

**Tisbury School Building Committee  
2019-2020  
7:00PM, Monday, September 21, 2020  
by Zoom Cloud Conference due to Covid-19 Restrictions**

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**TSBC Members Present:** Chair Harold Chapdelaine, John Custer, Sean DeBettencourt, Peter Gearhart, Rita Jeffers, Reade Milne, Rachel Orr, Jim Rogers, Michael Watts

**Others:** Anna Edey, George, Jean Hay, Marie, Teagan Myers, Janet Packer, Alice Robinson, Susie White, 508- 360-7205, Recorder – Marni Lipke, Daedalus Projects – Christina Opper, Amanda Sawyer, Tappé Architects – Chris Blessen,

**Schools:** Prin. John Custer, Sean DeBettencourt, Meredith Goldthwait, Rita Jeffers, John Mode, Melissa Ogden, Anne Williamson, TSC – Michael Watts,

**Town:** Selectman – Jeff Kristal, Jim Rogers, Town Administrator – Jay Grande Planning Bd. - Ben Robinson, FinCom – Jynell Kristal,

**Press:** MV Times – Rich Saltzberg,

\* TSBC members late arrivals or early departures.

**1. Call To Order**

The Tisbury School Building Committee 2019-2020 (TSBC) meeting was called to order at 7:02PM.

- (*Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)

**2. Virtual Meeting Reminders (Mute, Video, Chat, Raising Hands)**

Chair Harold Chapdelaine reviewed the protocol for remote meetings occasioned by the pandemic. The meeting was being recorded for posting, along with all background documents, on the Project website <http://www.tisbury-school-project.com>. All participants were welcome. In order to facilitate the technology he asked that:

- microphones be muted to reduce background noise,
- participants raise hands either by Zoom option or on video;
- non-TSBC members turn off their video so members could be more easily identified.

**3. Tisbury School Building Committee (TSBC) Attendance - was called.**

**4. Review and Possible Approval of Minutes from the August 24, 2020 Meeting**

• **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. RACHEL ORR AND SECONDED BY MR. SEAN DEBETTENCOURT THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 24, 2020 MEETING WERE APPROVED: MOTION PASSED: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTION** due to absence: PRIN. JOHN CUSTER—ABSTAIN, MR. DEBETTENCOURT—AYE, MR. PETER GEARHART—AYE, MS. RITA JEFFERS—AYE, MS. READE MILNE—AYE, MS. ORR—AYE, MR. JIM ROGERS—AYE, MR. MICHAEL WATTS—AYE, MR. CHAPDELAINÉ—AYE.

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• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY PRIN. CUSTER AND SECONDED BY MR. DEBETTENCOURT AND MS. JEFFERS THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 17, 2020 MEETING WERE APPROVED AS CORRECTED FOR SPELLING: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 9 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: PRIN. CUSTER—AYE, MR. DEBETTENCOURT—AYE, MR. GEARHART—AYE, MS. JEFFERS—AYE, MS. MILNE—AYE, MS. ORR—AYE, MR. ROGERS—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MR. CHAPDELAINÉ—AYE.

5. Acknowledgment of Receipt of Public Correspondence

Ms. Anna Edey's request for the letter from Counsel was acknowledged. The letter was emailed to her and was available on the Project Website.

6. Review of Concept Option 3: Floor Plans, Building Exterior, Massing/Elevations, Materials (See documents on file.)

a. Building Committee Discussion (See 8/24/20 Minutes p.2-4 #6.)

- It was hoped that the TSBC would review the current plans and vote to move the project into the next phase, cost estimation and preparation for public forums before a Special Town Meeting (STM).
- Mr. Chris Blessen and the Tappé Architect team presented the changes made in response to TSBC comments.
  - The stage now had American Disabilities Act (ADA) access—hopefully after Town Meeting vote to fund, it would be revisited for efficiencies.
  - On the gym floor, emergency shelter storage was shifted so that a reduced cafeteria could fit more cleanly on the next floor. The cafeteria size still allowed three seatings with some space to spare.
  - On the next floor, art, health/wellness and foreign language rooms were brought into a right angle and the speech/pathology and assistant principal's room were shown.
  - A concrete thickened shelf below the brick of the administration wing could aesthetically match the historic building. The loading dock was set further back from Spring St. and there was a chance of saving one of the mature trees on that side.
  - To increase direct daylight, the brick gym would include a translucent window system (Kalwall) with a high R value (insulation). Sloped skylights and larger clear story glazing would harvest northern light for the rest of that side of the building.
  - In addition to brick (\$37/ft.) and glass elements, Tappé suggested a high-pressure laminate on synthetic backing (\$97/ft.) that would not fade, could be ordered in a number of colors and patterns, and had a long maintenance-free lifespan.
  - Further work had been done on the Williams St. entry way. Previous storage spaces were now being populated with electrical layering and duct work.
  - The original building was framed by the lower and aesthetically separated new additions including the glassy towers.
- Given the societal and health/safety changes triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic the maximum capacity of the building was discussed. The TSBC acknowledged the conflicting pressures: to allow sufficient space for future contingencies versus

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restraining square footage to reduce cost. The current design was for two sections per grade, 18 students per classroom with the possibility of adding 2 more desks per room. School staff noted that they were used to addressing enrollment spikes and dips within a given space—for example a full size classroom was seldom necessary for a third section in a grade. On the other hand the TSBC pointed out the School had been using the temporary “white house” for 20 years because of limited space/poor planning.

- Mr. Blessen stated the shell of this iteration was about as tight as it could be for a New England School within the Education Plan. For example, the cafeteria was reduced as far as possible for three seatings within the space allowed by floor stacking issues.

- Lack of bathroom doors was a common request in many schools.
- The media center at the core of the building was an educator request but its shape was awkward with a narrow (12 ft.) arm that would restrict flexibility.

- After consulting with Island librarians space for 10,000 volumes was considered sufficient. Proposed bookshelves were double-sided. Half walls or other changes could be added in the next design phase.

- Educators also requested the flexible traffic circulation that lead to a bridge over the cafeteria, however the TSBC expressed concern that it was an ‘attractive nuisance’ tempting students to drop or throw things off it (see below: Tasks). Others felt the problem could be solved with plexiglas or discipline. Another direct route to the cafeteria would be a significant design change.

- Although clear and secure arrival/departure circulation was a priority design element, there was an objection to the lack of a visibly obvious front entrance. An ADA accessible Williams St. entrance would be tricky but might be possible if desired.

- A member criticized the sloping sidewalks or stairs leading to the playground.

- In answer to continued questions on air and light, it was noted that windows were placeholders and could be added, changed and located in the design development phase, e.g. discussion on the addition of windows to the historic building. Light was one of the difficulties with renovations projects which had to fit with existing exterior walls. Heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) systems were increasingly efficient in air exchange and purification.

- There was a discussion on the lower roofs and roof lines which would change when mechanical equipment and solar arrays were added. Mr. Blessen explained the HVAC equipment locations would be decided as engineering designs were further along, and the locations could be screened and/or placed out of the line of sight.

- The TSBC also raised the issue of the administrative/Project Headway wing, which had not previously been a focal point.

- The TSBC discussed what feedback was appropriate at this stage of schematic design level. A TSBC vote to go forward would pause the design in order to calculate cost estimates for a solid budget, and to produce renderings and supporting information needed for a Town vote. Circulation, codes, windows, etc. were usually covered in the next or design development phase when the TSBC would move deeper into the design phase for further tweaks and adjustments.

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- Some were hesitant about presenting a design that was not settled in all its details, looking at it from a voter's viewpoint, nor had there been any work on financial efficiency savings from the original estimate.
- In addition there was concern both from about the lack of public review during the process, including input from other Town boards and committees—resulting in fear of a failed vote and a third building project committee.
  - Several points were asserted, many by Chair Chapdelaine.
- The standard design/construction process was to present this phase of design (about 15% of total design completion) with costs for Town vote and to continue refinements in the next phase. Other options and designs would have to be re-conceived and repriced at considerable cost.
  - There was no 'perfect' design, and this one, in compliance with the charge for renovation/addition as driven by the Education Plan satisfied the 'primary customers' who were the staff that would use the building 8-10 hrs. a day.
- The design was a great improvement over the present school which was insufficient to the Town's student population (as attested twice by a number of experts) and to 21<sup>st</sup> Century education and security needs.
- It preserved the historic building and the amount of playground and parking land.
- Mr. Blessen and the Tappé team had been diligent in addressing TSBC concerns with a number of improvements: shifting the stage, complying with setbacks, reducing the cafeteria, improving the loading dock, adding light, etc.
  - If the Concept/Option was approved tonight the TSBC would meet jointly with the Board of Selectmen, Tisbury School Committee (TSC), Planning Board, and Finance Committee. The TSBC would also work on public forums, publicity and presentations in preparation for Town vote.
- TSBC meetings had been well attended by 16 to 35 attendants, including those particularly interested in the project. As a complex project with many stakeholders this was in general how government operated, with the most public interest in the period just before a Town vote.
- The original 1929 design took 7 years and the Edgartown School went through four building committees. However, at each delay, inflation increased the project cost.

**b. Public Comment**

- Mr. Ben Robinson objected to the lack of public input and communications with other Town boards. He also suggested rethinking the design; removing the planned stairwells and retaining the existing stair to allow more useful space. In addition he argued that the schematic design was more like 85% of design completion.
- Mr. Blessen explained that with 40 years specializing in school design, Tappé could attest to the design phase. Mr. Robinson's suggestion on stairs would move square footage around but was an opinion to be asked of staff who would use the space.
  - Ms. Anna Edey expressed a passionate opinion about a number of issues she perceived as design flaws.
- The project had committed to net zero energy draw. Mr. Blessen responded, the campus would be electrically powered and consequently available for renewable

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energy sources. Insulation would be greatly improved (see 2/18/20 Minutes p.2-3 #4). BTUs and Kilowatts would be estimated in the next design phase. However the size of the project precluded sufficient roof solar arrays to get to net zero without solar arrays in the parking lots. Geo-thermal power was cost prohibitive.

- Ms. Edey also criticized what she saw as a dark, interior, small cafeteria, suggesting instead a larger room (for two seatings) connected to the landscape. The TSBC responded that:

- the cafeteria was well lit with north daylight,
- staff considered two 150-student seatings but felt it would be chaotic and stressful;
- students spent 18 minutes a day in the cafeteria.

- The TSBC requested Ms. Edey convey her other points by email and she agreed.

• **MR. ROGERS MOVED TO APPROVE OPTION THREE AS REVISED SEPTEMBER 21, 2020 AND TO MOVE FORWARD WITH PREPARATIONS FOR PUBLIC FORUMS, PRICING AND DESIGN DEVELOPMENT; MR. WATTS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTION: PRIN. CUSTER—AYE, MR. DEBETTENCOURT—AYE, MR. GEARHART—AYE, MS. JEFFERS—AYE, MS. MILNE—AYE, MS. ORR—ABSTAIN, MR. ROGERS—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MR. CHAPDELAIN—AYE.** Ms. Orr was not ready to vote.

- The TSBC thanked Mr. Blessen. Chair Chapdelaine thanked the entire team for their perseverance—most people failed to understand the arduous nature of the process.

7. Acknowledgement of Upcoming TSBC Meetings and Joint Meeting with School Committee (TSC), Finance Committee (FinCom) and Select Board Schedule

The schematic design, narrative and engineering should be completed by mid October in order to have pricing (including contingencies) by the end of October, leaving a very tight public education schedule before the Special Town Meeting (STM)—which would be followed 15 days later by a ballot vote.

- It was necessary to reach the public in as many ways as possible, through the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), social media, live presentations on MVTV, forums, etc.

- In-Person public forums were likely to be hybrids of virtual attendance (including some TSBC members) and an in-person panel including: 2 TSBC members, and representatives from the TSC, FinCom and Selectmen—total indoor in-person attendance not more than 25 people including press and public.

- The TSBC brainstormed other venues. The Performing Arts Center (PAC) was closed, although there was a large tent in the High School parking lot (see below: Tasks). Tents presented a further expense and were dependent on weather.

- The Martha's Vineyard Film Society was also a possibility.

- Select Board Chair Jeff Kristal was working hard talking to private citizens.

- It was suggested all TSBC members carry a print-out of the design and talk to citizens about the project.

8. Other Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair Within 48 Hours of the Meeting

The TSBC thanked Ms. Orr for posting agendas on the Town website (see below: Tasks).

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Adjournment

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY PRIN. CUSTER AND SECONDED BY MS. MILNE THE TISBURY SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 9:26PM: 9 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MR. DEBETTENCOURT—AYE, MR. GEARHART—AYE, MS. JEFFERS—AYE, MS. MILNE—AYE, MS. ORR—AYE, MR. ROGERS—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MR. CHAPDELAINÉ—AYE.

**Appendix A: Meetings/Events:**

- ~~TSBC TBD 5:00PM, Monday, September 28, 2020 – Zoom~~
- TSBC – 7:00PM, Monday, October 5, 2020 – Zoom

**Appendix B: Actions**

Tappé/Daedalus – resolve:

- calculate maximum building capacity.
- contact staff re: students throwing things off the bridge over the cafeteria.
- west side wall and administration wing refinement.
- better pedestrian traffic connection with outdoor classrooms.

Mr. Chapdelaine/Daedalus - explore tent pricing (including heat) for public forums.

- explore MV Film Society venue.

Mr. Rogers – contact Ms. Bennett/Ms. Kral re: posting TSBC agendas on Town website.

**Appendix C: Documents on File: Available at:**

<http://www.tisbury.mvyps.org/> click on Tisbury School Project

(Official archive hard copies on file at Tisbury Town Hall & Tisbury School):

- Agenda 9/21/20
- Chapdelaine/Blessen cover emails re: Tisbury School 9.14.20 Updated Floor Plans and Perspectives (2 p.) 9/14/20
- Tisbury Elementary School Schematic Design Ground Floor... (9 p.) 9/9/20
- Chapdelaine/Blessen emails re: Cafeteria Additional Observation 9/16/20
- Blessen email re: Moving Forward with Option 3 8/27/20
- Photos (2 Kalwall, 2 exterior siding)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

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Marni Lipke – Recorder

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Date

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Harold Chapdelaine – TSBC Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Minutes approved as extensively amended 10/19/20