

District: City of North Adams
 School Name: Silvio O. Conte Middle School
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
 Date: May 30, 2012

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the City of North Adams, as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into schematic design for an addition and renovation project at the Silvio O. Conte Middle School. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s preferred solution for an addition and renovation project at the Silvio O. Conte Middle School to serve grades K-7.

| District Information | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| District Name | City of North Adams |
| Elementary School(s) | Brayton Elementary (PK-7) Sullivan Elementary (K-7) Greylock Elementary (K-7) |
| Middle School | Silvio O. Conte Middle School (currently closed) |
| High School | Drury High School (8-12) |
| Priority School Name | Silvio O. Conte Middle School (currently closed) |
| Type of School | Former middle school |
| Grades Served | School is currently closed |
| Year Opened | 1917 |
| Total Square Footage | 94,000 |
| Additions | Two (1968, 1976) |
| Acreage of Site | 2.9 acres |
| Building Issues | The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mechanical systems - Electrical systems - Windows - Roof - Envelope - Accessibility In addition to the physical plant issues, the District reported insufficient parking and outdoor play areas. |
| Original Design Capacity | 1,000 +/- (Originally designed as a high school) |
| 2011-2012 Enrollment | Greylock ES – 248 ; Sullivan ES – 244 ; Brayton ES – 510 |
| Agreed Upon Enrollment | Study enrollment includes the following configurations: 310 students for K-7 neighborhood school configuration (preferred solution) 620 students for K-7 consolidated school configuration |
| Enrollment Specifics | If the Board approves the preferred solution, the District will sign a Design Enrollment Certification for 310 students in grades K-7. |

| MSBA Board Votes | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Invitation to Feasibility Study | November 28, 2007 |
| Preferred Schematic Authorization | On June 6, 2012 Board agenda |
| Project Scope & Budget Authorization | District is targeting Board authorization on November 14, 2012 |
| Reimbursement Rate Before Incentives | 80.00% |

| Consultants | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Owners Project Manager | Strategic Building Solutions, LLC |
| Designer | Margo Jones Architects |

Discussion

The existing Silvio O. Conte facility, the District’s priority Statement of Interest, is a historic four-level 94,000 square-foot structure located in the eastern side of the City, adjacent to the downtown area. The facility was originally designed as a high school and later utilized as a middle school.

The original school building was constructed in 1917. In 1968, five “portable” classrooms were added to the northern portion of the site, and in 1976, a 6,200 square-foot gymnasium was added to the southwest portion of the building. Many classrooms are undersized and interior finishes are in poor condition. The District also identified numerous deficiencies in the Statement of Interest. In addition to general lack of accessibility features, the existing facility requires window, roof, heating, ventilation, and electrical replacement, as well as non-structural exterior improvements. The current facility is without exterior play areas for students and has limited parking for staff and visitors. The building is located on 2.9 acres in a densely populated residential neighborhood bordering the downtown area. Site development is constrained by the sloping periphery. Although this facility was closed in 2009, the District continues to utilize the building for District administrative offices.

In 2009, when the District removed the Silvio O. Conte Middle School from service, 6th and 7th grade students were relocated to their respective neighborhood elementary schools, and the 8th grade students transferred to the Drury High School. This grade reconfiguration resulted in three neighborhood K-7 schools; the Sullivan, Greylock, and Brayton Elementary Schools, and a high school serving grades 8-12. The District reported that this grade configuration has served its community and students well.

In conjunction with its consultants, the District performed a comprehensive assessment of the existing conditions and the educational programs of the Silvio O. Conte Middle School, Sullivan Elementary School, and Greylock Elementary School and received input from educators, administrators, community members, and facilities personnel. Based on these findings, the District and its consultants studied six preliminary options that included one limited renovation/addition option at the Greylock Elementary School, one addition and renovation option at the Silvio O. Conte Middle School facility, two new construction options at the Greylock Elementary School, and two new construction options at the Sullivan Elementary School as described in Table 1.

The District’s assessment of the existing conditions concluded that three of the District’s schools, the Sullivan Elementary School, the Greylock Elementary School, and the Silvio O. Conte Middle School, are all in need of remedial work. In addition to the individual facility and site issues identified at each of the schools, an important factor for the District in evaluating its options was the continuation of a neighborhood school structure for grades K-7.

Table 1 - Summary of Preliminary Design Pricing for Final Evaluation of Options

| Option (Description) | Total Gross Square Feet | Square Feet of Renovated Space (cost*/sf) | Square Feet of New Construction (cost*/sf) | Site, Building Takedown, Haz Mat. Cost* | Estimated Total Construction ** (cost*/sf) | Estimated Total Project Costs |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Option 1: Add/reno of Greylock | 75,720 | 22,695 \$165/sf | 53,025 \$275/sf | \$2,494,000 | \$20,821,000 \$274/sf | \$28,600,000 |
| Option 2: Renovation of Conte for 310*** | 80,029 | 77,302 \$211/sf | 2,727 \$275/sf | \$1,636,000 | \$18,700,000 \$234/sf | \$25,900,000 |
| Option 3: New construction for 310 at Greylock site | 74,000 | \$0/sf | 74,000 \$250/sf | \$2,620,000 | \$21,115,000 \$285/sf | \$27,702,000 |
| Option 4: New construction for 310 at Sullivan – Kemp park site | 74,000 | \$0/sf | 74,000 \$270/sf | \$2,111,000 | \$22,091,000 \$299/sf | \$29,601,000 |
| Option 5: New construction for 310 at Sullivan on existing site | 74,000 | \$0/sf | 74,000 \$270/sf | \$3,190,000 | \$23,170,000 \$313/sf | \$31,621,000 |
| Option 6: New construction for 620 at Greylock site | 124,534 | \$0/sf | 124,534 \$246/sf | \$3,190,000 | \$33,875,000 \$272/sf | \$45,538,000 |

* Marked up construction costs

** Does not include construction contingency

*****District’s preferred option**

Although Options 1 and 3 address deficiencies and concerns at the existing Greylock Elementary School (western end of the District), these options do not address the issues of more immediate concern at the Sullivan Elementary School (eastern side of the District) and therefore were not selected as the District’s preferred alternative. Options 4 and 5 resolve the deficiencies associated with the Sullivan Elementary School and better address school needs on the eastern side of the District, but the District determined that the buildable area required for a new facility on the Sullivan site or adjacent sites was unfeasible. Option 6 resolves the deficiencies associated with both the Sullivan and Greylock Elementary Schools; however, this option has the highest initial cost and does not support the neighborhood school organization that is highly desired by the District.

The District has selected the addition and renovation option for the Silvio O. Conte Middle School, Option 2, as its preferred solution to proceed into schematic design. The proposed project will serve grades K-7 students that are currently attending the Sullivan Elementary School. The proposal to renovate the Silvio O. Conte Middle School facility addresses the more immediate concerns associated with the Sullivan Elementary School while maintaining the District's desire to continue to provide three distributed neighborhood schools for its K-7 student population. The District has stated that its future plans for the Sullivan Elementary School are unknown at this time.

The MSBA understands that, although the District's preferred solution will resolve the more immediate deficiencies associated with the Sullivan Elementary School while maintaining the District's strong desire to continue with neighborhood schools, the preferred solution will not address all of the District's educational needs. In order to address additional educational needs, the District may need to conduct a future study associated with the Greylock Elementary School.

The District presented its proposed project to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee ("FAS") on May 2, 2012. At that meeting, members of the FAS noted the importance of a thorough understanding of the existing facility, and staff highlighted the need for the District and its consultants to understand MSBA policies regarding the allocation of construction and contingency cost estimates.

MSBA staff has reviewed the conclusions of the Feasibility Study and discussed the options and corresponding space summaries with the District and its consultants to better understand which plan is in accordance with MSBA guidelines and most beneficial and efficient for the City of North Adams. MSBA staff has reviewed and accepts the designer's updated Feasibility Study submission that identifies the options that have been explored on behalf of the District and the preferred alternative selected by the District, based on the following:

- 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 information.
- 2) MSBA has completed an enrollment projection and has reached a mutual agreement with the District for a design enrollment of 310 students for the K-7 elementary school project.
- 3) MSBA reviewed the Feasibility Study and subsequent material and finds that the options investigated were sufficiently comprehensive in scope, the approach undertaken in this study was appropriate, and the District's preferred solution is reasonable, cost-effective, and meets the needs identified by the District.
- 4) The District has submitted an operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget for MSBA review.
- 5) The District's schematic design submittal will be subject to final review and approval by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as part of the schematic design submittal prior to a Project Scope and Budget Agreement.
- 6) Subject to Board approval, the MSBA will participate in a project that conforms to MSBA guidelines, with the exception of variations previously agreed to in writing by the MSBA.

- 7) The MSBA notes that the proposed addition/renovation project will result in a facility that is larger than the facility that would result if the District were to build a new school that meets both the MSBA guidelines and the District's educational program for this enrollment. Also, the construction costs for the proposed addition/renovation project may exceed the MSBA's funding cap of \$275 per square foot for new construction, plus eligible demolition and abatement.
- 8) As part of the Schematic Design phase, the District will work with the MSBA to determine a mutually agreeable methodology to differentiate eligible costs from ineligible costs.
- 9) As discussed with the District and its consultants on May 2, 2012, the District and consultants need to have a clear understanding of the MSBA Project Funding Agreement and policies with respect to the use of budget contingencies that will be established in the next phase of the project. Also, given the historic nature of the existing Silvio O. Conte Middle School facility, it is extremely important for the District and its consultants to have a thorough understanding of the existing conditions of the facility in order to develop cost estimates that accurately reflect the scope of work, accounting for latent conditions and unknowns typical of an addition and renovation project at an historic building.

Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the City of North Adams be approved to proceed into schematic design for an addition and renovation project at the existing Silvio O. Conte Middle School facility.