

**Tisbury School Building Committee – Design/Construction Phase**  
**4:30PM, Thursday, April 28, 2022**  
**by Zoom Cloud Conference due to Covid-19 Restrictions**

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**TSBC Members Present:** Acting Chair – Rita Jeffers, Connie Alexander, John Custer, Sean DeBettencourt, Reade Milne, Jim Rogers, Sarah York,  
**Absent:** Mike Watts,  
**Others:** John Cahill, Rachel Orr, Olivia, Recorder – Marni Lipke, CHA Projects – Aditya Modi, Michael Owen, Amanda Sawyer, Tappé Architects – Chris Blessen, Toby Zaltsman, WT Rich - Harvey Eskenas, Jonathon Rich, Brian Santos,  
**Town:** Town Administrator – Jay Grande, Select Board – Jeff Kristal, Roy Cutrer, FinCom – Nancy Gilfoy, Louise Clough, Jynell Kristal, Mary Ellen Larsen Climate Com. -Melinda Loberg, Planning Bd. - Ben Robinson,  
**School:** Supt. Matt D’Andrea, Business Administrator – Mark Friedman, Prin. John Custer, Asst. Prin. Melissa Ogden, Julie Brand, Sean DeBettencourt, Meredith Goldthwait, Kate Harding, Rita Jeffers, Natalie Krauthamer, TSC – Amy Houghton, Jen Cutrer,

\* TSBC members late arrivals or early departures

1. Call To Order & Virtual Meeting Reminders

• The Tisbury School Building Committee Design/Construction Phase (TSBC) meeting was called to order at 4:36PM. Acting Chair Rita Jeffers reviewed the protocol for remote meetings occasioned by the pandemic.

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

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

3. 60% Construction Drawings (CDs) Option Review and Decision

(See documents on file & 4/25/22 Minutes p. 2-4 #5.)

Tappé Architects, Daedalus/CHA Owners Project Managers (OPM), and Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) WT Rich presented further analysis of the project design and options—resulting more accurate projections, some advantageous and others more negative.

• The following redesign encompassed all educational space except Project Headway, while eliminating the separate administrative wing (Options #1 & #3).

- Administration would fit into what was now a courtyard. The central staircase and elevator at the 1929 building main entrance would be eliminated leaving side spaces at the entrance level and larger spaces on the upper 2 levels. Then classrooms and offices were shifted around within the building: i.e. kindergarten (K) through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Special Education (SpEd) spaces would move to the other side of the building, the displaced physical/occupational therapy (PT/OT) rooms would move the side spaces left by the elimination of the stairs, the K-4th grade math would move up a floor; space over the gym/stage would become emergency storage, etc.

- If desired, Project Headway could be accommodated in the current White House or purchased modulars.

• The TSBC clarified some of the moves and suggested some modifications.

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- Elimination of the 1929 central entrance stair space would allow an office or class space but leave the historic entrance as an inoperable facade (see below: Actions).
- Security around the administrative offices was clarified. The media specialist was consulted on the change since the offices now opened directly into the media center.
- Eliminating 2 floors of the media centers was suggested to substantially increase space. However, school staff and Mr. Chris Blessen of Tappé argued that “media centers” were better thought of as valuable, flexible educational space allowing a number of different and simultaneous activities, as well as providing extra classrooms in case of enrollment spikes.
- Option #1 – which eliminated the administrative wing (using the above design) but kept the windows and masonry renovations, when further examined and despite aggressive reductions came in \$1,200,000 over-budget, resulting in serious disadvantages:
  - forestalled signing the WT Rich contract and consequently prevented the project from going out to bid;
  - required 2 designs (one for successful vote, one for failed vote) possibly delaying project completion date;
  - was unfeasible to set hard costs for alternate add-ons (e.g. administrative wing, etc.).
- Option #2 – did not change substantially since it did not meet the Education Plan.
- Option #3 – used the above redesign for administrative offices, but eliminated window replacement/masonry repointing. Advantages were:
  - a residual \$285,000 if all went well—which could help with some priority windows;
  - simpler unit price bid and discreet package allowing for hard numbers for a Town vote;
  - did not require 2 designs;
  - ability to go out to bid immediately.
- Value engineering (VE) in all options included: smaller windows, smaller curtain walls, roof overhang details, 50% fiberglass insulation reduction, lower gym roof (now slightly above standard), changing floor finishes from epoxy to concrete, etc. Other projects sometimes appointed 2-3 representatives (those most effected) to a VE Working Group.

The ensuing discussion acknowledged the painful situation and examined options from a number of perspectives.

- The intention was to complete the full project, the options provided possible first steps.
- The TSBC applauded the professional team for their work reducing the original \$10,000,000 overrun to \$3-5,000,000.
- Ms. Reade Milne advocated strongly for a project within the \$55,000,000 original budget, stating it was unconscionable to return for more money, considered residents had already lost confidence in the project, and suggested a total redesign and drastic cuts.
  - On the other hand others pointed out that a number of 2022 Annual Town Meeting (ATM) articles requested 10-20% additional funds for previous articles due to pandemic, Ukraine war, supply chain, etc. inflation. Some members felt the request was a compromise between some cuts and an additional funding ask, and were willing to advocate for it.
- Several members as well as Tisbury School Committee Chair Amy Houghton, were passionately concerned with a failure to fulfill the promise to properly renovate the 1929 building and windows which were a longtime problem and eye-sore.
  - Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) and some other grant funds for window replacement were not available as part of larger projects.
  - The timeframe for the windows (bid, order, installation ~ 30 weeks) required funding by November/December.

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- Mr. Blessen explained that reductions repurposing the media spaces and eliminating the administrative redesign above would not come close to covering the \$2,100,000 of window savings and would also eliminate further important educational spaces (unified arts, band/music, etc.). Similarly, reductions in soft costs (temporary school, fees, contingencies, etc.) would not provide any substantial savings.
- If Option #3 were followed and the additional funding failed, the goal would be to use contingency funds to reseal the windows, repair all active leaks and make the envelope weathertight.
  - There was also concern that building sustainability should be a priority.
  - Planning Board Chair Ben Robinson:
    - suggested a combination of Options #1 and #2, renovating the existing gym and considering priorities in building-out additional spaces for administration and music;
    - seriously cautioned against VE in terms of future upkeep, aesthetics and building value.
  - Members mentioned the importance of the school as a community building, and the design to bring the gym to the parking lot level to improve access.
  - Ms. Rachel Orr acknowledged:
    - the TSBC due diligence and wrenching, hard decision;
    - the serious concerns about the window issue;
    - Town understanding of pandemic and Ukraine war inflation and cascading world problems.
  - Ms. Jeffers took a pulse of the meeting:
    - Ms. Connie Alexander was not ready to vote, and requested a possible second meeting;
    - Ms. Sarah York was ready to vote for Option #3.
    - Principal John Custer appreciated the extra time to reflect, the additional information, expressed confidence in the professional team and was ready to vote.
    - Ms. Milne was not ready to vote.
    - Mr. Sean DeBettencourt, after ascertaining the building envelope would be sealed, was ready to vote.
    - Mr. Jim Rogers was concerned about the windows, hoped for more reductions in Option #1, wanted what was best for the Town and was not ready to vote.
    - Ms. Jeffers advocated for asking the Town to vote on the cost overrun, rather than specific components of the project, noting it was less about the windows than about inflation.
  - The professional team unanimously and strongly advocated for Option #3 as the only one that allowed the Town to go to market with bids in the next 5-6 weeks.
    - All other options entailed major re-design and/or bid delays at 1-2% monthly inflation. This was possible if the Town so voted but the team warned there was no magic solution.
    - Only Option #3 allowed set numbers for a Town vote on additional funds.
    - Mr. Michael Owen of CHA/Daedalus commended Mr. Blessen and Mr. John Rich of WT Rich for brilliant work that allowed a strategic launch, discretionary spending and a vote with hard numbers in hand.
  - **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. DEBETTENCOURT AND SECONDED BY PRIN. CUSTER AND MS. YORK THE TISBURY SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING DIRECTED THAT THE PROJECT GO FORWARD WITH OPTION #3 IN ORDER TO GET IT MOVING; 6 AYES, 1 NAY, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. ALEXANDER—AYE, PRIN. CUSTER—AYE, MR. DEBETTENCOURT—AYE, MR. ROGERS—AYE (reluctantly), MS. YORK—AYE, MS. MILNE—NAY, MS. JEFFERS—AYE.**
  - The professional team requested another May meeting to consider VE decisions.

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4. Other Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair Within 48 Hours of the Meeting - None

5. Adjournment

Each member and the public thanked Ms. Jeffers for a well-facilitated meeting, the professional team for their excellent hard work, and TSBC colleagues for their leadership and dedication in a difficult situation.

• **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. ALEXANDER AND SECONDED BY MR. ROGERS THE TISBURY SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 6:37PM: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. ALEXANDER—AYE, PRIN. CUSTER—AYE, MR. DEBETTENCOURT—AYE, MR. ROGERS—AYE, MS. YORK—AYE, MS. MILNE—AYE, MS. JEFFERS—AYE.**

**Appendix A: Meetings/Events:**

- TSC – 5:00PM, Tuesday, May 10, 2022 – EMS Bldg.
- TSBC – TBD, 3:30PM, Monday, May 16, 2022
- TSBC -Monday, June 20, 2022
- State Election/Tisbury Ballot – November 12, 2022

**Appendix B: Actions:**

- Tappé – explore elimination of 1929 front entrance/ egress.
- Mr. Watts/Ms. Jeffers – schedule May meeting on VE.

**Appendix C: Documents on File:** *(Available at: <http://www.tisbury.mvyp.org/> click on Tisbury School Project & Official archive hard copies on file at Tisbury School)*

- Agenda 4/28/22
- Jeffers email re: thought this might be helpful for tomorrow’s meeting 4/26/22 - Tisbury School Building, Space Summary (4 p.)
- Rich/Blessen emails re: Additional Option Analysis (6 p.) 4/27/22
- Tisbury School Project SBC Meeting April 28, 2022, Design Direction Options (x p.)

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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Michael Watts – TSBC Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Accepted 5/16/22