



Newton - Lincoln Eliot School – School Building Committee Meeting

School Building Committee Meeting with Design Review Committee and others in attendance

Meeting: December 14th, 2021 (6:02 PM-7:45PM)

Location: Digital, via Zoom

Attendees

City of Newton:	Alejandro Valcarce	Joshua Morse*	Stephanie Gilman
School Building Committee:	Liam Hurley* Emily Prenner* Rebecca Grossman*	Kathleen Shields* Alison Leary* Jonathan Kazakoff-Eigen	Johnathan Yeo* Margaret Albright
Design Review Committee:	Peter Barrer* John Mulligan*	Carol Schein* Thomas Gloria*	Ellen Light*
Arrowstreet Architects:	Tina Soo Hoo	Larry Spang	Daniel Jick
Hill International:	Mary Mahoney	Duclinh Hoang	
Others:	Brad Seamans Stephen Duffy	Pam Wright John Oliver	Caroline P.

* Denotes Voting Members

Liam Hurley called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for November 23, 2021

Councilor Grossman made a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

Emily Prenner seconded the motion.

Mary Mahoney of Hill International briefly reported and reviewed the status of the project.

Joshua Morse noted the goals of tonight's meeting is to determine the placement of the Main Entry to the school.

Lincoln Eliot

Tina Soo Hoo of Arrowstreet presented student distribution within the school district and reviewed anticipated travel routes for parent pick-up and drop-off as well as student walking routes. Ms. Soo Hoo also outlined the site priorities that are being taken into consideration and presented proposed vehicular and pedestrian routes. Ms. Soo Hoo presented the proposed staff and visitor parking map, indicating it is believed that 50 staff parking spaces can be accounted for on the site, with 45 street parking spaces on adjacent roads.

Jonathan Yeo asked if a complimentary blue zone on the opposite side of Jackson Road had been explored to ease traffic and student pick-up and drop-off noting that Lincoln-Eliot is the most walked community in Newton.

Margaret Albright added that other schools have “Drop-and-Walk” areas that could be designated.

Stephanie Gilman stated that a Survey is out with the Transportation Department and data should be back by the end of the month.

Tina Soo Hoo of Arrowstreet depicted the current add/reno option candidates and presented a new option, Option 1v3, to the group. Option 1v3 design includes demolition of convent only, with a combined bus/van loop and staff parking area.

Ms. Soo Hoo presented site circulation for add/reno Option 1, Option 2, and Option 3 and reviewed traffic and pedestrian routes from the pick-up and drop-off areas to the main entrance. Discussion Ensued.

Councilor Alison Leary expressed concern over designating pick-up and drop-off on the Waban St./Walnut Park side and questioned the impact from the Walnut Park pre-school noting it may be better solution to direct most of the traffic on Jackson Rd.

Larry Spang of Arrowstreet noted that in the current designs most of the traffic is located on Jackson Rd.

Margaret Albright stated that it is important to have the blue zone prior to the exit for the busses in order to prevent vehicles using the blue zone from blocking the busses and vans.

Joshua Morse briefly reviewed various possibilities for van and bus pick-up and drop-off and blue zones.

Tina Soo Hoo of Arrowstreet stated that the site grading is steep, with the steepest area located around the Auditorium, and noted that a series of ramps and stairs will be necessary to navigate to the main entrance if located on the South side of the building. Ms. Soo Hoo mentioned that the north side of the site has less slope and proposed locating a secondary entrance closer to the pick-up and drop-off area.

Joshua Morse noted that having the entrance on the north is preferable as most students will be walking from the north side.

Kathleen Shields expressed concern with parents utilizing space not designated as blue zones.

Joshua Morse added that it is easier to engineer solutions than to change behavior.

John Mulligan stated that it is much more likely that parents drop their kids off at the curb on Walnut Park instead of utilizing the blue zones on Jackson Rd.

Larry Spang noted that Arrowstreet is anticipating locating an entry on the North-East side of the building to accommodate walking students.

Joshua Morse stated that Walnut Park would be an inclement weather entrance only.

Councilor Rebecca Grossman expressed concerns over different entrance configurations having an impact and limiting the interior layout of the building.

Tina Soo Hoo of Arrowstreet noted that options exist depending on whether the Chapel will be preserved, or a new entrance lobby/admin area will be built.

Mary Mahoney added that an entrance located on the left side of the plans provides better accessibility options due to site grading.

Peter Barrer recommended eliminating some options to simplify the choices.

Joshua Morse asked if anyone in the group feels strongly about locating the pedestrian entrance on the right.

Margaret Albright stated her preference for locating the entrance on the left side of the plans and noted that the School Committee does not like having parent drop-off loops on the site.

Carol Schein stated she much prefers locating the entrance on the left side of the plans noting that it looks like the ramps and stairs on the right impede accessibility and make winter maintenance tough.

Emily Prenner noted she also prefers locating the entrance on the left side of the plans noting that most students will be coming from the North and highlighting significant accessibility issues with the pre-existing building.

Councilor John Oliver asked if there was an option depicting an on-site parent drop-off loop. Jackson school was shown as an example of a possible drop-off loop idea.

Councilor Alison Leary asked if bike racks had been taken into consideration and showed preference for locating the bike racks close to the main entrance.

Kathy Shields noted her preference for locating the entrance on the left side of the plan noting that a separate entrance will be available for the auditorium.

Margaret Albright noted that it is important to separate traffic from the Jackson School, suggesting that locating the parking area on the left side of the plan may help alleviate it.

Jonathan Kazakoff-Eigen noted he would like to have a separate entrance on the south side of the building for Auditorium access.

Joshua Morse noted the impact on traffic of utilizing the old Lincoln-Eliot as a swing space. It is anticipated that most students will be arriving by bus.

Arrowstreet presented all versions of Option 3 which includes demolishing the Auditorium.

Larry Spang of Arrowstreet noted that Option 3 locates most of the building on the right side of the site-plan.

Joshua Morse asked for the group's opinion on Option 3 and how they feel about the keeping or demolishing the Auditorium.

Emily Prenner stated that if keeping the Auditorium is not limiting in any way, and meets the requirements of the educational program, she is in support of keeping the Auditorium. Ms. Prenner noted that she would need

to be reassured by the architect that by keeping the Auditorium we are not limiting programmatic needs with the space available.

Jonathan Yeo noted that all programmatic needs will be met in Option 1 and 2.

Larry Spang stated that the initial floor plan study was done on Option 1 and 2 and believes that keeping the Auditorium meets the needs and goals of the program.

Emily Prenner stated she is impartial to keeping or demolishing the pre-existing Auditorium.

Joshua Morse added that keeping the auditorium will not detract from the program, or how it is delivered.

Margaret Albright stressed that the Auditorium is good community resource, and the building also houses much needed district storage. Ms. Albright also expressed concerns of the environmental impact of demolishing the building.

Councilor Alison Leary asked about the advantages and disadvantages of distancing the bus and van loop and noted that she likes to keep the Auditorium

Peter Barrer stated that he believes all versions of Option 3 should be eliminated.

Kathleen Shields noted that she likes auditorium and district storage, with emphasis being placed on the need for a space dedicated to district storage. Ms. Shields also shares the belief that the Auditorium is useful as a community asset.

Councilor Rebecca Grossman stated she is open to keeping it, or not keeping it, but would like a clearer plan for the Auditorium identifying user groups, cost and where the resources come from. Councilor Grossman expressed that she has no problem keeping the Auditorium if there was a clear and coherent plan for the future.

Jonathan Kazakoff-Eigen noted that he really likes the Auditorium and wants to make sure the Auditorium is well used. Mr. Kazakoff-Eigen also inquired as to what drives the convention of keeping the gym and auditorium co-located.

Larry Spang expressed from a planning perspective that its generally the loudest areas and they are generally used after school as well. Keeping the Gymnasium and Auditorium together can help separate it from the school.

Tina Soo Hoo of Arrowstreet presented Option 1v3.

Joshua Morse noted that the bus and vans are in a separate loop but are in close proximity which minimizes students crossing traffic lanes.

Tina Soo Hoo of Arrowstreet noted that there are 3 or 4 vans and one bus servicing Lincoln Eliot.

Mr. Morse suggested moving the van loop to be located off Waban St., or having the van loop connect from Jackson Rd. to Waban St.

Tina of Arrowstreet noted that busses come early and drops off a select number of students before traveling to other schools believing that the bus and van arrival are staggered.

Margaret Albright added that one or two Boys and Girls Club vans will also be servicing the school.

Arrowstreet presented Option 2.B and Option 2.C alongside Option 1, Option 1v2, Option 1v3 and Option 1B.

Councilor John Oliver noted that Option 2.c or Option 2.b reduce the number of children that need to cross traffic lanes.

Joshua asked the group if Arrowstreet should study separating vans from busses.
Margaret Albright added that the study at Cabot School led to splitting them up there.

Councilor Alison Leary asked if Option 2.B impinged on green space that may be useful to keep free of hardscape.
Jonathan agrees, noting it will impact greenspace on the residential side.

Kathleen Shields stated she likes Option 1v3 in terms of where the van loop is located and proposed moving the bus loop, since it is utilized by 1 bus currently, to Walnut Park or Waban St. to get the separation.

Jonathan Yeo asked Arrowstreet how many busses are being planned for.
Tina Soo Hoo noted they are planning for 2 busses.
Councilor Grossman asked if a 3rd one will eventually service the school?
Joshua Morse asked Arrowstreet to explore how a 3rd bus would be accommodated.

Joshua Morse informed the group that there is a meeting planned for January 11th, 2022, and suggested another working session the week before the meeting if possible. Mr. Morse noted that the goal is to maintain the project schedule and get a vote on the preferred option at the January 11th meeting.

Alison Leary expressed concerns about the Underwood and Ward schools closing, noting that a significant number of students could be arriving at Lincoln Eliot from different directions or by bus.
Jonathan Yeo noted that the Ward and Underwood school situation being heavily discussed with discussion focused on both schools together and what happens in the future. Mr. Yeo doesn't foresee a large number of Underwood students coming to Lincoln Eliot.

Pam Wright added that some kids are less than a 5-minute walk to Lincoln Eliot versus over a mile to Ward school.

Jonathan Yeo noted the school is sized to accommodate more kids, and there is already pre-existing pedestrian traffic from the East.

Mary Mahoney asked for the group to provide their availability for Jan 4th.
Next meeting is scheduled for January 11th.

Jonathan Yeo motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 PM.

Councilor Alison Leary seconded the motion.

Details of this meeting can be found on the project website at <http://lincolneliot-necp-projects.com/>.

These notes will become part of the project record as written

To the best of my knowledge, these notes are a fair representation of the items discussed at the meeting.
Additional items or corrections should be brought to the attention of the writer.
Submitted by: Mark Krikorian 2/25/22