismissal times and will make adjustments to signage and parking as needed. Thus far, staff parking seems to be working as planned, while some minor signage changes may be needed for parent parking.

II. Lincoln-Eliot Elementary School Project at 150 Jackson Road

The Lincoln-Eliot design has been revised and refined over the past few months to finalize the layout of the addition and several interior spaces, as well as some slight modifications to the site. The project has now moved into Construction Documents, the final phase of design. During this phase, the project is further detailed to select and document interior and exterior materials, finishes and colors. The sitework and playground areas will also be further detailed and documented.

The most recent updated project plans were reviewed with the Design Review Committee and the School Building Committee at their meeting on February 15, 2023. The updated plans were also presented to the School Committee on March 1, 2023. The following link is to a narrated virtual walk-through video of some of the interior spaces in the updated plans, and begins to give you an idea of what the project will look like. <https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showdocument?id=97864>

The project is on schedule to be bid in the summer of 2023 and to begin demolition the following fall. Construction is planned to be completed for the start of school in 2025. A more detailed project update with plans and images can be found on the Public Buildings website [here](#). Past meeting presentations, meeting recordings and additional project information can be found on the project website at <http://lincolneliot-necp-projects.com/>.

III. Countryside Elementary School Project

The Countryside project is in the Feasibility Study Phase, Module 3, of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) process.

The Preliminary Design Program (PDP), the first required feasibility study submission, was submitted to the MSBA in January. The PDP includes the Educational Plan and space program, staff visioning sessions materials, building and site existing condition information, a site selection matrix, and preliminary conceptual designs for renovation, renovation and addition, and new construction, as well as an options matrix to help determine a preferred path forward. The PDP studies and evaluates conceptual options for both design study enrollments of 340 students and 465 students and, based on the preliminary evaluation, proposes moving forward with a new building on the existing site for 465 students. The PDP document can be viewed [here](#).

The MSBA completed their review of the PDP and provided feedback in February, and the project team submitted responses to their comments and questions on March 6th. The project team is now continuing to develop multiple conceptual design options for evaluation for a new 75,500 square foot building, in order to work toward identifying a preferred solution. Once a preferred solution is determined, it will be studied and developed further to be included in the Preferred Schematic Report to the MSBA.

At the Countryside School Building Committee (SBC) meeting on February 28, 2023, the design team reviewed the preliminary conceptual preferred options and Horsley Witten, the civil engineering firm on the project, provided a detailed analysis of the existing site conditions.

The Countryside School Building Committee hosted a Community Forum on March 9, 2023 to present information on the project status, existing site and building conditions and preliminary design concepts. This was also an opportunity to hear community feedback and to respond to questions and concerns. Horsley Witten also presented information on requirements related to stormwater management and compensatory flood storage. The project will be presented to the Conservation Commission on March 23rd and the next Countryside SBC meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2023.

Project information, presentations and meeting recordings can be found on the [Countryside Elementary](#)

[School Project](#) webpage. Information about Module 3 can be found at [MSBA Module 3 - Feasibility Study](#) and an overview of the eight module MSBA process is at [MSBA Module Overview](#).

IV. Franklin Elementary School Project

The Franklin School Project is currently on hold while awaiting the results of the March 14th override vote on project funding. Preliminary conceptual designs and School Building Committee meeting materials and recordings can be found on the [Franklin Elementary School Project](#) webpage of the Newton Public Buildings website. A School Building Committee (SBC) meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2023 at 6:00 PM. Registration for the meeting can be found [here](#).

V. Horace Mann Elementary School Project

The Horace Mann School project also remains on hold while awaiting the results of the March 14th override vote on project funding. Project information and SBC meeting presentations and recordings can be found on the [Horace Mann Elementary School Project](#) webpage of the NPS website. Project information can also be found on Newton Public Buildings's [Horace Mann Project](#) webpage. A School Building Committee (SBC) meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2023 at 6:00 PM. Registration for the meeting can be found [here](#).

VI. Underwood and Ward Elementary Schools Facility and Enrollment Study

The Designer Selection Committee (DSC) met on February 16, 2023 to interview the two firms that submitted responses to the Request for Qualifications for the Underwood and Ward Facility and Enrollment Study. The two firms, Raymond Design Associates (RDA), the current architect on the Horace Mann Project, and Perkins Eastman Architects, the architect on the Zervas School project, are both well qualified firms with years of experience working on K-12 schools. The committee has submitted their recommendation to the Mayor and a final decision is anticipated shortly after she completes her review of the DSC materials.

A Ward and Underwood Working Group is currently being established. The Working Group will review and discuss options and will make recommendations to the School Committee for consideration based on the working group's review and community feedback. The study will identify options to address facility conditions and enrollment at both schools, and is anticipated to be completed by December 2023.

VII. Cabot Elementary School - MSBA Post-Occupancy Survey

The MSBA selected the Cabot Elementary School project to participate in a new pilot Post-Occupancy Survey process. Participation is currently voluntary, but will likely eventually be required as part of the MSBA process. This is a great opportunity to gain a deeper understanding about how the Cabot building is functioning and supporting the educational program, and will also provide a preview of the process for the Countryside project and other future school building projects.

Working with Principal Eric Sprung, surveys from the MSBA have been sent out to both staff and

families to collect data and occupant feedback. In addition, Public Buildings and NPS completed a separate MSBA questionnaire with data on enrollment, educational program, space use, maintenance and energy use for the building. In mid-March, the MSBA will conduct an all day site visit to observe building program use and operations. Once complete, the MSBA will provide a detailed report with all of the collected data and observations. We anticipate receiving the report in late May and will provide an update to the School Committee on the findings.

VIII. Other Updates

Phase 3 Solar Panel Project Update from Bill Ferguson, Co-Director of Sustainability

Both the Law Department and the Purchasing Department have approved contracting with Solect Energy for four projects: Williams roof, Horace Mann roof, Oak Hill Parking lot and Mason Rice Parking lot. This purchasing pathway is through a Power Options (PO) solar program that they provide on behalf of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center. Solect Energy is an approved PO contractor. The Law department is reviewing a Letter of Intent (LOI) from Solect Energy that will enable them to go to a more detailed planning stage. The LOI will be followed by a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) once project details are worked out. It appears that these four sites will now finally move forward and be developed.

Bill is meeting with Ameresco on March 9th on the other seven solar projects and an update on those will be provided in the next facilities update. All eleven projects are anticipated to be completed by the summer of 2024.

Transportation Updates

- A MassDOT Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Infrastructure Grant was recently awarded to Newton for improvements to the Parker Road and Route 9 intersection. The grant will help pay for safety improvements at the intersection that will support better walking and biking routes for students at Brown and Oak Hill Middle Schools and NSHS. At the project kick-off meeting on February 28th, MA DOT let the City know that the project budget has been doubled to \$1,254,000. A site observation visit is being scheduled for late March. It's anticipated that the project will begin construction in 2026 and be completed in 2027.
- Newton Bike/Ped Network Plan Advisory Committee - NPS and our Safe Routes to Schools partner will participate in the planning for the Bike/Ped Network Plan, which will provide an action-oriented road map to make Newton more safe, enjoyable, and accessible for everyone to get around on two feet, two wheels, or using any mobility device. The plan is expected to be developed over the coming year.

Parks, Recreation & Culture (PRC) Updates

- NNHS Stadium Sports Lighting
PRC received bids and awarded the project to an electrical/General Contractor to install the lighting equipment. The installation will be done this summer.
- NSHS Synthetic Turf Replacement

PRC is in the process of bidding the turf replacement and track resurfacing this month. The turf carpet and infill material purchase is being finalized this month, pending receipt of some material testing information on the product. The work is anticipated to be completed this summer.

- Albemarle, Burr School Fields & McGrath

The projects are on-going. PRC has begun working on a construction funding request for all 3 projects with the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) this month and next. If approved, Parks will be moving rapidly to get the projects to shovel-ready status. These projects are currently in design development.

- Playground Accessibility Matting

Installation of playground accessibility matting at Williams Elementary School is scheduled for April school vacation week.

- Cabot Park Pavilion

The Pavilion is designed and constructed by Mass Art Architecture school students and is nearly complete. The pavilion will be available for school special activities as well as community art and culture exhibitions.

- Newton Serves

This city-wide spring clean up event is scheduled for Sunday, May, 2023. Many school projects organized by PTO groups and school parents are listed on the MyRec website for volunteer sign-up. Registered school project sites include Newton South HS, Underwood, Burr, Franklin, Peirce, and Mason Rice Elementary Schools. Volunteer registration opens March 15th. More information can be found on the See the [Newton Serves](#) webpage on the PRC website.

Dudley Road Update

The City is pursuing discussions with NOW Communities/Civico Development to explore their concept of preserving open space with clustered housing on the 15 acre property between Dudley and Brandeis Roads. The City's Review Team reviewed nine potential partnership proposals to explore options for the land which is adjacent to Newton South High School. A summary of their review is available [here](#).

NOW Communities and Civico Development are currently in communication with the property seller regarding their proposal and possible offer. We will continue to update the School Committee as information becomes available.