

**CAPE ELIZABETH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

October 22, 2019
6:30PM Cape Elizabeth High School Library

Committee Members Present:

Donna Wolfrom	Superintendent
Jamie Garvin	Town Council Chair
Valerie Adams	Town Council
Marcia Weeks	Business Manager
Cathy Stankard	Director of Teaching and Learning, Title IX Coordinator
Del Peavey	Director of Special Services
Perry Schwarz	CESD Director of Facilities and Transportation
Peter Esposito	CESD Food Director
Susana Measelle Hubbs	School Board Chair
Heather Altenburg	School Board Vice Chair
Kimberly Carr	School Board Vice Chair
Elizabeth Scifres	School Board
Hope Straw	School Board
Nasir Shir	School Board
Jeffrey Shedd	CEHS Principal
Steve Price	CEMS Teacher/Performance Director
Jason Manjourides	PCES Principal
Caitlin Ramsey	CEMS Music Teacher
Erin Taylor	PCES Nurse
Carla Bryant	Community Member/Parent
Derek Converse	Community Member/Parent
Mary Ann Lynch	Community Member
DJ Nelson	Community Member/Parent
Andrew Patten	Community Member
Tim Thompson	Community Member
Calen Colby	Colby Company Engineering
James Hebert	Colby Company Engineering
Austin Smith	Scott Simons Architects
Julia Tate	Scott Simons Architects

Public Present:

Valerie Deveraux
Jill Abrahamsen

Welcome and Introduction:

Donna Wolfrom welcomed attendees and then asked committee members to introduce themselves. Dr. Wolfrom explained that the task of the Building Committee will be: to review the Needs Assessment Report; determine priorities; determine the size and scope of a future building project and bond; and then make a recommendation to the School Board.

Cape Elizabeth Schools Needs Assessment Report Presentation:

James Hebert, of Colby Company (CCE), provided a summary of the report, as well as providing information on the recently submitted application for the School Revolving Renovation Fund. The entire [Needs Assessment Report](#) and the [slide presentation](#) can be found on the CESD website under the Building Committee tab.

School Revolving Renovation Fund

Coinciding with the field work for the Needs Assessment Report, the Maine Department of Education is providing funding for schools that qualify for renovation projects through the School Revolving Renovation Fund (SRRF). Approximately \$25 million in loans are being earmarked. A portion of the loans awarded will be considered grants and therefore be forgiven. If selected, Cape Elizabeth will receive a 30% forgiveness. The remainder of the loans will be paid off in either 5 or 10 years at 0% interest. Municipalities front the cost of the projects, and then are reimbursed by the State of Maine once project(s) are completed. All projects must be completed by July of 2021.

Due to the short window of time in which eligible projects must be completed, a total of 12 projects in the amount of \$988,341 were identified for funding consideration through the individualized project data sheets produced by the Needs Assessment research. Eligible projects must fall under either Priority 1: Health, Safety, and Compliance Renovations; or Priority 2: Repairs and Improvements not related to health, safety, and compliance. Improving indoor air quality by cleaning all ductwork and re-commissioning HVAC systems, as well as addressing emergency plumbing fixtures (e.g., ADA compliant eyewash/shower fixtures) were projects identified in all three school buildings. Specific to the high school, identified projects included the correction/replacement of existing intercom and public address systems; providing a new ADA compliant lift, NFPA-33 compliant paint spray booth, metal dust collection system, and ventilation for the welding system within the Metal Shop; and roof structure reinforcement. CEMS projects include removing and replacing failing precast window sills with new windows, new flashing, and replace/repair brick. In both CEMS and PCES, the replacement of a three skylights within each building is included in the application.

The Maine DOE will announce recipients of the loans by February 1, 2020. Should Cape Elizabeth be awarded any funds, preparation of bid documents will begin as soon as possible in order to have any applicable projects completed by July of 2021. Otherwise, any and all projects identified in the SRRF application that are not funded will roll into the overall Needs Assessment Report.

Needs Assessment Report Findings

In all, after 24 separate field investigations, four meetings with a large span of stakeholders, and three project team meetings, 220 projects were identified. Each of the 220 projects are categorized as being either: red priority — needing to be addressed within 0-3 years before something will fail; yellow priority — needing to be addressed within 3-7 years; or green priority — not needing attention sooner than 7 years. In addition, each identified project is documented on a separate data sheet which provides recommendations, next level recommendations (in some cases), site photos, scope of work, and a cost analysis. A cost estimate cannot be assigned to some projects that would be considered new building and/or additions without a design in place (e.g., new cafeteria for PCES & CEMS). However, in these cases a general cost range based on square footage is provided with high and low margins. It was noted that building an addition is much more expensive than building on top of an existing

structure. (Again, a copy of the full Needs Assessment Report is located on the CESD website under the Building Committee tab.)

The general areas that must be maintained over the lifetime of any building are: boiler upgrades, reprogramming/occupancy adjustment, window replacement, roof replacement, HVAC upgrades/replacements, and technology upgrades. Within PCES and CEMS, the report finds that the physical condition of these two schools are “functionally satisfactory.” Basic education needs are met through the maximization of space and effective maintenance of buildings. The original building was constructed in 1934 and has gone through expansions nearly every decade since (1948, 1955, 1960, 1962, 1994, 2004), increasing the envelope of the original building and adding new systems onto old ones. Safety and efficiency of use, however, are not met within the current envelope of the conjoined schools due to a sprawling layout and entrances that are not located near front offices. Furthermore, the overall appearance of the schools reflect a fatigued system not indicative of the high performance expected from the schools.

CEHS, built in 1969, has seen one significant renovation in 2004 which included the addition of a main entrance and smaller interior upgrades. Similar to PCES and CEMS, the physical condition of this building is “functionally satisfactory,” but otherwise “not outstanding.” There are numerous points of entry, which create security challenges and there are no gender neutral facilities — which was repeatedly mentioned from various stakeholders.

In the case of all three schools, there are some issues which have significant annual maintenance costs due to the use of older materials and/or outdated systems. For example, the estimated annual cost of maintaining the Vinyl Composite Tile (VCT) flooring of all three schools is \$1.2M. Additionally, the use of Concrete Masonry Units (CMU) throughout the entire campus makes addressing various issues, such as upgrading bathroom needs, extremely challenging and conveys an “institutional feel.” After a certain point, it is prudent to evaluate whether it makes sense to invest more money in an old system or consider other options.

Path Forward/Next Steps

Three options were presented to the Building Committee for consideration.

- Option 1 — Do nothing. Maintenance curve will begin to fall off rapidly due to the age of all the school buildings and their systems. While there will not be a cost associated with completing a renovation or new construction, there are still costs associated with repairing and replacing aging parts.
- Option 2 — Selectively renovate and restore all three buildings. This option would require relocating students for at least one year into temporary portable classrooms while renovations take place in phases.
- Option 3 — Phased renovation combined with new construction. This option would be to renovate one building (presumably the high school) to bring it to its end of life (10-15 years). Study the cost to replace one school, while renovating the other and/or concurrently, create a Masterplan of the campus that will involve demolition and construction of new schools over the next 10-15 years.

Committee Discussion:

- Jamie Garvin commented that the 60-year lifespan referenced in the presentation doesn't necessarily mean that a building can't last longer. If investments are put in to prolonging the life of a building, how many more years can be gained by hitting the "reset button?"
- Calen Colby agreed that some buildings can and should last as long desired, but that it does not come without sacrifices nor does it get you back to the best and most efficient building. Everything comes with a set of advantages and disadvantages that must be weighed based on data available.
- Austin Smith added that it becomes a factor when renovation costs become disproportionately high and energy costs are disproportionately high. These things might trigger the question of whether renovating is better or not.
- Nasir Shir asked what advances in construction have occurred since the construction of all three buildings, that could be greatly improved with newer construction methods?
- Mr. Smith offered that newer buildings are constructed with more compact envelopes that significantly reduce energy consumption costs — sometimes to net zero — as well as creating buildings that provide much greater atmospheric comfort with temperature and sound, as well as efficiencies.
- Mr. Colby added that current technologies utilize materials which keep moisture out of walls and current methods of construction are much tighter, keeping moisture out — prolonging the life of the materials. The "softer sciences," student and teacher comfort, are much harder to put a number to in order to produce the very best students.
- Julia Tate added that the roofs on both buildings would not be compliant with current code or seismic requirements, which would then force a full facility upgrade.
- Susana Measelle Hubbs commented that the School Board recently approved new Strategic Goals for the next five years, with one goal encompassing environmental sustainability. The question is how can choices be made which will support this goal? For example, solar power.
- Mr. Hebert responded that there are clever ways to recycle energy from sources that produce excess heat. For example, air conditioners produce a lot of excess heat that can be used in clever ways for other purposes. With energy efficiency, its more than solar panels or wind turbines (which are great), but how well is your building insulated and can you retain the heat? The building design itself must be considered for sustainability.
- Mr. Smith added that the bonus of creating sustainable buildings is that it can be used to teach students on the benefits of sustainable construction.
- Mr. Colby added that the school department could create a filter by which every building/renovation decision passes through — whether it be passive house standards, green globes, or LEED. Do the choices meet the established criteria?
- Jeff Shedd asked if there is anything in the report which might inform the Building Committee as to whether or not (based on cost) they should support renovating or constructing new buildings?

- Mr. Hebert answered that the report was crafted in way that enables addressing projects individually or by grouping small projects together. The flip side is that you can't do an equal sum of pricing because some projects overlap and save money. The choice is whether every single project listed in the report is completed or to try an approach which chips away at some of the projects in a more manageable manner.
- Mr. Garvin commented that there are some projects (e.g., the windows at CEMS) that need to be addressed now, even though the entire building might need to be replaced down the road. This is the unfortunate reality for some of these projects.
- Mr. Smith offered that a time does come where buildings need to be replaced. Until that point arrives, you have to spend your money very strategically to make sure that you don't replace something that ends up being replaced itself.
- Tim Thompson pointed out that based on the FY20 school budget being approximately \$27M, we are spending approximately 1/25 of the entire school budget polishing floors. This might be something to prioritize if the rate of return warrants it. Mr. Thompson also shared the frustration over the presumed length of time that projects related to improving safety might take if it needs to go to the voters.
- Mr. Garvin shared that items under \$1M do not have to go to the voters. Most of the projects that were included in the SRRF application are stand-alone projects. If one project does not get funded there are still 11 more projects that might be.
- Mr. Hebert added that security issues at CEMS/PECS could not be addressed through the SRRF due to pricing and time frame required of that grant.
- Mr. Thompson added that the luck of having engineers contracted to complete the Needs Assessment study at the same time as the SRRF means that Cape Elizabeth would be at the front of the line over other towns to secure contractors if any of the projects receive funding.
- Derek Converse asked if there was operational data for heating, cooling, and electrical costs that might be compared to more recent building methods? This would be helpful in making future decisions about renovating vs. building.
- Hope Straw commented that if the Building Committee is charged with making a recommendation, they need concrete data around the costs of running the existing buildings today and what is the cost of all three options. How does the committee get this information?
- Mr. Colby said that the cost of a new building is always going to be the highest dollar. The cost of renovation would be the second highest, while doing nothing would be "death by a thousand cuts." You must go back and also consider the quality of teaching, the flexibility of the spaces, the ability of the community to utilize the schools during the summer — as it does with the new library. These are the "softer costs" which are also important. At what point does a new family choose to move to Yarmouth over Cape Elizabeth based on the health of the buildings?
- Elizabeth Scifres added that it is tricky to put a price on the cost of a new building without really knowing the extent of what renovation work will be done vs. new construction.

- Mr. Hebert added that the footprint of the school campus is limited. There will not be a lot of choices on where new construction might go, which could also impact overall costs. It's more than just the square-foot cost.
- Mr. Garvin asked if there has been discussion on the timing of possible options. What milestones are we working towards as a working committee?
- Dr. Wolfrom answered that it might take longer than the four scheduled committee meetings. You typically apply for school bonds in the spring or the fall.
- DJ Nelson said that the committee needs to get more information to compare costs between all three options.
- Dr. Wolfrom asked that we also need to gauge how much the community could support, financially?
- Mr. Hebert spoke to the idea of a Masterplan which buys time for an existing building to maximize lifespan, while constructing a new one on another location. At that point, 15 years approximately, consider a new bond and a new building. Create a longterm roadmap.
- Mr. Colby suggested that there are so many variables with new construction that it is important to provide a bracket of low and high costs. This can be provided to the committee.
- Mr. Thompson commented that creating a Masterplan will be an excellent way to educate the community and get greater support for the work.
- Susana Measelle Hubbs asked how to approach the next meeting?
- Mr. Colby suggested that we identify the top 10 things that truly matter, by creating a filter which covers the quality of education, operating costs, etc., and sort them out to see what is most important to the committee.
- Mr. Garvin asked if Colby Co. could help walk the committee through creating a Masterplan.
- Mr. Thompson said that he would like to know the costs of installing and maintaining concrete flooring and compare that to VCT maintenance.
- Perry Schwarz explained that the way to calculate how much heat & AC is needed in a building starts with looking at the exterior walls — do they have a roof or a floor above, are they slab on grade, or do the walls have a basement? The design of all CESD school buildings are all one floor, slab on grade, with a lot of exterior walls. He pointed out that every high school around Cape Elizabeth is going to a square design with a second floor, so that the second floor can take advantage of the heat from the first story. The load on Cape Elizabeth buildings is the maximum you can have. “We have cold floors and walls, the heat is going through the roofs.” His hope is that the committee will look longterm for both the school department and the town. The report is filled with all sorts of problems within the school. Right now, Mr. Schwarz shared, his staff is consumed with spending their work hours addressing problems related to the age of the building ... “much like the carnival game, Whack a Mole.” He feels comfortable stating that the amount of money we might spend renovating the schools to make them what we need and want, would not be worth the money. “We cannot do what we need to do with the buildings we have.” For

example, there are little repairs that cannot be easily addressed without spending a lot of money and there are a lot of these problems popping up more and more.

- Mr. Converse added that he is a professional estimator for a construction company. Knowing the costs of many commercial projects, he still concurs with Mr. Schwarz's opinion. The mechanical systems are so inefficient with the long hallways that heat must travel through.
- Mr. Schwarz confirmed that heat must travel a long way from CEMS in order to reach PCES and pointed to a Google map slide to illustrate the extremely long path it must follow.
- Mr. Thompson commented that given the space limitations of the campus, there would only be the capacity to build one new school at a time and also do renovations in the meantime.
- Mary Ann Lynch wondered about consolidating the schools into one or two buildings, by building upward.
- Mr. Colby added that consolidating buildings would be an attractive option for taxpayers as it would be more cost efficient.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, December 3rd, 6:30PM - 8:30PM at CEHS Library.

Adjourn:

8:35PM