



Watertown Town Council

Administration Building
149 Main Street
Watertown, MA 02472
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ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris,
Council President

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,
Vice President

Michael F. Dattoli,
Councilor At Large

Aaron P. Dushku,
Councilor At Large

Susan G. Falkoff,
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,
Councilor At Large

Angeline B. Kounelis,
District A Councilor

Lisa J. Feltner,
District B Councilor

Kenneth M. Woodland,
District D Councilor

TOWN COUNCIL & SCHOOL COMMITTEE JOINT PUBLIC HEARING MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2016 AT 7:00 PM RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

MINUTES

1. ROLL CALL

Council President Sideris called to order the Joint Meeting of the Town Council and the School Committee at 7:00 p.m. in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Those present for the Town Council were Councilors Michael F. Dattoli, Aaron P. Dushku, Susan G. Falkoff, Lisa J. Feltner, Angeline B. Kounelis, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Those present for the School Committee were John Portz, Chair, Kendra Foley, Eileen Hsu Balzer, Candace Miller, Elizabeth Yusem. Guido Guidotti was absent.

Others present were Michael J. Driscoll, Town Manager, Marilyn W. Pronovost, Town Council Clerk, Dr. John Brackett, Interim Superintendent of Schools, and Dr. Theresa McGuiness, Assistant Superintendent of Schools.

2. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION:

Informational Presentation on a [Facilities Master Plan Study by SMMA](#) (Symmes Maini & McKee Associates).

School Chairman Portz introduced the topic by stating that this presentation would be a high level view of the [Master Plan](#). He introduced the Architect, Joel Seely.

Mr. Seely stated the presentation is a culmination of work completed by the Steering Committee during the summer and the designs presented were only conceptual models to provide a guideline for the Town to pursue in order to [remediate conditions at the schools](#). With each conceptual option, a comparable cost model was provided to allow for comparisons.

Mr. Van Hammel provided further details. He explained the method of review that included a review of

- ~ What is available educationally v. what education components should be offered to students
- ~ The staff's desire to utilize up to date teaching methods v. the buildings' ability to service such techniques
- ~ The lack of land for development of new facilities in the community or the expansion of current facilities
- ~ The quality of current facilities – basically sound but with a need for maintenance improvements
- ~ A comparison of current classroom size with the Massachusetts State Building Association (MSBA) guidelines – a finding that most areas are undersized and that the oversized areas are often misused.
- ~ Changing demographics to plan for schools in 2025.

He discussed the models for improvement:

1. Essential Renovations – Baseline model – the interiors would be brought up to 21st Century standards; basically, maintenance items.
2. Advocated Renovations – these would include the essential renovations plus redo interiors to meet the educational needs for the facilities, such as moving walls to change space configurations, and window and door renovations. These changes would allow for project-based learning and team teaching.
3. New Construction

Mr. Van Hammel discussed each school.

Cunniff Elementary School

Essential Renovations

- ~ Basement – Renovate to enhance storage
- ~ 1st Floor – To accommodate a student population of 400, building space needs to be added, the gymnasium and cafeteria expanded, the arts area moved, and the security needs for the entrance updated (a need that should be addressed at each school)
- ~ 2nd Floor – consider the possibility of adding a second floor to prevent encroachment on the play space

Advocated Renovations

- ~ 1st Floor – open up classes with non-bearing partitions to allow for team teaching and project learning – expand gymnasium and cafeteria even further

Lowell Elementary School

Essential Renovations

- ~ 1st Floor – Basic interior renovations, update to security entrance, add cafeteria and classrooms; move the cafeteria for an outside view, use the views to enhance learning
- ~ 2nd Floor – Add classrooms

Advocated Renovations

- ~ 1st Floor – Provide added changes to classrooms, new entries, new cafeteria, new gymnasium located where old cafeteria is
- ~ 2nd Floor – Classrooms on top

Hosmer Elementary School

Essential Renovations

- ~ Intention is to reduce this school's population in order to allow for a balanced neighborhood school system
- ~ Overall renovations
- ~ Renovate the theater space to increase use

Advocated Renovations – A

- ~ Providing more open space to by working with non-bearing walls
- ~ Try to remove double loaded corridors to provide more common open space
- ~ Work on entry
- ~ Move the cafeteria some and expand
- ~ Add an Arts Center
- ~ Create an area for a District Pre – K program

Added Renovations – B

- ~ Create a new cafeteria and gymnasium
- ~ Establish a universal Pre-K program that could share the gymnasium and cafeteria
- ~ Complete renovations

Watertown Middle School

Essential Renovations

- ~ Improve the circulation of the building which has been added on to
- ~ Clean up classrooms
- ~ Create additions to the gymnasium
- ~ Create a new security entrance

Advocated Renovations

- ~ Open up cafeteria and expand it
- ~ Increase use of theater by closing off classrooms so that the Theater could be used by the public more frequently
- ~ Interior renovations

Watertown High School

This is a building with potential . Some classes are adequately sized but the layout of the building makes it difficult for educators.

Advocated Renovations

- ~ Create an Arts Center
- ~ Open up the cafeteria areas
- ~ Increase the Industrial area

Mr. Seely then discussed the cost of these changes.

School	Essential Renovs	Advocated Renovs
Cuniff	\$26.5 million	\$29.8 million
Lowell	\$28.3 million	\$33.0 million
Hosmer	\$29.9 million	\$40.7 million (Opt. A)
		\$54.4 million (Opt B)
Middle School	\$35.3 million	\$46.3 million
High School	\$44.9 million	\$53.4 million

The cost assumption used for the renovations was the value of the changes with mid-2018 dollars and with the same starting date for each school.

He stated that new construction was considered but that this might not be advantageous for Watertown as it already had completed some large renovations in 1997. Also fixing the current buildings would permit the Town to keep the existing facilities and would add to the Town's capital investments – the schools.

Mr. Seely suggested the following items as the next steps that should be considered:

- ~ Approve the Master Plan Report
- ~ Determine the Scope and Sequence of Projects
- ~ Community Outreach
- ~ Funding Options
- ~ Feasibility Study

Chairman Portz opened the meeting to questions. The following issues were addressed regarding the Feasibility Study:

- ✓ The purpose of the study – This would assist with the sequencing, scope, design, and cost estimate
- ✓ How to determine the proper method of completing the Feasibility Study
- ✓ The cost of preparing a feasibility study – The cost varies on what is being considered, such as the level of detail needed, the size of the population being served, and the scope of the project. It was pointed out that the more precise and detailed the information is, the more likely that a final estimate will reflect the actual cost.
- ✓ How to be a good client – Is it wiser to determine what is wanted for the school system or should the community let the consultant state what can be provided.
- ✓ What the scope of the next feasibility study should be – Individual School v. a district-wide vision
- ✓ When to start the process – Now or when the scope of the change is defined

Chairman Portz stated that he believed the next steps included technical development, community engagement, and educator engagement. He felt that

an Architectural Support firm needed to be engaged to guide the community with the technical needs of the project. The Steering Committee needs to meet again to discuss the impact of the changes. Educators need to be involved in defining how we move forward now that there is more information available.

Dr. Burkett reiterated the need for the technical assistance to aid in implementing the defined changes.

President Sideris ended the meeting by stating that this was an opportunity to present the information to the community, that the School and Town acting as partners would continue to have conversations on this matter, and that the community should not be afraid of beginning the process and making decisions.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Falkoff seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

ADDENDUM

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted by a vote of __9__ for, __0__ against, __0__ present on February 14, 2017.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President
s/MWP

**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2016 AT 7:00 P.M.
RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER
LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

1. Watertown School District – Facility Master Plan, December 19, 2016 – Prepared by Symmes Maini & McKee Associates (SMMA) – Item 2.
2. Watertown Facilities Master Plan Study, Watertown, Massachusetts, December 1, 2016 – Symmes Maini & McKee Associates (SMMA No. 10648.00) – Item 2.
3. School Facilities Assessment, Watertown Public Schools, Watertown, Massachusetts, Preliminary Qualitative Evaluation Document – March 13, 2014 – Item 2.