

District: Central Berkshire Regional School District
 School Name: Wahconah Regional High School
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
 Date: October 24, 2018

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the Central Berkshire Regional School District, as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Wahconah Regional High School with a new facility on the existing site. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s preferred solution.

District Information	
District Name	Central Berkshire Regional School District
Elementary School(s)	Becket Washington Elementary School (PK-5) Craneville Elementary School (K-5) Kittredge Elementary School (PK-5)
Middle School(s)	Nessacus Regional Middle School (6-8)
High School(s)	Wahconah Regional High School (9-12)
Priority School Name	Wahconah Regional High School
Type of School	High School
Grades Served	9-12
Year Opened	1961
Existing Square Footage	114,000
Additions	1971, 5 classroom addition 1975, 2 classroom addition (prefabricated temporary units)
Acreage of Site	40.9 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Structural integrity – Mechanical systems – Electrical systems – Envelope – Windows – Roof – Accessibility In addition to the physical plant issues, the District reported that the existing facility does not support the delivery of its educational program.
Original Design Capacity	Unknown
2017-2018 Enrollment	535
Agreed Upon Enrollment	460
Enrollment Specifics	The District and MSBA have mutually agreed upon a design enrollment of 460 students serving grades 9-12.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	Yes

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	July 20, 2016
Invitation to Feasibility Study	April 10, 2017
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On October 31, 2018 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on April 10, 2019
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	54.79%

Consultants	
Owner's Project Manager (the "OPM")	Skanska USA Building Inc
Designer	Drummey Rosane Anderson Inc

Discussion

The existing Wahconah Regional High School is a 114,000 square-foot, one-story building located on 40.9 acres of land that is approximately 1.5 miles from the town center of Dalton. The site is bounded by Old Windsor Road and the Wahconah Country Club golf course to the north; a steep hillside and wooded private property to the east; the Nessacus Regional Middle School parcel to the south; and the East Branch Housatonic River to the west. The existing facility currently houses grades 9-12.

The original school building was constructed in 1961. Five classrooms were added to the south-west wing in 1971, followed in 1975 by two prefabricated temporary classrooms added to the west wing. A series of building-wide interior renovations and refurbishments were completed in 2010.

The District identified numerous deficiencies in the Statement of Interest including, but not limited to, insufficient space for science labs, library/media center, art, music, drama, special education, health and counseling, physical education, and locker rooms; lack of language labs; insufficient handicap access; poor heating and cooling control; insufficient electrical capacity and too few electrical outlets.

In conjunction with its consultants, the District performed a comprehensive assessment of the existing conditions and the educational program and they received input from educators, administrators, and facilities personnel. Based on the findings of this effort, the District and its consultants initially studied thirteen preliminary options that included four addition/renovation configurations and nine new construction options. The following is a detailed list of the preliminary alternatives considered in that study. In addition, a base repair option was also evaluated.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
	Base Repair
AR-1	Addition/Renovation with addition to the south
AR-2	Addition/Renovation with addition to the east
AR-3	Addition/Renovation with additions to the east and north
AR-4	Addition/Renovation with addition to the north and demolition of existing classroom wings

NC-1A	All new construction located on existing green space and parking at north edge of site, with no overlap of existing building and no required phasing
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Option	Description
NC-1B	All new construction located on existing green space and parking at north edge of site, with no overlap of existing building and no required phasing
NC-2A	All new construction located on existing green space, parking and playing fields in northeast corner of site, with no overlap of existing building and no required phasing
NC-2B	All new construction located on existing green space, parking and playing fields along east edge of site, with no overlap of existing building and no required phasing
NC-3A	All new construction located on existing green space, parking and playing fields along east edge of site, with no overlap of existing building and no required phasing
NC-3B	All new construction located on existing green space, parking and playing fields along east edge of site, with no overlap of existing building and no required phasing
NC-4	All new construction located on existing green space and playing fields at middle of site, with no overlap of existing building and no required phasing
NC-5	All new construction located on existing green space and playing fields at middle of site, rotated 90 degrees from Option NC-4, with no overlap of existing building and no required phasing
NC-6	All new construction located on existing green space and playing fields at south edge of site, with no overlap of existing building and no required phasing

Upon further review, MSBA staff and the District agreed to five options (plus base repair) for further development and consideration in the final evaluation and development of the preliminary design pricing, as presented below. Options “AR-1,” “AR-4” and “NC-2A” were carried forward from the Preliminary Design Program, and Options “NC-2A.1” and “NC-2A.2” are variations of “NC-2A” that were added and explored in the Preferred Schematic Report.

Summary of Preliminary Design Pricing for Final Evaluation of Options

Option (Description)	Total Gross Square Feet	Square Feet of Renovated Space (cost*/sq. ft.)	Square Feet of New Construction (cost*/sq. ft.)	Site, Building Takedown, Haz Mat. Cost*	Estimated Total Construction ** (cost*/sq. ft.)	Estimated Total Project Costs
Base Repair	114,000	114,000 \$304/sq. ft.	n/a	\$6,265,000	\$40,887,000 \$359/sq. ft.	\$47,020,000
Option AR-1: Addition/Renovation (Phased)	126,500	114,000 \$348/sq. ft.	12,500 \$484/sq. ft.	\$6,265,000	\$51,964,000 \$411/sq. ft.	\$64,955,000
Option AR-4: Addition/Renovation (Phased)	130,000	54,900 \$355/sq. ft.	75,100 \$404/sq. ft.	\$17,366,00	\$67,155,000 \$517/sq. ft.	\$81,929,000

Option (Description)	Total Gross Square Feet	Square Feet of Renovated Space (cost*/sq. ft.)	Square Feet of New Construction (cost*/sq. ft.)	Site, Building Takedown, Haz Mat. Cost*	Estimated Total Construction ** (cost*/sq. ft.)	Estimated Total Project Costs
Option NC-2A: New Construction (Non-phased)	123,400	n/a	123,400 \$404/sq. ft.	\$12,496,000	\$62,312,000 \$505/sq. ft.	\$74,774,000
Option NC-2A.1: New Construction (Non-phased)	123,400	n/a	123,400 \$393/sq. ft.	\$12,945,000	\$61,431,000 \$498/sq. ft.	\$73,717,000
Option NC-2A.2: (New Construction (Non-phased)***	123,400	n/a	123,400 \$384/sq. ft.	\$12,520,000	\$59,905,000 \$485/sq. ft.	\$73,288,000

* *Marked up construction costs*

** *Does not include construction contingency*

*** *District's preferred solution*

The District has selected “Option NC-2A.2”, new construction, as the preferred solution to proceed into Schematic Design. The District selected “Option NC-2A.2” because it is anticipated to provide the best long-term value to the District; is estimated to be the least costly of the new construction options; because it will incorporate energy-efficient design measures and all-new systems and components; and it is anticipated to require lower operating and maintenance costs when compared to the addition/renovation options that were studied. The District notes that the key features of the preferred solution include a plan configuration that is compact, efficient, and flexible; spaces whose scale and adjacency support the District’s educational goals and retain the small-school feel that is important to the Wahconah community; and a centralized, light-filled Student Commons (first floor) and Learning Commons (second floor) that will function as the heart of the new Wahconah Regional High School. Additionally, the District notes that the preferred solution provides a single, secure point of entry and allows building staff to maintain building security during after-hours access to programs such as the Auditorium and Gymnasium.

Although the Base Repair option resulted in the lowest estimated project cost, the District determined it was not viable because it would not meet the space needs of its educational plan.

The District determined that “Option AR-1” and “Option AR-4” were not desirable because they did not provide the best long-term value for the following reasons: not all building systems would be new; systems would not be as energy efficient as in new construction; and the thermal performance of exterior walls would not be improved. Additionally, Options “AR-1” and “AR-4” called for disruptive, multi-year phasing and associated non-reimbursable costs for temporary classrooms, moving and storage.

The District appreciated the value and educational benefits of the new construction options that were evaluated but it determined that Options “NC-2A” and “NC-2A.1” were not as cost-effective or spatially advantageous as the preferred solution.

The District presented its proposed project to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”) on October 10, 2018. At that meeting, FAS members discussed the following topics: community participation and support for the proposed project; the functional and efficient

proposed site plan; the proposed academic cluster concept; the scale, character, and relationship of the Dining Commons and Learning Commons; the proposed quantity of seminar, small group and small special education spaces, and whether that quantity could be reduced while still meeting the District's educational goals; further consideration of adjusting location of OT/PT and custodial spaces in the proposed floorplan; the triangular classroom layout proposed and the District's need to provide staff with training to successfully use such spaces; and the District's ongoing and forthcoming professional development efforts to prepare faculty and staff to transition to a new building.

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

- 1) 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.
- 2) The District has submitted an operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget statement for MSBA review.
- 3) The District's Schematic Design submittal will be subject to final review and approval by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, prior to a Project Scope and Budget Agreement.
- 4) Subject to Board approval, the MSBA will participate in a project that includes spaces that meet MSBA guidelines, with the exception of variations previously agreed to by the MSBA. All proposed spaces will be reviewed during the Schematic Design phase.
- 5) 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.

Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the Central Berkshire Regional School District be approved to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Wahconah Regional High School with a new facility on the existing site.