



Newton Lincoln Eliot School - NECP Project

Design Review Committee (DRC) – Lincoln-Eliot Feasibility Study Update November 10, 2021, 7:30pm, Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Attendees: Amy MacKrell*, Marc Kaufman, Peter Barrer*, Ellen Light*, John Mulligan*, Robert Hnasko, Jonathan Kantar*, Andrea Kelly, SingNing Kuo, Tom Gloria*

* - Denotes Voting Member

Professional Team: Larry Spang, Tina Soo Hoo, Arrowstreet (AST)
Matthew Sturz, Duclinh Hoang, Hill International, Inc. (Hill)

Guests: Alejandro Valcarce, Newton Public Buildings
Emily Prenner, School Committee
Stephanie Gilman, Newton Public Schools

Action Items are denoted in bold/italic font.

Meeting opened at 6:00pm with a brief introduction by A. Valcarce.

Meeting Agenda Item 2 – Feasibility Study Update for Lincoln-Eliot taken at 7:03pm

Alex Valcarce reported that, on November 9, 2021, the Lincoln Eliot School Building Committee (LE-SBC) took a vote identifying addition/renovation as the preferred development approach based on evaluation of conceptual design options on criteria and analysis included in the LE-SBC options matrix. Mr. Valcarce further reported that the LE-SBC has not selected a preferred renovation/addition option.

Tina Soo Hoo, AST, presented conceptual design options being considered for addition/renovation of the existing property at 150 Jackson Rd and a populated evaluation matrix for each of the concepts. Ms. Soo Hoo presented an aerial view of the 150 Jackson Rd property and reviewed existing site layout, topography, building components, and existing building/site cross sections depicting the existing grade change across the site, while noting the existing grade change from Walnut Park and Jackson Road is approximately 19 ft.

Ms. Soo Hoo reviewed the base parameters for the Lincoln Eliot educational program and building program including, an updated student design enrollment with a range of 396-414 students and resulting adjustment to the education and space programs. The building program includes (18) classrooms and (2) special education classrooms. Classrooms will be “right sized” and be comparable in size and layout to the Cabot, Zervas and Angier Elementary schools. The school is also being considered for a District-wide special education program. The proposed site development will support (2) school buses and (8) vans, blue zone for parent drop-off/pick-up, staff parking, separation of pedestrians and vehicles, and enhanced green space.

Ms. Soo Hoo reviewed the project schedule including continuing feasibility study to evaluate addition/renovation options and through analysis identify a preferred option for building and site

development that meets the education program, building program, schedule, and budget. Upcoming milestones include January 2022 selection of a preferred development option and start of Schematic Design phase, Site Plan approval May 2022, June– December 2022 Design Development phase, January – June 2023 Construction Documents phase with Ground Breaking/Construction start July 2022 and School opening September 2025.

AST presented add/reno Options 1 and 2 and reviewed major components for each option:

- a. Option 1 includes demolition of the existing convent, construction of new gymnasium wing and renovation of chapel, classroom and cafeteria. Staff parking will be where the existing gravel park is with a van drop-off/pick-up curb cut and bus drop-off/pickup off of Jackson Road.
- b. Option 2 includes demolition of convent and chapel, construction of new gymnasium wing and administration office wing and renovation of classroom and cafeteria. Staff parking will be where the existing gravel park is with a van drop-off/pick-up curb cut and bus drop-off/pickup off of Jackson Road.

The options include life safety, building and accessibility code, and site improvements with an area identified for a future four classroom addition to the school. Due to the steep grade change across the site, Option 1 and 2 include exterior stairs and ramps from Jackson Road to the buildings new main entry. The use and layout of the ramps and stairs is continuing to be reviewed for best layout option.

Renovations to the existing auditorium and storage areas under the cafeteria will include abatement and life safety code upgrades only.

AST presented add/reno Options 3, 3.B, 3.C and 3.D which all include demolishing the convent, chapel, cafeteria/auditorium wing and basement storage, renovation of the existing classroom wing and new construction for a gymnasium, cafetorium, administration offices, and additional educational and support spaces.

- a. Option 3 includes a parking area on grade under the new gymnasium wing providing more green space and playing field area.
- b. Option 3.B includes a new gymnasium and cafetorium wing with spaces stacked to form a 3 ½ stories building area. The existing convent is a 4-stories structure. A new Lobby/Administration wing will be on the south side of the site.
- c. Option 3.C includes stacked gymnasium and cafetorium wing on the north side of the site and lobby and admin space on the south side of site, basically flipping wings in Option 3.B.
- d. Option 3.D includes new 2-story gymnasium, 1 ½ -story cafetorium, lobby and administration on the south side of the site, away from the neighbors.

Jonathan Kantar asked about the scope of work for HVAC in the existing building and expressed concern with indoor air quality. Mr. Kantar also asked the potential for the project to be net zero. AST reported that the intent is to have all new HVAC equipment/system in the renovated spaces. The classroom wing renovation as currently envisioned will maintain the existing corridor walls and demolish all demising walls to right size classrooms. Alex Valcarce added that the HVAC system will include all electric variable refrigerant flow (VRF) equipment and will be comparable to other recently constructed/renovated elementary schools. Mr. Valcarce noted that the current building has new curtain walls and windows which will remain with each renovation scheme. The existing auditorium will be available to the school, but that renovation of the auditorium will be funded separately from the LE school project. This is an opportunity for solar panels.

AST presented and reviewed a populated evaluation matrix for the six renovation and addition options with seven categories of criteria including Building and Site Facts, Cost and Schedule, Educational, Community, Building, Site, and Sustainability. Building and site facts include design enrollment of 396-414 students, site size 5.71 acres, (18) classrooms, and (2) special education classrooms. Overall building square footage varies from option to option with all of Option 3 iteration creating the most efficient building to meet the space summary and education program with a gross square footage (gsf) at approximately 76,045 sf. The project budget is \$40M, with a preliminary estimate for Option 1 at \$41.5M and incremental cost increase for Option 2 and greater increase in costs forecasted for Options 3-3.D based on the scope for demolition and new construction. All add/reno options would allow for students to move in by September 2025 with a standard site plan approval schedule. Prerequisites for the educational criteria is that an option meets the LE educational program and space program. Community criteria considers building access and control for community used spaces such as the gymnasium and cafetorium. Prerequisites for building criteria include meeting current building codes, MAAB/ADA regulations, providing a healthy building environment, and hazardous material remediation. Site criteria includes meeting environmental and hazard material mitigation and optimize storm water resiliency. All the options optimizes outdoor program space and green space and allows for future expansion. Lastly, sustainability criteria includes city goals for fossil free building HVAC system(s), minimized embodied carbon footprint, allows solar opportunities, and optimizes building thermal envelope performance.

Discussion ensued.

- Ms. Light asked about bringing the Jackson Rd. road closer to the school around the parking lot as it seems like a long path from Jackson Rd to the school? - Mr. Valcarce responded that the further cars are allowed onto the site, the more conflict it created with the pedestrians and pedestrian safety. The plan as proposed, allows greater opportunity to create green open space. Mr. Valcarce also noted that parking lot and van and bus drop-off/pick-up locations are still being reviewed by the team and that other access points to the school are being studied.
- Mr. Kantar suggested looking at alternative locations for van/bus drop-off/pick-up at the other side(s) of the school. - Mr. Valcarce indicated site layout options will continue to be studied as design progresses.
- Mr. Kantar asked for a number buses and vans that service the LE school? - AST reported that currently one bus and 4-6 vans serve the school. The project will provide for (2) buses and (8) vans to account for future change. Ms. Gilman reported that the current bus is for the METCO program and that most LE students are in walking distance to the existing school and 150 Jackson Rd site.
- Ms. Kelly asked if having the soccer field in the middle of the site, parking more centralized and green space towards the left was considered during options site layout? - AST noting this option was shown in the new construction options previously developed and the option will be considered in add/reno options as well.
- Tom Gloria asked about the decision process on why add/reno was selected over new construction? - Mr. Valcarce reported on discussion by and decision of LE School Building Committee over a series of meetings. During this process, the Committee discussed the pros and cons of new and add/reno, previous renovations done, and provided updates to Public Facilities Programs and Services and School Committee on options development and Committee deliberations.
- Ms. Light asked for opinions of members who attended the School Building Committee meetings during the add/reno decision making process. - Mr. Barrer reported that when the Committee reviewed options and compared add/reno to new construction a strong factor in

selecting add/reno was cost. Also, Mr. Barrer also mentioned a strong opinion on separating buses and vans. Ms. Prenner agreed with Mr. Barrer's comments and added that there were significant concerns with new construction and building new classrooms where the existing classrooms exist when all the options considered new or add/reno meet the educational needs of the school. Ms. Gilman added that the current location of the school best addresses the grade change across the site and would be the location of a new school if new construction was the option.

- Mr. Kantar voiced his support for the add/reno options based on saving embodied carbon on the site.
- Mr. Kantar asked for a list of challenges to get to net zero for each option.
- Ms. Kuo asked if the ramp could be used as the main path to the building entrance, instead of the stairs? - AST noted the team is continuing to review and address access equity concerns.

Next meeting is December 15, 2021.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

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: Duclinh Hoang 12/06/21