

**Town of Watertown  
School Building Committee  
Three Elementary School Projects  
Wednesday, December 15, 2021  
via ZOOM 6:00p.m. – 7:00p.m.**

**M I N U T E S**

**Committee Members Present:** Mark Sideris (chair), John Portz (vice-chair), Deanne Galdston, Heidi Perkins, Lindsay Mosca, James Kane, Steve Magoon, Tom Tracy, Paul Anastasi and Vincent Piccirilli

**Committee Member Absent:** Leo Patterson

**Committee Member Late** – Kelly Kurlbaum

**Others Present:** Daren Sawyer, Julie Rahilly, Andrew Cunneen and James Jordan (Architectural Team, Ai3 Architects); Vivian Varbedian, Tom Finnegan and Alana Forbes (OPM, Hill International); Cristy Murphy, Allyson Maher and Tim Bonfatti (Compass Project Management) Stacy Phelan and Mena Ciarlone

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Sideris called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. John Portz took a roll call of the Committee Members present.
  
2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 17, 2021**  
Chairman Sideris made a motion to approve the Elementary meeting minutes for November 17, 2021. Vincent Piccirilli motions to adopt the minutes as written; Steve Magoon seconded. All were in favor on a roll call vote.

3. **Review/Approval**

**Elementary Monthly Invoices:**

Vivian Varbedian presented the Elementary School projects invoices totaling \$2,899,512.52

**The Elementary invoices read as follows:**

- *Hill International - \$90,210.00*
- *Ai3 Architects - \$106,746.47 (Base Services), \$300.00 (Reimbursable Expenses)*
- *Brait Builders - \$2,515,138.21*
- *UTS (Testing Agency) – \$1,105.00 (Cunniff ES), \$280.00 (Hosmer ES)*
- *Colliers International - \$15,592.60*
- *FF&E Invoices - \$170,140.24*

Vincent Piccirilli made a motion to approve the Elementary School projects monthly invoices of \$2,899.512.52. Tom Tracy seconded. All were in favor on a roll call vote.

**Review/Approval**

**Retainage Reduction / Cunniff Elementary School**

Vivian Varbedian presented and explained the Retainage Reduction of Brait Builders request to reduce Cunniff Elementary School retainage from 5% to 2.5% in December 2021 final pay requisition. Vivian explained that by releasing a retainage reduction is when a percentage of money typically 5% is held as retainage from the General Contractor per the overall contract value to make sure that they finalize and finish the job properly. Approval is needed to release approximately \$900,000.00 of retainage. Adequate funds will be available to finalize all the remaining punch list items.

Chairman Sideris made a motion to release 2.5% of retainage from the Cunniff Elementary school project. Vincent Piccirilli moved Tom Tracy seconded. All were in favor on a roll call vote.

**Review/Approval**

**Change Order #10**

Vivian Varbedian presented the Summary of Change Orders with approval for Change Order #10. These change orders were done to review and make certain that the change orders are up to date. The change orders to date are \$2,327,244.48. The change orders are identified by H (Hosmer Elementary school) and C (Cunniff Elementary School) which includes various smaller items.

Change Order #10 totals \$180,686.87. This brings it down to less than 2.5% of original contract sum.

Chairman Sideris asked for a motion to approve Change Order #10. Vincent Piccirilli made the motion to approve Change Order #10 totaling \$180,686.87; Tom Tracy seconded. All were in favor on a roll call vote.

**4. Executive Summary**

Vivian Varbedian discussed and presented December 2021 Executive Summary for Hosmer, Cunniff and Lowell Elementary school projects. Cunniff Elementary school contractors are continuing to finalize work on the Building, Site and FF&E punch list. The Site work punch list is contingent on the weather. Hosmer Elementary school work is continuing with Finish Painting, Ceilings, Carpentry, Flooring, and all the Finish MEPs in the interior of the building. The Owner IT Department will start installation of Owner Furnished Technology Equipment. We are preparing for Lowell Elementary school coordinating moves once Hosmer Elementary school is in the new facility during winter February vacation. We will also simultaneously move Lowell Elementary school into the swing space. Students from Lowell ES will move into the Phillips building as well as St. Jude facility. Thomas Finnegan stated that the filed sub-bids were received for Lowell ES and were accepted. The General Contractor bids were received yesterday (12/14) and will be reviewed in next couple weeks. Recommendation will be made in January 2021.

**5. Elementary Schools Project Updates & Approval**

**Hosmer O’Connell Field: Added Recreational Amenities**

Julie Rahilly of A13 Architects presented and discussed the current design lay out of the added amenities at the O’Connell Field. In the summer the School Building Committee approved additional design and engineering services to investigate how the added amenities will layout. The diagram shows the added amenities in yellow which include a prefabricated restroom, portable bleachers, enclosed dugout with storage (*power included and data included for wifi access, broadcasting by WCA-TV if possible*), new softball batting cage, flag with illumination and a scoreboard. Also, the Prefabricated Restroom would have a water service connection from Boylston Street which would include two single-user toilet rooms. Toilet rooms will double as team changing rooms as required which will includes drinking fountain, a water service room for irrigation controls and building will be decommissioned during the winter months. The total budget estimate of additional amenities

is \$1,705,600.00 NTE (not-to-exceed). The final estimate to be done once design has been completed and approved. Chairman Sideris requested approval to proceed with the design. Vivian Varbedian stated that as the team is progressing in the design there will be opportunities to come back to the committee, review the progress and consider the comments that were raised.

Chairman Sideris asked for a motion. Vincent Piccirilli made the motion that the School Building Committee authorizes the design team to proceed with the design and to keep the School Building Committee advised at regular intervals with the budget NTE \$1,705,600.00. Heidi Perkins seconded. All were in favor on a roll call vote.

## 6. Elementary School Questions / Comments

- **Question 1** – Lindsay Mosca asked when the punch list is expected to be done? Will there be any seasonal issues? What is the timeline with the 2.5% with the outdoor punch list?

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian explained that most of the interior and exterior work for Cunniff Elementary school has been done. All work should be completed by the end of the month and beginning of January. With the growing seasons, releasing the 2.5% of retainage, there is still \$900,000.00 being held for all work to be completed. The remaining balance is more than enough to offset what work is remaining. Tom Finnegan also stated that there will be landscaping work done in the Spring. Grass area and one of the Retention Ponds will be done in December if the weather holds, if not it will be done in the Spring.

- **Question 2** – Steve Magoon asked what were the numbers like in the bids?

**Response** – Tom Finnegan informed him that the low bid was about \$350,000 over our budget of \$37M. Chairman Mark Sideris commented that it was good news given the climate of where we are at but there is a lot of work to be done to do the due diligence which will be presented in January. Vivian also commented that PVs were added later so it is not part of the base contract but part of Alternate #1.

- **Question 3** – Steve Magoon asked how was it chosen to add the additional pathways? Is there a reason for the bleachers between the bathroom and the dug-out; why was it angled that way as opposed to placing it parallel to the field.

**Response** – Julie Rahilly of Ai3 stated that the pathways from Mount Auburn Street to the restroom facility for example is required access for ADA and it is placed in the spot it is in because of the grading in that location. We are calling out a retaining wall there so that will have to be added to accommodate the pathways, but the retaining wall can also double for sitting for sporting events. It was angled for better sight lines to home plate to get a better view of the game. The layout came from the Landscape Architect who promoted that it would be better for the sight lines / fields.

- **Question 4** – Vivian Varbedian asked Julie Rahilly about the buffer (195' x 330' soccer field w/ 15' buffer) for the soccer field, is not necessarily the field size.

**Response** – Julie Rahilly said that what is shown is a maximum field size that could be possible at O'Connell Field. The Recreational Director, Peter Cenetola passed along some guidelines that we should follow. He recommended a 15ft buffer and would not necessarily want to place any pathways or equipment within the buffer so it can function as a soccer field. It is shown as a request of the Recreational Director but the softball fields will remain as skinned fields and the soccer field will overlap the clay portions of the fields. Vivian Varbedian also mentioned that the O'Connell Field is primarily a softball field and secondary as a soccer field so there may not have the proper irrigation or water run off for a soccer field.

- **Question 5** – John Portz asked regarding the bathroom facility; what does it mean if half of the building is water serviced, is it a public space? Also, portable bleachers, where do they go when not

bleachers?

**Response** – Julie Rahilly of Ai3 stated that the water service is not a public space, the water service has equipment inside that services the field. Julie also stated that the portable bleachers means that they can be picked up and moved however they sit on a pad as shown in yellow. You cannot move them on a weekly or daily basis.

- **Question 6** – Steve Magoon mentioned concerns from the Recreational Director, Peter Centola. Concerns are with safe distance to the edge of the field to vertical obstructions as well as bleacher angle, protective netting systems for cars and solar panels adjacent to the softball field. He suggested replacing the rain garden with grass or a picnic area. He also mentioned about security cameras be installed somewhere.

- **Response** – Julie Rahilly stated there are security cameras that took the field into account that are part of the base contract.

**Question 7** – Paul Anastasi asked if all the power showing coming from the building and the PV arrays. Will this be the regular power source from the Photovoltaics?

**Response** – Julie Rahilly answered Yes, it is.

- **Question 8** – Vincent Piccirilli asked if field lighting is shown in the slide?

**Response** - Julie Rahilly stated that field lighting was not requested to be included with the added amenities package other than a light for the flag.

- **Question 9** – Tom Tracy asked about the bleachers and the walkway, if on the varsity softball field, you move the bleachers behind the back stop, you would get rid of the problem with how the bleachers are situated currently, you can save a lot of the additional walkway that will be added. Any thought of putting the bleachers for the varsity softball field right behind the back stop like the junior varsity softball field?

**Response** - Julie Rahilly asked if this solution would propose eliminating one set of bleachers and only having one. Tom Tracy believes it can save a lot of walkway slope money but not sure, he would like to see what the Recreational Director or Athletic Director think about this. Julie says that a walking pathway will still be required to access the restroom facility and for ADA requirements.

- **Question 10** – Ann Marie Cloonan asked if the restroom will be where the memorial currently is? Significant amount of additional green space will be taken with the new additions. I do not see the solar 15ft on the map?

**Response** - Julie Rahilly stated that the memorial would be in the corner that is cut off the page. It is where the fence line is currently.

- **Question 11** – Christen Fleming asked if there will be lighting for night games?

**Response** - Vivian Varbedian stated that the only illumination will be for the flagpole and no additional site lighting will be provided.

- **Question 12** – John Husson asked will the bathroom double as the locker room for players? Is it sized appropriately for players to change after-school etc?

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian answered that the restroom facilities are large enough for handicap accessibility as well as allowing ample room for using the facilities not just for as a restroom as well as changing.

- **Question 13** - John Husson asked what is the plan for soccer usage here, only in the fall? Will outfield fencing be installed for the fields?

**Response** – Julie Rahilly informed him that there will be no outfield fencing. This will pose a safety hazard for the outfielders with the back-to-back softball fields. The fields will be open in the soccer area so there will be no fence dividing it.

- **Question 14** – Christen Fleming stated that the varsity games especially in the Fall/Spring may

require lighting. Soccer could utilize the field at night as well so that it relieves the pressure on Victory field.

**Response** – Chairman Sideris stated that we committed to this neighborhood that we weren't going to put lights there.

- **Question 15** – Del Furbish confirmed that the design looks amazing. Would there be outfield fences used during softball season?

**Response** – Chairman Sideris stated No, there will be no outfield fences used during softball season.

- **Question 16** – Elodia Thomas asked why the decision been made or what is the purpose of illuminating the flag at nighttime? Also, could it not be set to the side of the property, so it is not splitting the view down the property towards the school which we invested so much money making this gorgeous school? Tied into that is the scoreboard which would be facing the fields. We will have the back end of the scoreboard facing Mount Auburn Street which is not the most attractive thing to look at? Flags technically suppose to be taken down by the end of the day.

**Response** – Julie Rahilly answered that the illumination was a request from the town programming meeting. The scoreboard location was limited to were would it be visible to use on both softball fields. The rational for this was if on the opposite side of the school building that it would be more obvious in that location on Mount Auburn Street than if it were against it or behind the trees. Steve Magoon also commented that the flag needs to be illuminated at night unless it is taken down every day. Upward illumination is allowed within dark skies, but we can investigate this to see how we can make it as limited as possible.

- **Question 17** – Ann Marie Cloonan shared her concerns about green space being taken away. With the older designs, not sure what it is called but she does not see it in the design. Also, the bleachers and batting cage about the security level. What will happen at nighttime? How will it be patrolled? Will the bathroom be locked at a certain time and who will maintain them?

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian replied that the square footage will be given. Chairman Sideris also stated that the last person from the softball team will make sure the doors are locked right after the events and the doors are not opened all the time. More conversation needs to be had with Public Works and Jim Kane (Facilities Director) to solve some ongoing concerns. It won't be open 24 hours.

- **Question 18** – Maureen Foley is not thrilled with where the flagpole is as she believes that it obstructs some vision from Mount Auburn. Also, who is going to maintain the bathroom and the public will use the bathroom when it is open. It will be very messy in the bathroom.

**Response** – Jim Kane added that he will work very closely with DPW and the School Building Committee to come up with a good solution to clean the bathrooms. There will be a lot of consideration regarding cleaning of the bathrooms.

- **Comment A**– Lindsay Mosca commented that she appreciates the design and to see these types of amenities which was lacking in town in terms of our female athletes.
- **Comment B** – Superintendent Deanne Galdston echoed what Lindsay Mosca. She is very pleased with the drawings and believes it is an excellent facility for our girls and elevates the level of their playing to a place that is equal or equitable to what we offer our boys.
- **Comment C** – Chairman Sideris commented to Steve's and Peters point about the angle of the bleachers. If we move the ones over by the parking area and make it straight, then you will have to move the other side that bleacher will look out at Auburn Street, out thru the outfield.
- **Response** – Julie Rahilly mentioned that it looks funnier in plan than it would if it was built, and you were experiencing it in (3) dimensions. Also, the question of why the pathways is the way they are; Julie says there is a slope from the perimeter of the field down toward both parking areas, so the pathways accommodate the grading there which ties into the angle of the bleachers. This can be reviewed by the

Landscape Architects and have them provide an alternate.

- **Comment D** – Lindsay Mosca commented that she does not dislike the path going all around the field, people might like this feature. Also, the spot behind the back stop looks tight by the rain garden and parking lot. It doesn't appear that it will fit.
- **Comment E** - Chairman Sideris stated that the comments are very well taken, and this is the first time seeing this. He asked Julie to revise and bring it back again before finalizing.
- **Comment F** - Vincent Piccirilli pointed out that an illuminated light flag was installed at the Sullivan Playground with LED light that sits at the top of the pole and down. He believes that they would do the same thing here.
- **Comment G** - Ryan Murphy asked if games played at the same time if consideration can happen about getting one temporary fence. If the bleachers are moved behind the back stop it is not the end of the world, we are open.
- **Comment H** – Paul Anastasi mentioned that now we have access to digital locking hardware for security purpose for the bathrooms. Schedules can be placed in the hardware and remotely lock the doors. No humans are needed with the new locking devices that are out there presently.
- **Comment I** - Steve Magoon appreciate the community of green space but it is important to provide the amenities to bring it into an equitable situation. He prefers not to have any hardscape on the field at all, but it is important to provide the appropriate amenities to the softball program.
- **Comment J** – John Portz acknowledges how it is important for the female athletes in the town to have an opportunity to play in facilities like this.
- **Comment K** – Ava, Watertown High School student thanked all involved for putting in the effort for the softball field. She appreciates all for putting in so much thought for their program.
- **Comment L** – Elodia Thomas voiced her concerns about the fields. The school population Pre-K thru High school is about 7%. All this comes out of the taxpayers. The batting cage is very close to the abutters. Does the batting cage have a lock, so the abutters don't have to listen early morning or late at night? We must consider everyone. Let's look at the numbers and get more realistic. Other people use this playground, and these are shared facilities. The school does not own the fields. We need to be more innovated and thoughtful about what type of rules are being set in place.
- **Comment M** – Ann Marie Cloonan stated that we are proud of our field and the beauty it brings to the town. Equity for the girls is not in question. The field is not a school field and the residence have a voice that should be acknowledge.

## **7. End of Elementary School Project Business Meeting**

Chairman Sideris ended the Elementary School Project Business meeting at 7:15 p.m.