

**Town of Watertown  
School Building Committee  
Three Elementary School Projects  
Wednesday, March 16, 2022  
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, Lindsay Mosca, Heidi Perkins, Steve Magoon, Paul Anastasi, Tom Tracy, and Vincent Piccirilli

**Committee Members Absent:** Kelly Kurlbaum, James Kane and Leo Patterson

**Others Present:** Daren Sawyer, Andrew Cunneen, James Jordan and Nate Williams (Ai3 Architects); Vivian Varbedian, Tom Finnegan and Alana Forbes (OPM, Hill International); Christy Murphy and Allyson Mahar; (Compass Project Management), Karen Feeney, Mena Ciarlone and Stacey Phelan

**1. Call to Order:** Chairman Mark Sideris called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. John Portz took a roll call of Committee Members present.

**2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 16, 2022**

Chairman Sideris made a motion to approve the Elementary Meeting Minutes for February 16, 2022. Vincent Piccirilli motions to adopt the Elementary school portion of the minutes as written; John Portz seconded. All were in favor on a roll call vote.

**3. Review and Approval of Elementary Schools Monthly Invoices, Ai3 Architects Amendment No.6 and Brait Builders Request for Retainage Reduction for Hosmer**

Vivian Varbedian presented and reviewed the Elementary school monthly invoices, Ai3 Architects Amendment No.6 and Brait Builders request for retainage reduction for Hosmer Elementary School.

**February 2022 invoices are as follows w/total at \$2,338,116.25:**

- Hill International – \$90,210.00
- Ai3 Architects (Basic Services) –\$27,094.16
- Ai3 Architects (Extra Services) – \$28,940.00
- Ai3 Architects – Reimbursables Services - \$1,035.00
- Brait Builders –\$1,710,482.96
- Colliers International (Cx) - \$ 15,569.40
- Ridgeline Energy – \$185.00
- A. Walecka & Sons - \$170,560.00
- FF&E Invoices - \$294,039.73

Chairman Mark Sideris made a motion to approve the Elementary School projects invoices. Vincent Piccirilli motions to approve the Elementary school project invoices totally \$2,338,118.25. Tom Tracy seconded. All were in favor on a roll call vote.

#### **Ai3 Architects Amendment No. 6**

Vivian Varbedian is seeking approval from the School Building Committee for Amendment No.6, Ai3 Architects to redesign of the Hosmer Elementary School Solar Canopies. The approval amount to amend Ai3 Architect's contract for the solar canopies are \$37,667.50

Mark Sideris made a motion to approve Amendment No.6. Vincent Piccirilli motions to approve amendment to Ai3 contract for \$37,667.50. Tom Tracy and Steve Magoon seconded; all were in favor on a roll call vote. Chairman Sideris stated that Vivian Varbedian did a fine job explaining but expounded that the School Building Committee wants to look at moving the solar canopies because the concerns of the arrays in the neighborhood.

#### **Retainage Reduction: Hosmer Elementary Schools Project**

Vivian Varbedian is seeking approval for Brait Builders request to reduce Hosmer Elementary School retainage from 5% to 2.5% starting in March 2022 final pay requisition. This will release approximately \$900,000.00 of retainage. Chairman Sideris asked if Hill team reviewed and if there is sufficient retainage to cover punch list items. Vivian Varbedian stated "Yes". Chairman Sideris motions to approve the retainage reduction. Vincent Piccirilli motions to approve reducing the retainage from 5% to 2.5% for Hosmer Elementary school. John Portz seconded; all were in favor on a roll call vote.

#### **4. Executive Summary**

Vivian Varbedian reviewed and presented a quick snapshot of March 2022 Executive Summary for Cunniff, Hosmer and Lowell Elementary school projects.

Hosmer Elementary school is fully occupied with students in and enjoying the new school. Work will be performed during April school vacation to move forward punch list items for both Cunniff & Hosmer Elementary Schools. Currently, the old Z- shaped section of Hosmer Elementary school, asbestos abatement is ongoing. Once abatement is completed, demolishing will begin.

#### **5. Elementary Schools Project Updates –**

##### **Lowell Elementary School - Approval of General Contractor & Alternate 1**

Vivian Varbedian presented and looked for approval of the General Contractor and Alternate 1 which is for the Photovoltaic for the building. Pursuit to Chapter 149, a Sub-Committee was established and performed their duties for pre-qualifying and going out to bid for a General Contractor. The General Contractors that submitted were CTA Construction, Brait Builders Corporation, Agostini Construction and J & J Contractors. CTA Construction Managers as the Lowest Qualified Bidder w/Base Bid \$37,350,000.00, Alternate #1 (PV for Building) \$624,750.00, Total Bid w/Alternate \$37,974,750.00

Alternate 1 description – The furnishing and installation of complete Photovoltaic (PV) System with estimated annual production of 196.2kWh.

- Furnished under section 26 00 00 (Electrical Sub – Contractor)
- Includes labor, materials, equipment, transportation, appurtenances, and related services.
- Include arrays, mounting hardware, terminal boxes, inverters, disconnects, circuit breakers, panel boards/switchgear.

Vivian Varbedian recommendation is to move forward with the low qualified bidder of CTA Construction for the Lowell Elementary school project as well as moving forward and accepting Alternate #1. Chairman Sideris motions to approve. Vincent Piccirilli motions to award the contract to CTA Construction Managers for the base bid plus Alternate #1. John Portz seconded; all were in favor on a roll call vote.

## **6. Elementary School Questions / Comments**

**Question 1** – John Portz asked if there were any type of renderings of what the Solar Canopies would look like at this point? Is it still in the planning stage?

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian stated that this will allow them to move forward with the redesign so that a rendering can be presented as well as what the options will be. This is just for a redesign.

**Question 2** – Paul Anastasia questioned Vivian Varbedian statement about the same stage as the Cunniff Elementary school. The Cunniff Elementary school had full demo and the building was open to us. I don't believe that we are at the same stage. Not disagreeing just don't believe we are at the same stage. The existing Z building hasn't been demoed yet.

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian stated that there is site work to be performed. Only work that is 100% complete would the retainage effect not necessarily the site work portion of the project.

**Question 3** - Chairman Sideris asked how long does demolish take once started?

**Response** - Vivian Varbedian stated it takes (6) weeks for demolition then site work begins.

**Question 4** – John Portz asked when will demolition start?

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian stated that Hosmer demolition is projected at the end of the month and finishing early May 2022. The Executive Summary also reflects Hosmer Z section demolition schedule.

**Question 5** – Lindsay Mosca asked once awarded, what the timeliness and start time for Lowell Elementary school project?

**Response** - Vivian Varbedian stated that once recommendation is approved, we will work with the General Contractor to get a commitment letter out to them as well as a contract by the end of the month.

**Question 6** – Attendee AnnMarie Cloonan asked if there will be any major impact to the neighborhood during the demolition?

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian stated that like the first phase pertaining to the connection to the Hosmer Elementary school, we will work with the General Contractor, Brait Builders on site to minimize any impact to the neighborhood as well as any noise and debris. Also, dust mitigation plan will also be included with watering and fire hosing. Chairman Sideris also stated for the neighbors, like going back to the very first phase with the dump trucks taking materials out and having minimal impact on the neighborhood.

**Question 7** – Attendee Gail Vasington asked when do you anticipate having a rendering of the solar panel redesign at Hosmer Elementary school? Will the options be presented at these meetings?

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian stated “Yes” the options will be presented to the School Building Committee. Daren Sawyer of Ai3 Architects stated that the renderings will be available for the next building committee meeting. Approximately 3-4 weeks will be needed, to put some preliminary design thoughts together and generate some renderings.

**Question 8** - Attendee Leslie Brokaw asked when would Lowell Elementary school construction start? Would it have same end date even with the lost months?

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian stated that we are hoping to have the Lowell construction to start immediately as soon as the funds are appropriated, the contract executed and move towards any schedule recovery in anticipation of having the same end date. If there are any changes, the School

Building Committee will be notified at once.

**Question 9** – Attendee AnnMarie Cloonan asked if there will be Saturday work? What way will the construction traffic flow?

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian stated that there is no anticipation for the Hosmer Elementary school project assuming what the question is pertaining too. There will be some trucking on Saturdays starting at 8am per the ordinance and we will minimize it during the week.

**Question 10** – Attendee Susan Leduc wanted to make a comment about the choice of the Lowell General Contractor. She fully understands the logic being the resident of the Town; the logic of taking the lowest qualified bidder. On the other hand, being an abutter of the Hosmer ES, she is amazed at the job that Brait Builders did and wonders if taken into consideration at all the facts that they came in on time on budget. She is amazed what a fine job they have done by not disturbing the neighborhood and building a major facility. They have been considerate in every way by not disturbing traffic especially on Mount Auburn Street. Does this count or does it absolutely by law has to be the lowest bid from the qualified bidder?

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian stated that it doesn't always have to be the lowest bidder, but it has to be the lowest qualified bidder which in this case it was CTA Construction. Chairman Sideris interjected that it is a state law.

**Question 11** – Attendee Elodia Thomas echoed Susan Leduc stating that Brait Builders came in under budget and ahead of time. She is always digging into stuff and there are some concerns with CTA that she is sure that the Committee has done due diligence. It is concerning as a resident and a taxpayer. She is hopeful that there will be a very strong oversight of this firm given the issues that she has been made aware of and have uncovered.

**Response** – Vivian Varbedian stated that all due diligence was done on behalf of the City of Watertown as well as the oversight which has always been consistent throughout the process not only with Hosmer and Cunniff Elementary school, but we will continue to be so on behalf of the City of Watertown for the Lowell Elementary school project.

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

Chairman Sideris ended the Elementary School Project Business meeting at 6.23pm.