

CABOT SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE (CSBC) + DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC)				MEETING MINUTES	
Newton Education Center, Room 210			APPROVED 9/13/16		
April 5, 2016					
6:00PM					
ATTENDEES:					
NAME	ASSOC.	PRESENT	NAME	ASSOC.	PRESENT
Margaret Albright	CSBC	Y	Peter Barrer	DRC	N
Susan Albright	CSBC	Y	Arthur Cohen	DRC	Y
Mary Lou DiBella	CSBC	Y	William Eldredge	DRC	N
Diana Fisher Gomberg	CSBC	Y	Robert A. Franchi	DRC	N
David Fleishman	CSBC	N	Tom Gloria	DRC	Y
Ruthanne Fuller	CSBC	Y	James Freas	DRC	N
Sandra Guryan	CSBC	Y	Jonathan Kantar	DRC	N
Matt Hills	CSBC	N	Andrea Kelley	DRC	N
Maureen Lemieux	CSBC	N	Ellen S. Light	DRC	Y
Joshua Morse	CSBC	Y	Marc Resnick	DRC	N
Emily Norton	CSBC	Y	Scott Ross	DRC	Y
Cynthia Paris Jeffries	CSBC	N	Steven Siegel	DRC	N
Angela Pitter-Wright	CSBC	Y	Eve Tapper	DRC	N
Nicholas Read	CSBC	N	Deb Crossley	DRC	N
Andrea Steenstrup	CSBC	Y			
Setti Warren	CSBC	N	Jeffery Luxenberg	NV5	Y
Karen Wasserman	CSBC	Y	Tom Murphy	NV5	Y
Dori Zaleznik	CSBC	N	Melissa Gagnon	NV5	Y
			Donna DiNisco	DDP	Y
Michael Cronin	NPS	Y	Leno Filippi	DDP	Y
Julie Kirrane	NPS	Y	Craig DiCarlo	DDP	Y
Ouida Young	ACS	Y			
Alex Valcarce	NPB	Y	Katy Max Holmes	CITY PLANNING	N

NV5 called the meeting to order at 6:02PM.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion: J. Morse moved to approve the meeting minutes from the march 17, 2016 Cabot SBC meeting. D. Fisher Gomberg seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval.

2. Project Update

Newton Public Buildings provided introductory remarks and noted that whereas updated slides were recently presented to the DRT and the DRC, the plan is to present only new slides that compare all the options and not to present the entire slide show unless there is a request to do so.

Design Update

The design team provided a brief overview of the options that have been developed since the last CSBC+DRC meeting on March 17. Four (4) different schemes with regard to the placement of the gym were presented:

- Option 4.0 is the baseline option
- Option 4.1 moves the gym 10' forward, toward Cabot Street
- Option 4.2 moves the gym 20' forward, closer to Cabot Street; with this option, the lobby would need to be extended.
- Option 4.3 positions the gym in the forefront of the existing building
- Option 4.4 rotates the gym 90 degrees. This option has some advantages in terms of opening up the view of the park from Cabot Street. The connection to the lobby would need to be worked out.

DRC Report

The following points were noted by the DRC:

- a. E. Light and A. Cohen presented comments from the DRC meeting on March 23. With regard to the options 4.1, 4.2 and 4.4 that move the gym 10' or 20' or rotates the gym 90 degrees, there will be an impact to the neighbor's views of Cabot Park from Cabot Street as well as to the historic façade from Cabot Park. For all options, the link to the existing building will need to be studied.
- b. At the DRC meeting, a straw vote revealed that the Committee was in favor of options 4.0 (baseline) or 4.1 (moving 10' closer to Cabot Street) which would keep the gym back from Cabot Street and create more of a plaza area.
- c. There was some concern noted about shadowing the front entry/plaza if the gym were to move further towards Cabot.

The following points were noted by J. Morse, Newton Public Buildings Department:

- a. Per meeting with the DRT, the DRT appreciates the benefits of options 4.0 and 4.1 and if there is a way to keep the broad face facing the park, that would be preferred.
- b. The Cabot project was expected to be presented to the Newton Historic Commission on April 28 for review. Initial input from the Senior Planner indicated Option 4.0 was likely to be preferred.
- c. This is not Site Plan Approval. The City is looking for direction tonight to narrow down the design options. Without a decision tonight, the overall schedule, including the Schematic Design submission to the MSBA (scheduled for June 7), will be impacted.

- d. The design team will continue to look at configurations of the link at the east side of the existing building.
- e. The design team will explore ways to address the height of the gym. Mechanical systems may contribute to lowering the overall height.

3. Public Comment

The following points/questions were noted by members from the Community:

- a. The current schemes do not seem to give proper respect to the historic aspect of the building. Option 4.4 shows most of the historic façade.
- b. Pleased about the circulation around the site. Although the historic part of the existing school is being saved, the two options which seem to be the most favored are equally bad. The gym does not have to obscure the historic part of the building. It was suggested that the gym could move northward to relieve blocking the most historic corner of the building.
- c. The question was asked whether the team revisited the design since the acquisition of the Potter property. NPB noted that the acquisition offered a great opportunity to improve site circulation although given a culvert with a substantial amount of water flow passes under that portion of the site, it is not feasible to build above.
- d. The question was asked whether the gym massing could be rotated at an angle which would open up the plaza as well as the view to the park for some of the Cabot Street neighbors.
- e. A neighbor on Bridges believes that closing Parkview is a mistake. There is no reason to limit traffic flow on off-school hours. The neighborhood is very tight and Bridges needs to remain one way.
- f. A neighbor noted that the site circulation works very well, although the gym is in the wrong location and should be restudied. The front of the building should face the bus and parent drop off.
- g. A resident on Bridges appreciated the traffic circulation alterations and preferred Option 4.0
- h. A resident on Blake liked Concepts 4.1 or 4.15 as striking a balance between the massing on Cabot Street and the views from East Side Parkway.
- i. A resident thanked the Cabot SBC and DRC for their work and noted her appreciation for proposing closing of Parkview, which she considered essential.
- j. An additional 39 signatures were collected, resulting in a total of 279 signatures in favor of closing Parkview.
- k. A neighbor whose kids attended Cabot noted that Parkview should be thought of as a 24/7 street. She noted that there are currently very few controls in off-school hours and supported closing Parkview.
- l. The question was asked about lowering the height of the gym. NPB noted that all possible options with regard to height relative roof structure, shape and mechanical systems will be evaluated.

- m. A representative from Safe Routes to School noted that she is very pleased with the plan and that connecting the park to the school is absolutely essential.

The design team presented slides showing alternatives to the gymnasium height and massing. Images were shown of sections with trusses and with AHUs inside the gym as an alternative to AHU placement on the roof which would be a significant obstruction from the historic components of the existing building. A. Cohen noted that multiple smaller RTUs may not have as big of an impact to the view, compared with one or two larger units. Implications of various sizes and whether the units are placed inside or outside will need to be studied. DDP noted that multiple units may incrementally increase cost.

An image was presented showing the gym lowered into the ground by 30.” E. Light spoke out against depressing the gym floor and reminded the committees that the gym floor in the old Angier School needed to be replaced repeatedly due to water damage.

4. SBC/DRC Comment

D. Zaleznik inquired about design options for the exterior of the gym to minimize the “big box” look and feel.

J. Morse noted that the peak shot for NCAA basketball is at 18 feet high and believes there is opportunity to work with the floor to ceiling height. High School standards recommend 23’-24’ ceiling height. S. Albright noted that some basic research on her part had indicated a preferred range of 18-22 feet in height. The question was also asked whether the height of the connector can be reduced if the height of the gym is decreased. L. DiBella noted that the tallest activity in the gym is “ropes” and sees little loss in program in lowering the overall height. S. Guryan noted that it might be appealing to lower the gym height.

R. Fuller stated that the Committee had looked at many design options and weighed those against the project goals and that she was comfortable with the decisions that the Committee had made. She supported Concept 4.1 or a variation with further review of reducing the gym height. S. Albright noted that sufficient time was not spent in studying alternate locations for the gym subsequent to the acquisition of the Potter property. S. Ross inquired whether there is any possibility to further study the gym location.

J. Morse explained that the building cannot be over the culvert (which is below the Potter property), as 25% of the City’s storm water flows through the culvert. Aside from the culvert, if the gym were to be placed at the Potter location, light would be blocked to the cafeteria as well as to several classrooms and emergency access around the school would be blocked. D. Zaleznik noted that at this time it is not appropriate to go back and relook at a new gym location. The project team needs to be mindful of MSBA deadlines.

MOTION: M. Albright moved, seconded by A. Steenstrup, to agree to allow the designers to move forward with the design somewhere within the 4.0 and 4.15 range of options. R. Fuller added that the plans will continue to be refined and community input will continue to be sought.

Vote: 11 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention (S. Albright).

5. Other Business

Over the next few months, the design team will work to prepare the cost estimate set of documents which will include plans and elevations, which are required for the Schematic Design submission to the MSBA on June 7. The next CSBC/DRC meeting is scheduled for May 5 at 6:00PM.

6. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:28PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Gagnon
NV5

[End of 04/05/16 Meeting Minutes]