

Essex School Building Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: October 22, 2024

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Memorial School

A. Call to Order

7:15 PM

B. Public Comment - No public comment

C. Business Meeting

1) New Business

No new business was introduced at this time.

2) Continued Business

Debrief of Memorial Elementary Building Tour

- The committee reflected on key takeaways from the building tour prior to the meeting.
- Discussion focused on how the Memorial Elementary School design might inform the Essex project, including:
 - Energy efficiency measures.
 - Sustainability efforts and materials selection.
 - Flexibility of classroom and common space design.

Update on Design Enrollment Projection from MSBA

- The committee reviewed updated enrollment projections in light of new housing developments.
- The Van Wyck property development now projects up to 146 bedrooms, which may impact future student population.
- The committee agreed to revisit enrollment projections with the MSBA to ensure that the new data is reflected accurately.
- Lessons from past projects were discussed, particularly the need for flexibility in classroom design to accommodate potential enrollment fluctuations.

Next Steps and Estimated Timeline in the MSBA Process

- The committee reaffirmed its commitment to the MSBA process and discussed the anticipated timeline:
 - **OPM Selection Process:**
 - Formation of a subcommittee at the next meeting.
 - Public advertisement of the RFS for OPM selection in January.
 - Shortlisting firms for interviews in early February.
 - Selection and contract approval by March.
 - **Design Selection Process:**

- Once the OPM is in place, the designer selection process will begin.
- Anticipated timeline leads to schematic design approval by **2027**.

Additional Discussion Items

- **Feasibility Study on a Combined Elementary School**
 - The committee discussed the possibility of merging Essex and Manchester elementary schools.
 - While a feasibility study is necessary, the MSBA process requires exploring multiple options before a decision can be made.
- **Pre-K Expansion Considerations**
 - The committee acknowledged that potential state mandates for universal pre-K could significantly impact future space planning.

Action Items

- Review and update enrollment projections in light of new housing developments.
- Finalize and approve the OPM selection timeline at the next meeting.
- Committee members to express interest in joining the OPM selection subcommittee before the next meeting.
- Next meeting scheduled for: November 26, 2024, to discuss OPM selection and MSBA updates.

E. Adjournment

8:00 PM.