

District: Carver
School Name: Governor John Carver Elementary School
Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
Date: September 30, 2009

Recommendation:

That the Executive Director is authorized to approve the Town of Carver as part of its Invitation for Feasibility Study, to proceed into schematic design for the replacement of the existing Governor John Carver Elementary School. MSBA staff has reviewed the designer's options for the Governor John Carver Elementary School and accepts the District's preferred solution to replace the existing building with renovations to the existing Governor John Carver Elementary School and the Erwin K. Washburn Primary School and an addition adjoining the two buildings as the most cost-effective and educationally sound option.

Background:

The District serves 930 students in Grades PreK -5 in three buildings:

- Pre-K classrooms are located on the first floor of the administrative building at 3 Carver Square.
- Grades K-3 are located in the Erwin K. Washburn Building on Main Street behind the Governor John Carver Building.
- Grades 4 and 5 are located in the Governor John Carver Building on Main Street.

Prior to the 2008-2009 school year, Pre-Kindergarten was housed at the Washburn School, and Grade Three at the John Carver School. As a result of overcrowding at the John Carver, Pre-Kindergarten classes were moved to an off-site facility and Grade Three classes were moved to the Washburn School.

The Governor John Carver Elementary School, the District's prioritized Statement of Interest, is comprised of two buildings. The first structure was built in 1951, and an addition was constructed in 1957. The school shares a 23.7 acre site with the Erwin K. Washburn Primary School, a one-story structure built in 1975. Although two separate facilities, faculty and students travel between both buildings sharing classrooms, the Library/Media Center, Computer Lab, Gymnasium and Cafeteria in an effort to adequately deliver the educational programs at each school.

The Governor John Carver Elementary School is a total of 35,000 square feet and had a 2008-2009 enrollment of 456 students. The District identified a number of building issues associated with the HVAC, electrical, and life safety systems. In addition to the physical plant issues, the District has identified programmatic deficiencies as a result of overcrowding. Due to overcrowding as well as the lack of a library, gym and cafeteria, students and faculty from the John Carver School circulate between the two schools without any enclosed connection to utilize eight classrooms and the core spaces at the Washburn School.

Erwin K. Washburn Primary School was built in 1975, and is a 64,392 square foot facility. The 2008-2009 enrollment was 436 students. The Washburn shares similar

building issues to the John Carver School, with one of its most pressing problem being its inconsistent HVAC system. In terms of curriculum delivery, an open floor plan creates noise and storage issues in a building already plagued by overcrowding.

On November 27, 2008, the MSBA Board of Directors approved staff’s recommendation to issue an invitation into the Feasibility Invitation category to further study the problems identified at the Governor John Carver Elementary School.

Discussion

The Governor John Carver and Erwin K. Washburn Elementary Schools share the same site, core space areas and faculty. As such, the District requested and the MSBA agreed that the District and its consultant team should investigate a proposed option that would address the issues at both the Governor John Carver and the Washburn School.

Carver has stated that its primary goal is to create a single facility which will house the Town’s entire PK-5 enrollment. Currently, the Town is utilizing spaces at two separate facilities in order to provide adequate space for the Elementary educational program. Valuable instructional time is lost throughout the school day as students move between buildings. The District is confident that structurally, both buildings offer a suitable base for a cost-effective and timely project which will fulfill Carver Public Schools’ need for an elementary facility.

The Feasibility Study includes an evaluation of three renovation/addition options to the Washburn Elementary School; and one new construction option. Residents in the Town of Carver view the Governor John Carver Elementary School as an iconic building and feel strongly that it should remain a part of the community. Also, the District has a strong desire to execute a sustainable and economically efficient construction project. With these things in mind, the new construction option was eliminated in favor of renovation/addition alternatives.

Summary of Preliminary Design Pricing

	Option	Enrollment (Grade Structure)	Gross SF	Estimated Cost
B3	Renovate portions of Gov. Carver & Washburn schools; build addition connecting both facilities	PK-5	133,930	\$32,998,616
E2	Renovate portions of Gov. Carver & Washburn schools; build addition connecting both facilities	PK-5	132,760	\$32,714,736
J	Renovate portion of Washburn School; build addition replacing Gov. Carver School	PK-5	133,330	\$34,988,964
H	New Construction Option	PK-5	132,800	\$38,092,715

After extensive public, School Committee and Building Committee review, the District selected “Option B3” as its preferred alternative. In addition to its cost-effectiveness, the following reasons were given for choosing this option:

- Classrooms are all located in one zone of the building, and this is seen as promoting a strongly desired “one-school” philosophy and culture.
- The large core facilities – Gymnasium, Cafeteria and Multi-Purpose Room - are closely grouped so they can function in combination when needed. This zone is also easily segregated from the classroom area for community after-school use.
- A significant portion of existing construction (57% of the floor area) is retained and reused.
- The Governor Carver building is retained and, although its interior will be significantly modified, its exterior appearance will remain consistent.

MSBA has reviewed the conclusions of the Feasibility Study and the enrollment data with the District and found:

- 1) All initial paperwork required has been processed including an executed Initial Certificate of Compliance, the composition of the School Building Committee and the enrollment questionnaire.
- 2) MSBA has completed an enrollment projection utilizing the enrollment questionnaire completed by Carver. The MSBA and the District have agreed to a design enrollment of 925 students for the Governor John Carver Elementary School project.
- 3) MSBA reviewed the feasibility study and finds that alternatives investigated were sufficiently comprehensive in their scope and that the District’s preferred option is reasonable.
- 4) The MSBA and the District have reviewed the preliminary space summary submission and have agreed to work further to review the allocation of spaces as it relates to MSBA guidelines and the renovation of existing facilities. In addition, the MSBA has noted that further review and substantiation of the grossing factor utilized by the Designer is required.

Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the Town of Carver be approved to proceed into schematic design to combine the Governor John Carver and Erwin K. Washburn Elementary schools by renovating portions of each building and constructing an addition adjoining the two facilities.