

COMMITTEE ON JOINT SCHOOL BUILDINGS

June 9, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Chairman O'Connell called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Bonilla, Fajardo
School Committee Members O'Connell, Turner, Hamer

Absent: Alderman Thomas

Messrs.: Alderman O'Neil, M. Lenfest, H. Cobanoglu, A. Thomas

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

Mark Lenfest, Senior Project Manager at LeftField: The updated summary, you'll see that there's been progress made in programming at Hillside, Parkside, Southside, just a little bit remaining there, bidding, large improvement on Beech up to 75%. All other projects are 100%. Construction, you will see that Beech has started, McLaughlin, Hillside tracking 55%, and then 25% at Parkside and South Side. We are still closing out the modulars. Again, that's not construction related. That is just contract documents. So, everything is progressing within schedule.

Chairman O'Connell: Would you remind us of the dates of completion again for these projects? We know because now it's imminent, right? We have McLaughlin, that is going to be opening in September.

M. Lenfest: Correct. That'll be open for the 2026-2027 school year in September. Hillside will be for the following school year, 2027-2028.

Chairman O'Connell: Hillside will open during the February vacation.

M. Lenfest: The addition will open. And then we'll have another summer construction series and then we'll be opening that fall.

Hamdi Cobanoglu, Senior Project Manager at LeftField: Parkside, we will be completing the addition and actually for Southside as well 2027 in February and right before the school vacation week. And 2028 summer, the entire project will be completed. For Beech everything will be completed in summer of 2028. Except phase two, probably phase two will be completed by the end of that year, the end of 2028.

Chairman O'Connell: And just so people understand, Beech Street School will be completed in the summer of 2028 and will open completely as a school for around September 1. And when you're talking about phase two, what you're referring to is the remediation of the land where the current Beech Street School is, and the parks and other stuff that has to be done. I just want to revisit that for people since our first date is coming at us. After two and a half years or so, we've got McLaughlin on the horizon being complete.

Alderman Bonilla: When was phase two to be completed?

Chairman O'Connell: Beech will be open September 1, basically, of 2028. And then the work will have begun and will be going on for phase two. I don't know if we've got an exact date, do we? The plan is to have it done by the end of 2028.

M. Lenfest: Correct. It's subject to programming.

Chairman O'Connell: This project is dependent on some things from. One of the issues is the school building, the current school, once the school district declares it no longer needed for school purposes, it becomes the property of and the domain of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. The school district at that point doesn't have the right to go in as a school district and say and start demolishing the Beech Street school until those decisions are made. Now they've been made and there actually isn't a big choice about that. But that's why it can't be as a school board, we're a different board than that. We're a joint board. But the school board can't be in the position of mandating or deciding on behalf of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen this is what we're going to do because we want to be deferential to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. But the expectation is that that work will be done in the fall of 2028, barring something happening.

Alderman Bonilla: I do recall having an agreement with the Board of Mayor and Aldermen at the time, though, for the land swap of Amoskeag land. Didn't we have some sort of agreement that we would swap it?

M. Lenfest: Yes, that's correct. But again, as the chairman was stating, there's still the process. So once the programming is complete there is action that does need to happen from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen just to execute the remainder of that agreement. He's right in saying that there would be those process steps, for lack of better terminology.

Chairman O'Connell: I think it's important what you're pointing out, Alderman Bonilla, because there are legal agreements underpinning this, which don't allow for freedom of action. Right. There was an agreement reached with the Amoskeag company with regard to the land swap. And so that agreement needs to be honored. I think we have a high level of confidence that phase two will be finished in the fall of 2028. You know, we have Harvey Construction as the contractor on that project. They're not going to sit around, sitting on their hands with their equipment there for a couple of months while they're running delays. So, the expectation is to roll through it. And as we get into the middle of 2028 or earlier, we'd expect to tighten all that up.

M. Lenfest: Going into the ongoing and completed activities within the last 30 days. Again, we continue all owner architect, contractor meetings for all projects. The group one, which is Hillside and McLaughlin schools, interior and envelope construction continued. We resumed group one site work construction, the furniture fixtures and equipment, and technology meetings and procurement progressed on all four projects. Summer work schedules and move ready planning and mover procurement were all done as well. The group two schedule refinement was continuing, procurement of group two was wrapping up, group two steel detailing. Group two is Parkside and Southside schools. Group two steel detailing in the rough end of the mechanical systems and site work continued, as

well as the envelope construction. Envelope construction is the framing of the exterior walls, which then leads to the sheathing and then the start of masonry construction. So, anybody that's been by those schools has seen that work. Ongoing Beech continued procurement coordination with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, soil management coordination, Beech site improvements began.

H. Cobanoglu: I believe we started last Tuesday. We had six working days and all the materials; the site contractors started hauling off the materials to the approved facilities. Some goes to Rhode Island facilities; some stays in New Hampshire and some goes to Massachusetts. So, depending on the contamination level, all the materials go to the appropriate facilities. So, we have a couple more weeks to complete this work. We are also waiting for the New Hampshire DSS approval for the exterior of the building footprint area. Right now, we are working only within the building footprint area. And as soon as we get the approval, we will also start exterior areas. The pile contractor will start drilling piles on June 22nd. So, we have good momentum there.

Alderman Bonilla: The last time I had a conversation with our chairman and then also Alderman O'Neill about the piles at Beech, we're going to communicate to the community that we're going to start driving piles, right? What's the form of communication going to look like to the surrounding communities when we start driving piles?

H. Cobanoglu: Harvey created a website. They are updating that website weekly for the upcoming week. So that information should be there. But if not, I'll make sure it's included there.

Alderman Bonilla: I recognize we have the information on our website. I've never had a career in construction management or on being on a site, but from what I recall, the piles are going to be pretty loud. I just want to make sure that I can take whatever information you have and disseminate it, especially to my constituents.

Alderman Fajardo: Is it possible to send letters to the abutters? I know having it all on the website is obviously handy.

M. Lenfest: No, we can do community outreach. Yes, absolutely. There's a messaging board, but absolutely the abutters can be notified. Not an issue. We also did versions of piles at a couple of the other schools and we did notify those director abutters.

Alderman O'Neil: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for recognizing me, because my name was used earlier. One suggestion that was made to me from folks in the construction industry, because of the complexity, the density, you could come up with a lot of words about Beech Street, was other communities have done a once a month meeting that the residents are invited to for an update because not everybody has internet access, not everybody's on Facebook and all the social media and you send mail to addresses but you don't know if the people still live there. When I visited there pretty early on, they were dealing with some complaints from Auburn Street, if you remember, Alderman Bonilla. And there were multiple languages involved that I recall. So, a suggestion was made and maybe this has been done in other places, a once-a-month meeting. You can pick the existing Beech Street school, I'm making this up, on the second Wednesday of the month. That way nobody has an excuse to not know what's going on.

Chairman O'Connell: I think we can take that onboard. Right. We'll bring that back to the team. I know that Harvey has been made aware from the very beginning, and they've assured us of their expertise in managing community expectations, etc., but that is something that I haven't seen. And I'll make sure you get full credit, Alderman O'Neil.

Alderman O'Neil: I'm not looking for credit, just for the best way to reach out. It's very dense, with multi-unit buildings around there. There's a lot of residents that live down there.

Chairman O'Connell: And there has been ongoing communication with the residents to this point. I take your point and there's a lot of mitigations in place for this as well. And as we were told at our last meeting, the daily reports have the results, there are vibration sensors and sound sensors that capture this site. So, the project knows exactly the level of noise on this site minute by minute, all day, every day. And that will continue for the duration of the project. And the vibrations are measured on that site every minute, right through the project. That's an assurance that's assuring people, but I think it's a good suggestion to say let's have some ongoing meetings. So, let's talk about that if you guys want to bring it to Harvey for our meeting tomorrow.

M. Lenfest: We'll definitely review that. We had a lot of success when SMMA ran the neighborhood meeting series during programming. And especially at the Beech school. And they brought in interpreters, talking about the language barrier. So, we'll definitely look into that.

Alderman O'Neil: I've been working where we just drove piles, and there was a lot of pre-work done. And talking to the neighbors, this was not in Manchester, and there was monitoring going on. And some people still made sure the project knew they didn't like the vibrations. And just regarding language, Director Thomas is up there. She has staff that speaks how many languages?

Anna Thomas, Public Health Director: Seven.

Alderman O'Neil: Seven different languages; she could be of great help.

M. Lenfest: Excellent. So, jumping over to the 30 day look ahead, continuing communication in the OAC meeting process. Group one masonry and interior construction continues as well as site work, furniture fixtures and equipment, and technology procurement are ongoing. We actually executed the purchase agreement on the furniture for the McLaughlin school. And the advertisement for the technology has gone out. Summer work begins June 22nd. So last day of school is Wednesday the 17th. Teacher pack up day is the 18th and the schools start to move on the 19th and 20th. Group two procurement will be wrapping up. Group two site work continues. The envelope construction continues. Hamdi spoke about the Beech school schedule, refinement, continued procurement, and most importantly, the soil management and site improvements. The rest here is really just the ongoing coordination meetings, cost management schedule, refinement and communication with all stakeholders. The communication, I'd just like to key on that with Alderman O'Neill joining us and Alderman

Bonilla's suggestion. We will definitely look into those. As you know, our biggest stakeholders are the neighbors and the children.

Chairman O'Connell: At Parkside-Gossler, the impact on the playground there, has that started? Right now, there's around a two-week period where the playground is going to be impacted. Is that right?

H. Cobanoglu: We are waiting for the exact date from the vendor, but it will be towards the end of the month. At that point, the playground will be shut off for approximately 2 to 3 weeks. So, there will be additional rubber surfacing and relocation of some of the playground equipment.

Chairman O'Connell: I think it's important to telegraph that because we think about neighbors and when people see that playground being impacted. I want it well telegraphed that it's planned. It's going to be back as good and better than it is today because that was a newer project. And so, there's great pride in it and it'll be out of action for maybe three weeks.

M. Lenfest: We got a lot of positive input from the DPW on getting that accelerated. So, it'll be shut down for the least amount of time possible, so the kids will have it for the majority of the summer.

Chairman O'Connell: I'm glad. I know there's great care being taken with it. And I want the public to be assured.

Alderman Fajardo: Is there a plan to maybe post a sign or signage around the park with the time frame?

H. Cobanoglu: Yes, that's our plan. But the time is still TBD.

Alderman Fajardo: When the construction starts, for example, it might say it is a temporary project and it is reopening.

H. Cobanoglu: That's our plan. We also moved the futsal court to the back of Gossler and Parkside. That futsal court also will be shut down for a week because we will need to do the surfacing of the futsal court. We will also telegraph that one.

Alderman Bonilla: A recommendation is to utilize the futsal courts at the Sheehan-Basquil park in the meantime. How many futsal courts do we have in the city?

M. Lenfest: I don't know about in the city.

Alderman Bonilla: We have the futsal court you're talking about. We have another futsal court in Sheehan-Basquil. So, in the meantime, when you post about under construction, you can have a sign or post about that, and direct people to utilize the futsal court at Sheehan-Basquil because we do have one. Maybe we can talk about maintaining that one in the future. That's a conversation for another time, but we do have a futsal court available for those families on the west side to utilize it in the east side. Because we want to make sure that they have other opportunities.

M. Lenfest: We'll include that.

Chairman O'Connell: The other thing that just needs to be visited at these meetings is that this project is currently on budget and on time. And the third leg of that stool is that everybody has gone home safe every day as long as this project has gone on.

M. Lenfest: Yes, sir. And that's the next slide. As the chairman said, we are within the \$306 million budget. Here's the screenshot of the master budget cover page. The detailed budgets are included in the monthly report. This is the picture of the cover sheet for last month's invoice. This month's invoice was submitted today and will be processed for next week. We'll be including that in your updated report, I would say Monday of next week that should be available. And currently, no change to the schedules that have been shared with the group. And if you look at the very bottom of Beech Street site restoration, that's what we're calling phase two, the abatement demo happens roughly at the same time. But then the continuation is what we're calling phase two, Beech Street site restoration. And you'll see that does have a completion date of December 2028. Again, we included the links to the project websites. We encourage everybody to go to those; they're being well maintained with some excellent photos and information. And again, if anybody has any questions feel free to contact us through those websites.

Chairman O'Connell: As we come to the end of this tonight, I know there's another meeting, believe it or not, maybe not quite as important as this one, but there is another meeting coming up later this evening in the chamber. I don't know if we noted it here, but I'd like the public to be aware that as part of the payment of permits for this project, the school district from this project paid \$506,000 to the city at the beginning of June to ensure that it got into this financial year. I wish that was heralded more from on high because with all the numbers that people are going to be discussing tonight, the number that might not be mentioned is the money that comes from the school district to the city. It's more than \$2 million. There are some in our community and others that would look at this and say how is it that a city is charging the school district for permits for buildings, and potentially because of our budget process, actually borrowing money to do it for 25 years. It's kind of hard to understand, but I don't want to visit all that controversy here. I just want people to be aware of it. The most recent one was the approximately \$500,000, which was ensured that it would hit this financial year. I wish there were more cognizance taken of that. The second thing I want to say as we come to the end of this, is just the work that's been done with regard to students and students visiting these properties. A lot of work has gone into bringing students from all our schools to do tours of these schools. And if you see the reaction of these students, especially the students who have visited these buildings, they see the reality of what they're learning in the classroom and they see it going up in these buildings. I want to commend all of you, but especially our two contractors, Consigli and Harvey, for facilitating that work. It's been a pleasure to see and I know it's ongoing.

2. Monthly status and financial report for May 2026 submitted by LeftField.

*On motion of **School Committee Member Turner**, duly seconded by **School Committee Member Hamer**, 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.*

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Bonilla**, duly seconded by **Alderman Fajardo**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.



Clerk of Committee

*Meeting Start Time: 5:00PM
Meeting End Time: 5:26PM
Minutes Prepared By: Michael Intranuovo*