

Regular Session Meetings

October 19, 2020

A meeting of the Swampscott School Committee was held in virtually in Swampscott, MA commencing at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Ms. Amy OConnor, SC Chair, Ms. Suzanne Wright, Ms. Carin Marshall, Mr. John Giantis, School Committee members. Also, Present: Pamela Angelakis, Superintendent of Schools, Jean Bacon, Director of Teaching & Learning, Martha Sybert, Business Administrator, and Martha Raymond, Asst. Superintendent of Student Services. Student reps present: Myra Diaz, Tabitha Randell. Mr. Delano, School Committee was absent.

The School Committee was meeting in a virtual setting, fully remote via teleconferencing, practicing social distancing, and in accordance with the Governor's suspension of certain open meeting laws. The meeting was being recorded and broadcast live on the local cable station.

Community Announcements:

Ms. Diaz said students are excited about the start of Hybrid Learning.

Ms. Randall stated that the Enviro club was doing a beach cleanup next weekend and is planning a litter pickup event with the Cross Country team.

Ms. OConnor mentioned she was alarmed to receive her 1st COVID emergency message from the state.

SBC Final Option (Vote requested). Ms. Vivian Varbedian from LBA reviewed the project schedule. The feasibility study is almost complete, the preferred schematic will be submitted to the MSBA in November, schematic design submission in April, and town formal vote in the early fall (possible September).

Ms. Varbedian reviewed the project goals related to the four pillars (Education, Site & Traffic, Sustainability, Community).

Mr. Sherwood spoke about the town-wide traffic study in relation to student density, safety analysis, vehicle volumes, and student density. He reviewed the four sustainability goals (Energy Efficiency, Open Space & Site Resources, Interior-Environment and Wellness, Operation, Maintenance & Life Cycle).

Mr. Sherwood summarized the options that had been on the table and ruled out (I.e Hadley K-4, District 3-5). He stated the District K-4 at Stanley was the most logical, thoughtful, and economical choice. Mr. Sherwood noted that the 2 options for the K-4 at Stanley were new in the past month. Option 2 was the unanimously preferred option at last Thursday's meeting.

He walked through the schematic diagrams of Option 1 and Option 2. Mr. Sherwood reviewed some of the rationales for choosing Option 2 (i.e. 3 stories along the woods made it feel to scale, the field provides a space buffer for neighbors).

Mr. Sherwood reviewed the SBC evaluation of Option 1 and Option 2 based on the following: less imposing scale, more efficient footprint, better entry views, further from neighbors, better perimeter buffers, more open play space, better field areas, better educationally, better sustainability, better for community use, simpler vehicular flow, longer onsite queuing, less rock or fill removal, and less natural resource impacted.

Ms. OConnor asked if the back right corner as a potential EMS entrance was like the HS back entrance. Ms. Wright stated it is gated like the HS but will not be open to traffic. Mr. Sherwood spoke about students walking, and bike riders using the Forest Ave. extensions as a safe entrance. Ms. OConnor asked if the back area of the Forest Ave extension was all wooded. Mr. Sherwood noted it is all wood area. Ms. OConnor asked about the FX areas in the hallways. Mr. Sherwood explained the breakout spaces/conference rooms.

Mr. Giantis asked about the rooftop deck and safety. Mr. Sherwood mentioned that some of the visited elementary schools had them. There would be very good barriers for safety which they have dealt with previously. Mr. Giantis asked about the K-4 play areas. Mr. Sherwood said there may be some swings but also adaptive and accessible pieces will be in the areas which are easily accessed.

Ms. Marshall said she was so impressed and glad that we looked at the site in a different way.

Ms. OConnor asked about the next steps and what is needed from the SC. Ms. Varbedian said the SC could support people shifting to the idea of a District-wide versus smaller schools, continue to get the message out and support increased busing beyond 2-miles. Mr. Sherwood spoke about the study which showed the 1-mile radius was a sweet spot. He stated that five buses would support the MS and Elementary with separate runs which would lessen cars to both schools by a third. Mr. Sherwood stated the obstacles were the idea of neighborhood schools and traffic.

Ms. Marshall thanked Ms. Wright for such a great job representing the SC.

Motion: Ms. Wright made the motion to accept the recommendation of the School Building Committee's vote to forward the District-wide K-4, option 2 at the Stanley site, to the MSBA and seconded by Ms. Marshall.

Ms. OConnor read a statement from Mr. Delano in support of the site.

Mr. Giantis acknowledged the extensive work by the SBC and architects. He stated that his personal preference was the Hadley 3-5 along with his rationale. Mr. Giantis mentioned that the great majority of people he spoke to wanted a Hadley option. He said that he heard the size of Stanley was overwhelming, busing concerns, and costs. Mr. Giantis mentioned that he was not sure the option would pass a town wide vote.

Ms. Marshall understands that people like the Hadley 3-5 option. She said she liked it herself as it solved some problems but that it did not solve enough of them. Ms. Marshall said she did not feel Swampscott could afford to build two buildings.

Ms. Wright added that she supports the K-4 option. She felt the deficits in the Hadley 3-5 option had been flushed out. She discussed the cost of building another building if they built the Hadley 3-5 option.

Ms. OConnor said as a parent and taxpayer she was impressed with the process and amount of community engagement. She stated that the level of partnership with community boards/committees tipped the scale for her toward the District-wide K-4. She tipped her hat to Ms. Wright and the team.

Ms. Wright said it is a unifying building and they have time to still work on it further.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 3 to 1 via roll call vote. Ms. Wright-yes, Ms. Marshall-yes, Mr. Giantis-no, Ms. OConnor-yes.

Superintendent Update: Ms. Angelakis' update is based on a few conversations with Ms. OConnor. She discussed the perception of live streaming. She explained live streaming would mean an investment in multiple monitors and cameras that move with the teacher. Ms. Angelakis stated that what we are calling live streaming is out of their wheelhouse right now. However, the Leadership team is looking into piloting live Zoom. There are teachers that have volunteered for the pilot (HS-14, MS- Mr. Calichman is working with Math teachers, Elementary-2). Ms. Angelakis noted that it is hard to monitor kids at home when the teacher is doing lessons. The Pilot will permit them to poke holes in the process.

Ms. Angelakis said there are still facility issues. Mr. Kasper has worked countless hours with mechanical engineers but there are still some unknowns.

Ms. Angelakis mentioned Swampscott COVID-19 numbers are now in the green and may likely be in yellow by the end of the week. She posed whether we should go to Hybrid learning on 10/26 or wait. Ms. Angelakis asked if they have the SC support to stay with the 9/16 & 10/5 Cohorts if we go red.

Ms. Mulcahy said the numbers are alarming and trending upward. She stressed having SC support and having conversations about what to do if the numbers keep climbing. She displayed the Swampscott trend from the Board of Health.

Ms. Wright gave her support but would like to see an effort to bring K-2 students in and go forward with the live Zoom pilot.

Ms. OConnor asked what was behind the numbers. Ms. Mulcahy responded that we do not have the specifics (ie. one family, nursing home).

Ms. OConnor agrees with Ms. Wright that if the data shows we need to slow down she would not argue. But she would encourage rather than all or nothing to bring in smaller cohorts.

Ms. Marshall stated that she thought we were following the CDC & MA Dept of Health guidelines for Hybrid. They recommend some in person if the numbers are not in the red. Ms. Angelakis thought the 3-week in red suggestion was from DESE, not DPH. Ms. Raymond said the 3-weeks of red was a DESE recommendation.

Ms. Wright mentioned following the regulations and going with the data and guidance.

Ms. OConnor said that it would not be a surprise if the kids were back and someone tested positive but that is not a reason to go remote. She stated that it is a combination of many data points.

Sub Committee:

Policy EBC-S - Supplemental:

- JLCB – Inoculations of Students-Ms. Wright noted there were no changes to the policy.
- EBC-FA – Face Covering & Other Personal Protective Equipment-Ms. Wright read the update.

Motion: It was moved by Ms. OConnor to approve the EBC-FA policy with the edits and seconded by Ms. Marshall.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 4 to 0 via roll call vote.

Motion: It was moved by Ms. Marshall to accept the EBC-S policy and seconded by Ms. Wright.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 4 to 0 via roll call vote.

Chair:

SC Voting Delegate & Alternate Voting Delegate for MASC (Vote requested). Ms. OConnor explained the purpose of the official delegate was for the school committee to have a vote at the annual business meeting of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

Ms. OConnor stated that she is not sure we have ever sent delegates. She asked if anyone had planned to attend. She nominated Ms. Marshall as the delegate if she chooses to attend. There was no alternate delegate assigned.

Motion: It was moved by Ms. Wright to accept Ms. Marshall as the SC MASC delegate and seconded by Ms. Marshall.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 4 to 0 via roll call vote.

Next meeting to be held on October 28, 2020

Adjournment

Motion: At 8:53 p.m. It was moved by Ms. Wright to accept the motion to adjourn & seconded by Mr. Giantis.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 4 to 0 via roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela R.H. Angelakis, M.A., M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
/dmm

Date: October 29, 2020

Supporting Documentation:

 MASC Delegate_Form_2020_updated.pdf 

 Policy EBC-Supplemental approved 19-Oct-2020.pdf 
