

BERKSHIRE HILLS REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Great Barrington Stockbridge West Stockbridge
MONUMENT MOUNTAIN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE (SBC) MEETING
In-Person/Virtual

April 9, 2025 – 5:30 PM

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

Attendees: Peter Dillon, Steve Bannon, Sarah Bourla, Steve Soule, Dan Bailly, Jason St. Bill Fields, Sharron Harrison, Steve Boyd (virtual), Christopher Barnes, Kara Staunton Shron (virtual), Diane Signer, Ananda Timpane (virtual), Anthony (Andy) Troiano (joined at 5:50 PM), Eri Gabriel, Steve Shatz

Absent: Ian Brown, Lily Haskins-Vaughn

Project Team Attendees: John Benzinger, Nick Lobik, Victoria Clifford (virtual) – Skanska, Donna DiNisco (virtual), Jeff Oxisdad, Jim Shuttleworth (virtual), Katherine Brooks (virtual) – DiNisco, Andrew Jonic – WRA, Bruce Fairless (virtual) – GZA, John Knauft (WRA) virtual

Community Attendees (virtual): NEWSletter, Ben Roland, Sheela Clary

Call to order 5:30 PM

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- **Motion to approve meeting minutes of 2/12/2025**
 - o **Motion: Steve Shatz**
 - o **Second: Sharon**
 - o **Dan Bailey abstained**
 - o **Motion unanimously approved**

2. Communications

- Recap of 4/1 Forum and 6/16 Forum Planning:
 - o 4/1 forum was advertised on Facebook, local radio and local cable, press release and media coverage – however, still poorly attended
 - o Group discussed poor attendance at April forum and how to increase interest in next forum
 - o One take away from the 4/1 forum was to send a postcard to all residents with details of the next forum
 - Skanska reported that they have a quote of \$2,600 for a single post card mailing to all residents in the three-town district – would recommend we approve a printing/mailing for the June 16th forum and a future forum in the Fall.
 - o Bill Fields expressed that weekday nights are challenging for families. He recommended the following: Saturday forum, provide a bus that stops at the senior center, BigY, Price Chopper, Community Center, and offer refreshments and coffee.
 - o Steve Boyd added that the Vote Yes Monument campaign group is registered and will begin outreach this summer. Steve recommended the project and SBC continue to focus on presenting all project information and facts – and the campaign group can be more strategic on getting the word out. Steve Boyd asked committee members to consider volunteering for campaign efforts.
 - o **Steve Shatz moved to spend up to \$3,000 on two postcard mailings.**
 - **Seconded by Bill Fields.**
 - **Motion passed unanimously**

3. Test Well Update

- The design team gave an update on the test well results:
 - o Some soil challenges resulting in a well depth of 450' (vs 500' at PSR) resulting in slightly less cost
 - o Additional casing was required to support the well (~ 50' more) resulting in slightly more cost
 - o Based upon the thermal properties of the well, the project will require approximately 110 wells (vs 116 wells at PSR)
- Cost implications:
 - o On-budget from PSR. The increase in casing is offset by the shallower well depth and the reduction in the quantity of wells.

4. Mechanical System

- Steve Soule reported that he reviewed the Wahconah HVAC system with Skanska and DiNisco on 4/1
- Remaining systems to be decided:
 - o Fan Coil Units (FCU) vs.
 - o Active Chilled Beams (ACB)
- Cost difference couple 100k – chilled beams were more upfront cost but require less maintenance
- Steve Soule noted a few downsides to chilled beams:
 - o Can't isolate zones – we would want that capability if renting out spaces after school hours
 - o Second filter MERV 13 filter – to get that effect would need to change filter every few days, unrealistic
- Steve noted that the gym, cafeteria, and auditorium will be on its own
- Steve Boyd asked if operating costs been considered – and added that all-electric buildings are more expensive to run
 - o \$39k to run per year
- Eric noted that we would probably have more spaces, especially vocational spaces, rented out in the new building and that it seems beneficial to be able to change out filters during flu season. Fan coil there is an additional point of filtration.
- Peter – in the event of forest fires, there is a good argument for a secondary filter in the fan coil option. Peter asked if we looked into UV technology for virus mitigation
 - o No, they are incredibly expensive
- Kara – what's the longevity of the system?
 - o Both the same – will last the life of the building and is a good candidate for compatibility with future technology
- Steve Soule – was there a reason Wahconah had three distribution handles
 - o Fan coils used in corridors because of humidity control
 - o Unsure their specific design rationale
- **Dan Bailey made a motion to proceed with fan coil units (FCU) as the mechanical system.**
 - o **Seconded by Bill Fields.**
 - o **Discussion: Eric noted that there is higher maintenance, but more payoff in the long run. Increased filtration is positive especially for cold/flu season,**
 - o **Peter asked if it makes sense for a hybrid system, with chilled beams in the auditorium and gym.**
 - **Jeff clarified that the auditorium and gym will have forced air.**
 - o **Motion passed unanimously**

4. Budget Update

- Additional \$6M granted by the MSBA – reimbursement rate updated from 45.52% to 49.83%.
- Made possible by Peter asking for the MSAB to review of the reimbursement rate
- Other budget updates:
 - o Includes MSBA excluding Peter Bridge Resilient Youth in Transition (BRYT) program for reimbursement (still pending). Approx \$795k added to local share.
 - o Includes 4% Green School
 - o incentive points (maximum)
 - o Includes MassSave Incentive (\$1.5M)

	January 2025 Selection of D-B-B GSHP + ACB	March 2025 Selection of D-B-B GSHP + ACB
Contracting Method	Design-Bid-Build (149)	Design-Bid-Build (149)
Total Construction	\$127,425,000	\$127,425,000
Soft Costs	\$27,027,000	\$27,027,000
Total Project Costs	\$154,452,000	\$154,452,000
MSBA Reimbursement*	(\$53,383,000)	(\$59,300,000)
MassSave Incentives (Estimated based on LCCA)	(\$1,585,000)	(\$1,585,000)
Total Local Share	\$99,484,000	\$93,567,000
Potential IRA Incentive (Est. based on LCCA)	(\$5,000,000)	(\$5,000,000)

- MSBA corrected the base reimbursement to 49.83% (45.52%)
- Includes MSBA excluding BRYT program for reimbursement (still pending)
- Includes 4% Green School incentive points (maximum)
- Includes MassSave Incentive (signed MOU)

- MCEC Grant
 - o Peter and Steve Soule attended a informational meeting- would require a application, may be able to get an additional \$5M in grant money for the project.
 - o Unclear if \$5M off additional or a grant for a new sustainable feature like solar.
 - o Only available to communities with students under 40% poverty – we are 43%.
 - o Will MSBA take away from their grant?
 - No
 - o Money might not be there next year – working on applying now
- Steve Boyd asked if we have a percentage of raw material coming from overseas?
 - o Not at this point, we can look at that potentially with the SD package

4. Design Update

- Floor plans:
 - o Refinements to FF&E, but no big plan updates
 - o Art classrooms and early childhood flipped to give art classroom connection to outdoors, and childhood connection to parking and play space
 - o Art room breakout space in hall – gallery space
 - o Peter – kiln in the workroom? Yes
- Site plan:
 - o Review of site plan updates
 - o Review of landscaping and hardscaping updates
 - Entry plaza
 - o Eric – has there been consideration on how to knock down road noise in the landscape design?
 - Planting trees along edge will help
 - Look at adding trees along route 7 (similar to Highlawn in Lee)
- Exterior Design
 - o Updates to the exterior design and entry design
 - o Feedback:

- Boyd – do the dormers sacrifice space? No
 - Shatz – feels the gables provide more interest to the building
 - A2 favorite among group, A1 second most favored
 - Chris not a fan of the canopy design – not big enough and looks like every other school. Greylock canopy is a nice size. Expand and incorporate more elements on the ground.
 - WRA recognized the canopy has been the element least developed and agreed it needs work
 - Explained intent of seat walls
 - Diane – we want the building to look like a school and feel welcoming. Gave an example of building where the transition from outside to inside felt gradual.
 - Glass canopy or skylights in canopy to bring in light?
 - Leaks and might not look that great
 - Andy added that the roof line isn't going to give much coverage due to its height and the canopy is modern, out of place with traditional gable design
- Next Steps
- o Upcoming Meetings:
 - Exterior Design Subcommittee Meeting - Wednesday, April 16th
 - SBC Meeting - Wednesday, May 7th
 - SBC Meeting - Wednesday, June 4th
 - Great Barrington Historical Commission - TBD
 - Community Information Meeting – Monday, June 16th with project cost
 - SBC Meeting - Wednesday, June 18th
 - Site Design Subcommittee Meeting - TBD
 - Sustainability Subcommittee Meeting - TBD
 - o Discussion on upcoming outreach:
 - 6/16 meeting date – not good because it is last day of school
 - Group discussed it was potentially the only option due to when cost information would be available and school schedule
 - Jason felt it was in our best interest to stick with the 6/16 date
 - Town Meeting on a Saturday – May 3rd
 - Project to have a table or booth?
 - Target events in the summer and fall coordinate with yes committee
 - BUSK event
 - 6/14 party in the park

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:30pm