

EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MA
Easton School Planning Committee Meeting Minutes
August 16, 2017

Minutes of School Planning Meeting, August 16, 2017, 50 Oliver Street convened at 7:00 PM. Present: Dr. Lisha Cabral, David Twombly, Ann Weintrob, Ben Hampton, Thomas Brussard, Caroline O'Neill, Connor Read, Jane Martin, Ken Carlson, and Carly Hudson.

- I. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
- II. Minutes from Tuesday, June 27, 2017 were approved on a motion by Thomas Brussard with a second by Ben Hampton.
- III. Tour Recap
The team highlighted the Primary School Tours:
 - We need to be certain we communicate the work of this committee to staff and focus on our understanding of what we see as critical elements of our schools from the “building level” perspective.
 - We need to have a complete understanding of the opportunity for efficiencies that are presented by this project.
 - Our continued language must differentiate between “our schools” and the “the buildings”. Our current facilities were never designed to meet the educational requirements of today; we need to have optimal spaces for people to work and in today’s buildings, we don’t have that space.
 - Our CPR (Coordinated Program Review) has cited several areas such as Occupational Therapy and ELL which will support our request with the MSBA.
- IV. Enrollment Projections
Dr. Cabral distributed enrollment projections for the District. She explained the data included in the projections and asked all team members to review this material and provide her with feedback, questions, and corrections. Overcrowding and the impact that overcrowding has on programming, is the #1 indicator which the MSBA considers when evaluating a project. There were several factors which the committee discussed in relationship to our enrollment numbers:
 - Our housing stock is diversifying.
 - We continue to have programmatic changes in our schools.
 - Birth rate during the recession has been lower but this may change as economy improves.
 - Our capacity at the Pre-K and K level prohibits our ability to grow these programs. These programs can be a big draw for families who are considering Easton as a place to relocate.
- V. NEXT MSBA meeting is scheduled for September 14th, 2017. This meeting will review our enrollment projections and our current maintenance plan. Dr. Cabral, Theresa Skinner, David Twombly, and Stephanie Danielson will attend this meeting.

- VI. Town Meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2017. Connor Read indicated that the warrant will open September 25th and remain open until mid-October. Connor explained that there was a mitigation payment from Avalon Bay made for their new facility in Easton. This payment was set aside by the Town for the specific purpose of the feasibility study costs related to this project. However, Town Meeting will still need to approve this appropriation. The committee discussed the importance of attendees at Town Meeting to approve this article. Committee will make formal presentations to the BOS and the Finance Committee regarding the project and associated warrant article. The MSBA provides guidance on the language for this article. Several options were discussed related to more general outreach on this issue:
- PAC Sessions
 - Op Ed signed by the Committee
 - Press Releases by Committee
 - Organizations that Support our Schools
- VII. Team agreed that any feedback/questions which are received through the community should be brought back to the group. It is important that we are all delivering the same message about the project, its process, and progress to the entire community. To that end, the committee has started an on-going list of Action Items and Messaging Items (attached to these minutes) which will be updated and referenced on an on-going basis.
- VIII. We have submitted our four possible project scenarios to the MSBA. Further configuration work, which includes design, layout, programming, grade level configurations, etc. is done in detail during the feasibility phase. The architects and project manager will provide guidance and the committee agreed to design a way (focus groups, as an example) to ensure we engage the staff, and the community and get all viewpoints and filters as we move to final design.
- IX. A shared Google Drive has been set up for this committee. Committee members should provide Lynn Souza with their email information so that they can be invited to join the meeting. It was confirmed that Open Meeting Law prevents committee members who cannot be present for meetings from conference call participation.
- X. The Committee agreed to hold regular standing meetings on the third Wednesday of every month at 6:00 PM. The next meeting will be held on September 20, 2017. The meeting adjourned at 8:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Martin

Chair School Planning Committee

SCHOOL PLANNING COMMITTEE

ON-GOING ACTION ITEMS

Date Entered	Description of Action Item	Responsible	Status
8/16/17	Provide Lisha with Feedback on Enrollment Information	Committee Members	
8/16/17	Develop Committee Presentation for BOS and Finance Committee with Language for Warrant Article	Ben, Connor, David T., Lisha	
8/16/17	Develop a 2 or 3 minute video on Project (need, process and status) – Reach out to ECAT	Becky	
8/16/17	Develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure attendance and support at Town Meeting	Committee	

SCHOOL PLANNING COMMITTEE

THE MESSAGING

8/16/17 Meeting

- It is important to elevate the quality of the facilities to match the quality of education our children are receiving in our primary schools.
- Our goal is to design facilities that remove the limits which are presented because of the current environment.
- It will be critical to maintain the characteristics of small learning environments; the small and intimate learning communities support the culture within our primary schools.
- We are not trying to fix our schools, we are trying to fix the buildings.
- Our primary school buildings continue to age and the costs of repairing them, within even improving programming, is very expensive.
- Our goal will be to look for a variety of input which includes cross section from our staff, parent and Easton community as we move to detailed design configuration.