

District: Town of South Hadley
 School Name: Plains Elementary School
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
 Date: May 30, 2012

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the Town of South Hadley, as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into schematic design to replace the existing Plains Elementary School on the existing site. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s preferred solution to replace the existing Plains Elementary School on the existing site.

District Information	
District Name	Town of South Hadley
Elementary School(s)	Plains Elementary School (PK-1) Mosier Elementary School (2-4)
Middle School(s)	Michael E. Smith Middle School (5-8)
High School(s)	South Hadley High School (9-12)
Priority School Name	Plains Elementary School
Type of School	Elementary School
Grades Served	PK-1
Year Opened	1932
Total Square Footage	44,762
Additions	1989
Acreage of Site	22 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structural integrity - Mechanical systems - Plumbing systems - Envelope - Windows - Roof - Accessibility
Original Design Capacity	Unknown
2011-2012 Enrollment	328
Agreed Upon Enrollment	270
Enrollment Specifics	The District and MSBA have mutually agreed upon a design enrollment of 270 students serving grades K-1, for a project that will serve grades PK-1.

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Feasibility Study	September 30, 2009
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	59.21%
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Consultants	
Owner’s Project Manager	Arcadis
Designer	Margo Jones Architects

Discussion

The existing Plains Elementary School is a 47,495 square foot building on a relatively flat five-acre site located at the intersection of Route 33 and Route 202 in South Hadley. The existing facility serves grades PK-1.

The original school building was constructed in 1927. Upgrades and additions were completed in 1955, 1968, and 1987. Modular units were added in the early 1990s to accommodate increased enrollments. The original building was constructed utilizing a variety of structural systems including steel, masonry, and wood systems. Based on limited visual observation, the timber framed roof system of the original building is reported to exhibit signs of deterioration and may need significant reinforcing. No other obvious structural deficiencies were observed during the feasibility study; however, an analysis of floor and roof system capacities, for both gravity and lateral loads, will be required for any significant project at the existing building.

The plumbing, electrical, and mechanical systems are mostly original, and with a few exceptions will require replacement. The existing building has significant accessibility limitations, and the majority of spaces are under-sized when compared to MSBA guidelines. The District has reported that the size of the existing classrooms and core spaces, as well as the general layout of the building, affect the District’s ability to deliver its educational program.

In conjunction with its consultants, the District performed a comprehensive assessment of the existing conditions and the educational program and received input from educators, administrators, and facilities personnel. Based on the findings of this effort, the District and its consultants initially studied six preliminary options that included two addition/renovation configurations and four new construction options as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Preliminary Evaluation of Options

Option	Description of Preliminary Options	Preliminary Total Project Budget Estimate
1	Base repair – Limit work to interior of the building; address code issues, system deficiencies, and envelope failures	\$12.87 million
2	New, two-story construction at Toth Property – New construction on significantly restricted site requiring substantial development	\$28.20 million
3	New, two-Story construction at Mosier Elementary School site – New construction adjacent to existing Mosier School	\$25.67 million
4	Addition/renovation at existing Plains Elementary School – Phased construction of addition to existing Plains	\$27.86M

Option	Description of Preliminary Options	Preliminary Total Project Budget Estimate
	School; full renovation	
5	New, one-story construction at Plains Elementary School site – New construction north of existing Plains School	\$26.47 million
6	New, two-story construction at Plains Elementary School site – New construction north of existing Plains School	\$25.65 million

After discussions with MSBA staff, the District and its consultants identified three of the preliminary options for further development and consideration in the final evaluation of alternatives, as described below in Table 2. Only three new construction options were advanced into the final evaluation for the following reasons:

- The base repair option failed to address many of the educational deficiencies in the facility;
- New construction at the Toth site, the most costly option, would be on a site that is not suitable for development due to wetland restrictions and significant grade changes resulting in a limited area to locate a building; and
- An addition/renovation at the existing Plains Elementary School, the second most costly option, would be constructed in three separate phases and consist of numerous structural systems and retrofitted conditions, all subject to code-required analysis and potentially substantial and costly upgrades. Although the phased addition/renovation option would address both facility and educational deficiencies, the District and its consultants concluded that it was more costly than the new options on the same site, disruptive to the students during construction, and doesn't meet the District's educational objectives as well as new construction.

Due to these factors, three new construction options were identified for development of preliminary design pricing as presented below.

Table 2 – 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 3: New, Two-Story School at Mosier Site	63,375	-	63,375 \$280/sf	\$2,000,000	\$19,745,000 \$312/sf	\$25,668,500
Option 5: New, One-Story School at Plains Site	63,375	-	63,375 \$285/sf	\$2,300,000	\$20,361,875 \$321/sf	\$26,470,438

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
<i>Option 6: New, Two-Story School at Plains Site***</i>	<i>63,375</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>63,375</i> <i>\$275/sf</i>	<i>\$2,300,000</i>	<i>\$19,728,125</i> <i>\$311/sf</i>	<i>\$25,646,563</i>

** Marked up construction costs*

*** Does not include construction contingency*

****District's preferred option*

The District has selected a new, two-story school at the Plains Elementary School site (Option 6), as the preferred solution to proceed into schematic design. This option meets the needs of the District's educational program, fits the site, is more efficient than the one-story option, allows for appropriate adjacency of playing fields, and has the lowest estimated cost.

The District presented its proposed project to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee ("FAS") on May 23, 2012. At that meeting, members of the FAS asked about the size of the proposed classrooms and how they could flexibly meet the needs of the District, and recommended that the District consider covered student drop-offs in the design.

MSBA staff reviewed the conclusions of the Feasibility Study, all subsequent submittals, and the enrollment data with the District and found:

- 1) All initial paperwork required has been processed, including an executed Initial Compliance Certification, 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 270 students for the Plains Elementary School.
- 3) MSBA staff reviewed the Feasibility Study and subsequent material submitted by the District and concludes 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) Pursuant to the MSBA's regulations, the site of an approved project must be owned (fee simple title) by the city, town, or regional school district that is seeking funding from the MSBA or be under the exclusive control of the city, town, or regional district pursuant to a long-term lease. Accordingly, before the MSBA can enter into a Project Funding Agreement with the District for the proposed project, the District must certify that it has full control and exclusive use of the proposed site either by fee simple title or long-term lease.
- 5) The District has submitted an operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget for MSBA review.

- 6) 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.

Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the Town of South Hadley be approved to proceed into schematic design to replace the existing Plains Elementary School on the existing site.