

**BERKSHIRE HILLS REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Great Barrington

Stockbridge

West Stockbridge

**MONUMENT MOUNTAIN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE (SBC) MEETING**

**In-Person/Virtual**

January 22, 2025 – 5:30 PM

Virtual Location: (Public attendance) \* Zoom (details provided on meeting agenda)

**Attendees:** Peter Dillon (left at 6:45 PM), Sarah Bourla, Steve Soule (virtual), Dan Bailly, Jason St.Peter, Steve Bannon, Bill Fields (virtual), Sharron Harrison, Steve Boyd, Diane Signer, Christopher Barnes, Steve Shatz

**Absent:** Eric Gabriel, Ananda Timpane, Ian Brown, Kara Staunton Shron, Robert Putnam, Jamie Goldenberg, Kate Van Olst, Lily Haskins-Vaughn

**Project Team Attendees:** John Benzinger, Nick Lobik, Victoria Clifford (virtual) – Skanska, Donna DiNisco, Jeff Oxisdad, Jim Shuttleworth – DiNisco, Andrew Corcoran – WRA

**Community Attendees (virtual):** James – Great Barrington, Steve Izikson, The NEWSletter

**1. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- Motion to approve meeting minutes of 12/4/2025 and 12/17/2025 (Part 2).
  - Motion: Steve Shatz
  - Second: Steve Bannon
- Motion unanimously approved

**2. Skanska update**

- Nick Lobik, Skanska, gave an overview of the schedule
- 1/29/2025: FAQ Meeting – required MSBA meeting to review PSR before board approval to move into Schematic Design
- 2/20/2025: MSBA Board Meeting (formal approval into SD phase)
- SD estimates due mid-May
- SD submission due to MSBA in June
- Final MSBA contribution/tax impact to be known end of August

**3. Design Update**

- Site design subcommittee recap:
  - Reviewed proposed site plan and provided feedback
  - Overview of input received:
    - Overall pleased with the initial layout of the site
    - Consider looking at organization of the drop-off area to bring students closer to the entrance

- Program connection to the lower level patio area
  - Embrace the site for teaching opportunities
  - Ensure the site design works in harmony and takes advantage of the soil conditions
  - Use native plants for landscaping
  - Continue to explore ways to connect the experience from within the building to the outdoors
  - Consider relocating the elevator to be more centralized for all occupants
- o Second meeting date to be confirmed by Skanska
- Sustainability subcommittee recap:
  - o Met to review and make recommendation on the Mechanical System
  - o Input received:
    - Eliminate Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) system from further consideration
    - Ground Source Heat Pump (GSHP aka geothermal) is a long-term investment
    - Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) is attractive due to its initial cost
  - o
  - o Dan Bailey reported that the group is recommending the following ranking for the project mechanical systems based on value of investment:
    - 1st: GSHP
    - 2nd: VRF
    - 3rd: ASHP (or eliminate)
  - o The committee discussed geothermal vs. air source heat pumps, pros and cons presented by the design team
  - o Skanska recommended the committee make a motion to approve geothermal test well operation for \$90k, to be funded from the “environmental & site” cost code of project budget, to be scheduled for February break
  - o Steve Boyd asked what will happen to the test if it performs poorly and we go with VRF.
    - Donna: It would stay in place and not be operated.
  - o Diane Singer: are there any environmental concerns with the wells and having them beneath a playing field?
    - Donna: None because they are close loop.
  - o Steve Boyd: are the wells shallow?
    - 500 feet, potentially deeper ~600 feet
  - o Peter Dillon: what is worst case scenario?
    - Donna: Due to high water table, water could flood the well – connectivity might not be suitable or too costly to manage the water
  - o Steve Boyd: if we hit a wall on geothermal after project approval, can we switch to VRF?
    - Donna: It would require a re-design
  - o Dan Bailey: stressed the importance of communicating the value of geothermal to the community:
    - VRF you are reliant on nation grid for power source, geothermal you are your own power source
    - Potential tax incentives
  - o Steve Shatz – we have the opportunity to be off the grid and not reliant on fossil fuels, which is what the future of our community deserves
  - o Bill fields – would recommend ground source for 3 reasons:
    - Lowest energy costs
    - Highest life expectancy
    - Would be able to service this on our own than rely on subcontractors for service

- o Dan Bailey moved to approve funding to test well drilling with the understanding that if it is favorable we will move forward with GSHP. Steve Bannon seconded the motion:
- o Roll Call:
  - Peter Dillon – yes
  - Sarah Bourla – yes
  - Steve Soule (virtual) – yes
  - Dan Bailly – yes
  - Jason St. Peter – yes
  - Steve Bannon – yes
  - Bill Fields (virtual) – yes
  - Sharron Harrison – yes
  - Steve Boyd – no
  - Diane Signer – yes
  - Christopher Barnes – yes
  - Steve Shatz- – yes
- o The motion passed, not unanimously
- o Skanska/Design team to report back on well results end of February
- o Peter asked Steve Boyd what would be his first choice for the mechanical system?
  - Steve Boyd clarified his apprehension is the grouping of the vote not the system and he would feel more comfortable approving funding the GSH after knowing the test well results. However, supports the committee.
  - Sarah Bourla commented that is where her apprehension was as well.
- o Other comments from the subcommittee:
  - Consider decisions being made based upon recent climate events (i.e. drought, fires, etc.)
  - Consideration of wind power
- CM vs. DBB
  - o Skanska/Design team recommended the SBC vote on preferred construction delivery method and asked the SBC to vote on the preferred delivery method. Skanska and DiNisco recommended Design-Bid-Build (DBB) due to cost savings and confidence in DiNisco's construction documents
  - o Steve Boyd asked if we will get the same quality of bidders in DBB vs CM?
    - Pre-qualify bidders will ensure all those invited to bid are qualified
    - Nick that Skanska has been in contact with contractors and feels comfortable that we have at least 3 per trade interested in bidding
  - o Dan Bailey asked what the difference for Skanska in managing a CM-at-Risk firm and a DBB General Contractor.
    - Nick: Process is similar but the timing of when we bring them on is different, CM-at-risk you have more pre-con services and early coordination. In either delivery method, Skanska is providing on site clerks of the works services.
  - o Dan: where would the committee have most input in the construction process?
    - Nick: Similar amount is allowed, but the timing is difference
  - o Diane: is there a difference in where the workers come from?
    - Similar bidder pool for both – public work, filed sub bidders need to be DCAMM certified and pre-qualified
    - The District could make local work % a requirement but there is a very small pool of contractors who are DCAMM certified Berkshire count, so it could limit your bidder pool quite a bit
    - Diane and Steve Bannon spoke to the community wanting to see local workforce hired

- Bill Fields noted this came up in community forums from the last project – during that process, the committee spoke to local contractors, and they did not want to go through the process of being DCAMM certified
- Peter Dillon left at 6:35 PM
  - Steve Boyd expressed his personal opinion that he felt the quality of bidders is less on DBB and that there is no flexibility on adding alternates
  - Nick Lobik added that there is no longer a 2% reimbursement incentive from MSBA to go CM-at-Risk, it is a \$9M premium for CM-at-Risk
  - Diane – are you building the same building either way?
    - Yes. The value ad is the early pre-con services, with the potential to get money back at the end, staffing may be better on-site. CM more suited for more complex projects where you need more coordination early on.
  - **Sharon Harrison made a motion to proceed with Design-Bid-Build as the construction delivery methodology. Steve Bannon seconded the motion.**
    - Peter Dillon – absent
    - Sarah Bourla – yes
    - Steve Soule (virtual) – yes
    - Dan Bailly – yes
    - Jason St.Peter – yes
    - Steve Bannon – yes
    - Bill Fields (virtual) – yes
    - Sharron Harrison – yes
    - Steve Boyd – no
    - Diane Signer – yes
    - Christopher Barnes – yes
    - Steve Shatz- – yes
  - **The motion passed unanimously**
- Review of upcoming meetings
  - January 29 – MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee Meeting
  - Week of January 27th MassSave Meeting to discuss program (tentative)
  - Week of February 3rd Safety/Security Meeting
  - February 4th @ 2pm Sustainability Subcommittee Meeting (LEED Scorecard)
  - Week of February 4th Site Design Subcommittee Meeting
  - Week of February 4th Exterior Design Subcommittee Meeting Motion to remove 2 public committee

#### **New Business**

- **Motion to amend the SBC membership to remove inactive members: Jamie Goldenberg and Kate Van Olst.**
  - Motion: Steve Bannon
  - Second: Dan Bailly
- **Motion passed unanimously**

**Meeting adjourned at adjourned 6:57 PM**