

COMMITTEE ON JOINT SCHOOL BUILDINGS

July 09, 2024 at 5:00 PM

Chairman O'Connell called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: School Committee Members O'Connell, Soule, Turner
Aldermen Terrio, O'Neil

Absent: Alderman Morgan

Messrs.: D. Saindon, M. Lenfest

1. Presentation from LeftField regarding the School District Priority One Project to date.

David Saindon, Project Executive at LeftField, introduced himself. I am joined with my colleague, Mark Lenfest, Senior Project Manager with LeftField, and Jennifer Soucy, Project Architect with SMMA. I have an eleven-slide deck presentation tonight, but it should go fairly quickly. We will do a progress update, look ahead to activities, budget and invoicing which we do not have in this packet tonight and I will explain why, and then schedule and progress pictures. Activities completed within the last thirty days. Some of these are completed, some are continuing and will be ongoing. The GMP with Consigli has been executed. Continued development and refinement of the Hillside and McLaughlin schedules; Parkside and Southside will follow. Continuing programming with middle school projects in general, and Beech Elementary. Infrastructure, utility infrastructure, for the modular sites are almost complete. They are ongoing. Continued coordination, site logistics with Consigli and Triumph Modular. Coordination with Eversource continues. Gas relocations have been completed at Parkside and Southside. Move planning is ongoing, and there is ongoing communication with the staff and the community. Beech Elementary and middle school CMR procurement is ongoing. As of tonight, the delivery of the modulars and the setting are about 95% complete. The only site that isn't complete is Hillside, but it will be shortly. When I say complete, I mean they have arrived and are set. For the thirty-day look ahead, we have continued development with the middle school schedules. Same with the procurement with the CMR for the construction managers for the middle school projects and Beech. Continued programming, permit coordination, utility work. We will start some site restoration at various modular sites, continued fit-out at various modular locations, continued coordination with Eversource, technology for the modulars, fiber-cabling, move planning will continue, and there is still communication with all stakeholders. Overall, you can see with the modulars we are about 30% complete. With Beech, 85% for programming, design is 20%, and the CM procurement process has started. For McLaughlin, Hillside, Parkside, and Southside, the same procurement is being done. It doesn't mean we are going to have one construction manager for all four schools, but we are just doing the procurement all at once. You see that McLaughlin and Hillside are further along with programming and design. Overall, for the modular summary update as you can see for Beech, McDonough, McLaughlin, Hillside, Parkside, and Southside, all of the units has been fabricated. They have all been delivered with the exception of Hillside. I believe Hillside is arriving next week.

Mark Lenfest, Senior Project Manager at LeftField, stated later this week.

Mr. Saindon stated later this week. They will be set. You can see that MEP, fire alarm, PA system connections and communications are ongoing for Beech, McDonough, and McLaughlin. General site work, as you can see, varies from site to site obviously because not all sites are the same. Eversource power as well. You will start seeing fire alarms and security get populated over the next month. Eversource summary update. We are still waiting for confirmation on the pad-mounted transformers. I am told that they are in Manchester. Eversource is just waiting for us to be ready. That is the best confirmation I can provide. Is there anything else I can add without overstepping by saying something that might not happen?

Mr. Lenfest stated no, that is an accurate assessment. Basically, with the pad-transformers, they will not commit the transformer to your project until you have your building's electrical system intact. In order to facilitate that, we are working on a disconnect package. Not to get everybody too far into the weeds, but that will enable Eversource to deliver the transformers earlier to us. They have been a good construction partner to date.

Mr. Saindon stated the budget was provided as part of the monthly report that was shared with everyone on July 5. This is a blow-up of the financial report for the modulars. Again, it was shared with everyone on July 5 as well as all the other budgets for the other projects. For an invoice summary, because of the timing of this meeting, the warrant signing, invoice due dates, I did not provide an invoice log as part of the monthly report. There is not a report attached here for transparency that I typically provide. In fact, the invoices are going to be approved, I know on the screen it says July 12, but it will actually be tomorrow. The warrant signing is scheduled for July 18; checks will be issued July 19. What I will do for the next report is provide the invoice log. It was just that the timing was not in alignment. I wanted to bring everyone's attention to that as to why it wasn't on the report. As far as schedules, they continue to be in progress. Next month, I will include an updated schedule for Hillside and McLaughlin. Again, the schedule will continue to evolve as the various construction managers get on board for the middle school projects. Again, they will get refined and fine-tuned. Some progress pictures for the various project sites: Beech, McLaughlin, McDonough, and Southside. That concludes our presentation.

Alderman Terrio asked are all of the modulars going to be ready for occupancy on the first day of school.

Mr. Saindon stated they are scheduled to be ready for occupancy by August 16. As of right now, yes. We do not see a glaring problem.

Alderman Terrio stated this presentation focused on modulars. I am assuming that simultaneously we are doing a lot of work within the schools that needs to be done. Is that correct?

Mr. Saindon asked when you say in the schools, do you mean the various middle schools.

Alderman Terrio stated correct me if I am wrong, but we are doing a lot of rehab work in schools. We need the modulars to put the kids in while we're doing work in the schools. I'm assuming that work has already started in the schools.

Mr. Saindon stated the modulars are being implemented for capacity reasons. Also, as part of the four middle schools, all of those are being renovated and there will be an addition to all four. That work has not started, but the programming and design work has.

Alderman Terrio stated so basically, we are just focusing on the modulars right now.

Mr. Saindon stated correct. The modulars will assist in some of the swing space as those four schools are renovated.

School Committee Member Turner stated to piggy-back off of Alderman Terrio, it is my understanding with Hillside at least that we get the modulars set, get them occupied at the start of school, and then the next step would be the addition on Hillside, and once that is complete then students from within the building – an area that needs renovations within Hillside – those students will then move to the addition and it will be ready to be occupied. Then work will happen within current Hillside and the addition will act as swing space, while fifth grade still occupies modulars. Then fast forward two years, two-plus years, the modulars move away. Then we have an addition and a renovated Hillside. I imagine that is somewhat the plan with the other buildings.

Mr. Saindon stated correct. From a conceptual phasing standpoint, to oversimplify it, the addition will be built first for Hillside and McLaughlin, then the addition will act as the swing space for students. I am saying it in a very simple manner, but to do that musical chairs, there is a lot of coordination with the district. Conceptually, that is how the phasing will work.

School Committee Member Turner stated the slide where you talked about Hillside being 95% complete in terms of delivery and setting, does that set us back for any sort of timeline.

Mr. Saindon answered it is later than what Triumph indicated, but they are confident they will be able to catch up. Being in the construction and design industry my whole career, I have never once seen a total project follow its original schedule. The schedule is somewhat of a guide and evolves. As long as the end-date doesn't change.

School Committee Member Turner asked is it possible to move the word draft off the middle of some of the slides in the future because some of the numbers on the financial reports are obstructed. If it doesn't make a difference, we can put it where there is white space. It would make it easier for me to pull some stuff out. As the project proceeds, we can find a new spot for the draft sticker.

Mr. Saindon stated not a problem.

Mr. Lenfest stated we did have a special meeting with Triumph to discuss the late delivery of Hillside. They have a very focused revised construction schedule on the

setting of the seaming and the interior work. They have been an excellent construction partner.

Alderman O'Neil stated I want to make sure subs are getting paid. In order to do that, we need to make sure Consigli gets paid. Their payment schedule is off a little bit, is that what you showed earlier?

Mr. Saindon stated no, it is not off.

Alderman O'Neil stated I am not purposely excluding SMMA or LeftField; but I worry about the subs.

Mr. Saindon stated we have a very structured deadline payment process. The district cuts checks once a month. We got dates from the district and we work backwards. We send out reminders to vendors because the dates vary from month to month; it's not the fifth every month, it varies. No complaints have made it to my desk. Everyone is getting paid. When I prepared this slide deck to finalize it this morning, the intent was to get the invoices approved by the district on the 12th, but in communicating with the Superintendent, we moved it to tomorrow. The 12th should say the 10th, that changed today.

Mr. Lenfest stated we have hit every deadline and the checks have been cut. The invoice report was not available for this presentation.

Alderman O'Neil stated it is a paper check from the district to Consigli, correct.

Mr. Saindon replied I am going to say yes. It is not electronic.

School Committee Member Soule I want to follow-up with where we are with the Beech Street site.

Mr. Saindon stated last week I was copied on an email from the Amoskeag Board. Mr. O'Connell can elaborate further, but a letter of intent was issued as far as the intent of the land-swap. The board accepted or approved in concept that land-swap. Their attorney is going to be working with the district's attorney to adjust the reverter rights.

Chairman O'Connell stated all along we have been waiting to get to the next step with regard to the property or intended land for Beech Street. As you said, last week we received very welcome news that the Amoskeag Trust had agreed. The intent today is that it will go before the district's attorney, who is on vacation this week. They will have it in their hands on Monday, and we will get it through legal next week and know where we are.

Alderman O'Neil asked is the City Solicitor in the loop on that.

Chairman O'Connell answered they will be. Nobody is in the loop now because the letter was received this past week and our attorney is not available. So, the intention is to have the attorneys look at it which will include the city's attorney to get us to the next step.

Alderman O'Neil stated it might speed things up if the City Solicitor is involved.

Alderman Terrio stated initially I thought, maybe it is my misunderstanding, that the city and district were going to ask for the land of the park which is controlled by Amoskeag to use that as school property. He mentioned a land swap. Are we swapping land with Amoskeag? Do we need to provide land to them?

Chairman O'Connell stated no. I don't know what land swap means. The concept that you mentioned, there is no swap.

Alderman Terrio stated so I understand correctly, that the land is going to be turned from a park into school property.

Chairman O'Connell stated correct. There is an understanding that the current playground and basketball court would be recreated on the side by Beech Street school. That was a condition still during the memorandum of understanding stage and not final that we want to make sure that the net asset to the people in that area of the city...that the basketball court and playground are not lost but are replaced. That is the only caveat that I know of. Even the letter, to be frank, the letter received last week which we can send to this board was a very short email. It said the Amoskeag Trust has agreed that they want to see this go ahead and are supportive. To be frank, it didn't actually mention that piece of recreating the playground. That was the understanding with the earlier information we sent to them. To Alderman O'Neil's point, now that there is an agreement so to speak, it now falls to the attorneys to decide what is right so we can do this properly and officially. That is the step we will be at starting on Monday.

Alderman O'Neil stated it would be appreciated if the City Solicitor's Office was involved.

Chairman O'Connell stated even the suspicion that they wouldn't be is important to dispel. There is nothing here that is going to happen.

Alderman O'Neil stated I understand. There was at one point early on when the City Solicitor was not in the loop.

Chairman O'Connell stated I am not aware of that.

Alderman O'Neil stated I can't remember the specifics.

Chairman O'Connell stated I am not aware of that. I know in the meetings that I have been at with the City Solicitor on this project, I was sitting at meetings with groups of ten, twelve, fifteen people in the city including Ms. Rice and others at meetings back in the early stage of this project. I don't want to be contentious, but I dispute the idea that somehow the City Solicitor's Office was left outside of something and not included. I am going to make sure that they will be included.

2. Monthly status and financial report for June 2024 submitted by LeftField.

*On motion of **School Committee Member Turner**, duly seconded by **Alderman O'Neil**, it was voted to accept the report and submit it to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and Board of School Committee for informational purposes.*

Alderman O'Neil stated as you are into the programming, if there are opportunities – this is for the community – to create gym space now is important. We can't say later I wish we would have. I throw that out to the architects and programmers. If there are opportunities to create additional gym space, I hope that can be considered and can fit within the budget. I am not an architect, but I think on the back side of Hillside the stage goes from the hallway to the carpenter shop or something. For the program, we need to serve the community. It is not exclusively the school district's problem. We need to create gym space; it is an issue in the community.

Chairman O'Connell stated the spaces are being designed as we speak and there have been meetings. I was at a meeting the previous week where the principals were involved and talking about Beech Street's design. They are still at the design stage. There is nothing final to bring before somebody for approval yet. The issue of gym space was an important part of that conversation.

Alderman O'Neil stated I know that Alderman Terrio and I don't have any say in it. This is the School Board's decision unless we try to do something in a partnership later to call it a community-type space. This is the time to do it; not a change order later.

School Committee Member Soule stated I want to reinforce and let you know that is something that is being thought of. We already have two community schools with federal money for the next three or four years to make sure that there are community spaces. You can rest assured that there are people from all the schools that are being renovated and added onto whose concerns are being heard. It is also, if you think educationally, it is also where education is going because we haven't always had the community fully involved. I think that is something you can rest assured that I will be watching too. I think it is going to be important that as you talk about this, that this group has an idea so if we have thoughts, it is important for the community to hear this and know what we are thinking.

Chairman O'Connell stated to that point, a community school is greater than a gym. There are lots of spaces. The conversations of when we get to see the product before it goes to construction, these are community schools. One other thing, in the earlier conversation about the sequencing of events, besides the general model that modulars go in and kids get moved and the new construction begins, when it is completed students move out to the new construction. Whether the kids who are in modulars stay or not, that is a school-by-school issue. The scheduling of renovations throughout the school happens in a phased way. Separate from that, the opportunities during the summers for the next three years, there are spaces that can be done during summers that are only available in the summer time. It is grayed out right now and not scheduled but the idea would be to maximize those opportunities. Let's say the schools close in the summer of 2025. There might be work around the school because it is the perfect time to spend two months doing work. It is complex and fascinating to see it being done.

It depends on programming and the function of our schools and our schools being able to function, etc., while moving all these pieces. I am grateful to you for your continued great work. I'd like to recognize Josh Gagne as well who is constantly involved with this project through DPW and so many other great faces that we don't see at this meeting that are working on this every day. I was going to mention Vance, but he's had enough things said about him already.

Alderman O'Neil stated I want to end on a positive note. I've had a chance to formally tour the modular site and informally; I ate my lunch two days in a row watching them move the modulars in at Beech Street. I was fascinated by it. I sat in the parking lot and watched them move in. The team, SMMA, LeftField, DPW, Consigli, Triumph, and all the subs involved, it is one clicking project. I haven't gotten any complaints from the neighborhoods about anything which is unusual.

Chairman O'Connell stated good. Our meeting in September is going to be on the State Primary Election. So, our clerk is going to be distributing an email to each of us so we can choose a different date for the September meeting.

Alderman O'Neil asked August is still on schedule.

Chairman O'Connell stated yes.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **School Committee Member Turner**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Normand". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Clerk of Committee