

Elementary Facilities Master Plan Update

Message from the Superintendent of Schools

It has been just over a year since the citizens of South Windsor voted in favor of constructing a new PK-5 elementary school on the Orchard Hill campus. As I have shared previously, we are committed to keeping families and the community-at-large informed about the progress of this project.

This latest newsletter highlights many of the milestones achieved over the past several months: the selection of a construction manager, site and survey work, refinement of programming needs, the hiring of a commissioning agent, the completion of schematic design, and significant work towards design development.

In the last elementary facilities update, I indicated that we would include a section regarding "Frequently Asked Questions." These are the topics that arise most often during my interactions with parents and community members.

Finally, I want to alert staff, parents, and residents that a community informational session will be held on **Thursday, May 28 at 6:30 p.m.** in room Alt 6 at Timothy Edwards Middle School. The purpose of this informational session is to review progress to date; share tentative drawings, renderings, 3D models; and provide an opportunity for participants to pose questions to the architects, owner's representative, construction manager or district administration regarding this project.

I hope this newsletter is helpful to those parents and community members interested in following the progress of Phase One of our Ten-Year Elementary Facilities Master Plan.

Sincerely,



Kate Carter, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

May 2015



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One of the architect's early renderings of the new Orchard Hill School

PBC SELECTS CONSTRUCTION MANAGER

In February 2015, the Public Building Commission (PBC) selected Gilbane Building Company as the construction manager for the new Orchard Hill elementary project. A construction manager plans, coordinates, budgets, and supervises construction projects from early development through completion. They collaborate with the architects, owner's rep and district staff as part of the project development.

Gilbane was founded in 1873 as a family-run carpentry and general contracting business. Gilbane is a recognized leader in the construction industry, and is one of the largest providers of construction management services in Connecticut. They are currently ranked as a top contractor in Connecticut by *Engineer News Record New York 2014*.

Under the supervision of Karrie A. Kratz, Operations Manager for the Connecticut Business Unit, Gilbane will be the on-site project manager from ground breaking to occupancy. Gilbane attends all PBC meetings, and will work closely with architects, the owner's rep and district staff during all of the remaining phases leading up to construction and occupancy.



Operations Manager Karrie Kratz, at a job site with one of her colleagues

MR. TORTORA TO SERVE AS NEW SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



While district-wide elementary staffing decisions will not be finalized until the spring of 2017, we have determined that Mike Tortora, the current Orchard Hill principal, will serve as the principal of the new school. It was important to identify the principal of the new school early on so that the principal's voice and expertise could be incorporated into the planning of this project. Mr. Tortora has been an integral member of weekly project meetings and has brought valuable insight to the process. Mr. Tortora joined South Windsor Public Schools in July 2008. He is both a resident and a parent - his three children attend South Windsor Public Schools. Mr. Tortora shares that he is "excited about having a facility designed to meet the needs of the 21st century learner and proud to work (and live) in South Windsor, where education is a priority!"

NEW MEMBER APPOINTED TO PBC

On March 2, 2015, the Town Council appointed Matthew Montana as the newest member of the PBC. Mr. Montana is a professional architect with over 20 years of experience in the field. He has worked on a variety of projects, including residential, K-12 and higher education facilities. Matthew tells us, "I am excited to lend my expertise and assistance to the Orchard Hill project and Ten-Year Elementary Facilities Master Plan."

Typically, the PBC meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in Room 106 at 1737 Main Street. Regular meetings may be cancelled or special meetings scheduled depending on the needs of the project. Questions regarding PBC meetings can be directed to the Clerk of the Public Building Commission, Ann Walsh, at (860) 291-1205.



CONSTRUCTION PROJECT PHASES

There are seven phases of a school construction project: programming, schematic design, design development, construction documents, bidding, construction, and occupancy. Within these phases are countless tasks carried out by a wide variety of professionals.

While formal actions are taken at the monthly PBC meetings, there are many informal meetings to gather needed information from a wide variety of staff members. The project professionals hold weekly meetings with the superintendent of schools, director of facilities, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction and building principal to ensure that the building will be responsive to the educational programming needs of students, staff and families. In addition, town staff such as the town planner, town engineer, fire marshal, and representatives from police and fire departments attend these meetings, as appropriate. PBC representatives also attend these informal meetings.

The programming phase allows project professionals to ask the questions necessary to produce a design that complies with the educational specifications as well as to ensure that everyday practical matters are considered in order to produce a high-functioning and safe building. The following are examples of the kinds of questions that have been posed:

How many buses will stack at dismissal and arrival? How many staff members will need parking spaces? What accommodations will need to be made for special education students requiring specialized equipment? What size will your lunch waves be? What needs will custodians have for storage or access to cleaning supplies? What are your typical procedures for snow removal? What is the schedule for instrumental music lessons? How will the needs of the pre-school program differ from the K-5 population? How will community use impact the daily operation of this building? What driveway width is needed to ensure that emergency vehicles have appropriate access? How do the needs of an intervention space differ from a traditional classroom? What is the best location for recycling and trash dumpsters? How many parents/relatives attend evening functions, such as concerts?

The following is an overview of some of the activities associated with the early phases of this project.

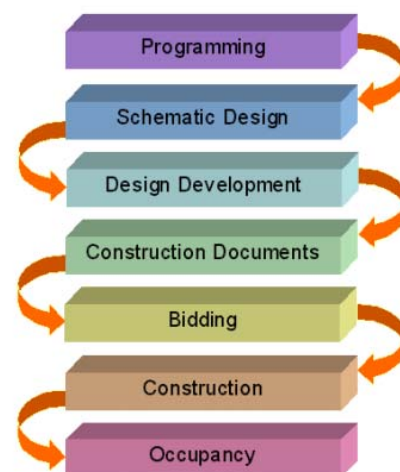
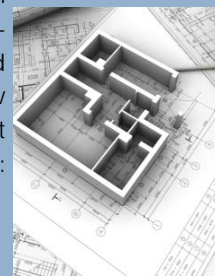
PROGRAMMING PHASE

A critical component of the programming phase is gathering input from school district staff to ensure that the design will support the needs of the primary end-users of the facility: students, staff, and families. The project professionals have conducted several programming meetings with teachers, principals, curriculum leaders, secretaries, nurses, food services staff, custodians, and support specialists from across the district. In fact, they have met with over 70 staff members throughout this process. These participants have provided input into instructional needs, program goals, storage requirements, space layouts, relationships between spaces, and functions of unique spaces such as the nurse's office, pre-school classrooms and the art room. It should be noted that we enlisted feedback from professionals from across the district, not just current Orchard Hill staff. The decision to include voices from all of our elementary schools was deliberate as this project is part of a larger plan that will affect all of our elementary schools. Districtwide staffing changes will occur as a result of closing a school and reconfiguring to a four-school model. Teachers at the new school are likely to hail from all of our other four schools. Thus, we determined it was important to have voices from across the district to inform the development of this project.

SCHEMATIC DESIGN PHASE

During the design phase, the architect develops drawings, documents, or other media that illustrate the concepts of the design and include spatial relationships, scale, and form for the owner to review. Schematic design is also the research phase of the project, when zoning requirements or jurisdictional restrictions are discovered and addressed. These documents delineate how the building is laid out - room sizes and relationships, single line diagrams of all systems (i.e. water mains, electrical risers, etc.), preliminary elevation studies of the building exterior, and, if applicable, drawings of special interior spaces.

The schematic design phase took roughly four months, and the design plans were reviewed during frequent meetings with the PBC and staff. At the conclusion of the schematic design phase, DRA submitted drawings, a project narrative and an estimate of construction cost for review and approval by the PBC so the project could move to the next phase: Design Development.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When will the community see the preliminary designs for the new school?

There will be a community meeting held on May 28 to share the results of the Design Development stage of this project. Participants can expect to see preliminary renderings and images of the proposed design.

When will we see on-site construction activity?

The official groundbreaking for the new Orchard Hill School is scheduled to begin in February 2016; however, one might see limited activity such as tree/brush removal or installation of fencing prior to this date.

How long will construction take?

Following groundbreaking, the construction of the new school is expected to take about 15 months. There are a variety of factors that can impact construction timelines, but every effort will be made to remain on schedule.

When and how will families learn about redistricting?

The elementary master plan calls for reducing our elementary schools from five to four. Specifically, the plan calls for the closing of Wapping School in the summer of 2017 followed by the opening of the new Orchard Hill School in August of 2017. It is too early in the process to make redistricting decisions, but as the time gets closer we will be providing families with a timeline for when to expect information about elementary school boundary lines and specific neighborhoods and street addresses impacted. It is important to note that the administration and the South Windsor Board of Education are committed to making these decisions thoughtfully and well in advance of the opening of the new Orchard Hill School. This will allow ample time for transition activities to occur for students, families and staff.

What is the current status of the ED049 Application?

The ED049 form is the required grant application for a school construction project. It provides data and information regarding a proposed project, including but not limited to: rationale for the project, cost information, financing information, nature of work to be undertaken, square footage details, projected enrollment, and the grade level range of students included in the project. (Source: www.ct.gov, ED049 guidelines)

The ED049 grant application was filed with the State of Connecticut's Department of Administrative Services on June 19, 2014. The timeline for the state's review

and approval of these types of grant applications is twelve months. Our project is currently on the list of eligible schools waiting for the General Assembly's approval for grant commitments (i.e., ED049 Approval). This approval is anticipated to occur by June 3, 2015 when the current legislative session concludes.

What will happen to Wapping School when it closes?

Once the Board of Education closes Wapping School as an educational facility, the Town Council will decide if the building should be razed or repurposed. While no official action has been taken, it is widely known that there are competing demands for space at the Community Center. The notion that the Parks and Recreation Department could move from the overcrowded Community Center to the newly available Wapping School has been discussed publicly. The move would provide Parks and Recreation with space desirable for supporting its mission while opening up more space at the Community Center for senior activities. There are also preliminary discussions regarding space for additional town staff functions as well the opportunity to address some instructional space needs associated with the High School as it endeavors to offer more career pathway opportunities for students.

What will happen to the current Orchard Hill building after the new school opens?

The current Orchard Hill facility will serve as "swing space" in support of our Ten-Year Elementary Facilities Master Plan. As currently proposed, both Philip R. Smith and Pleasant Valley Schools will require the use of swing space while their buildings undergo renovate-like-new construction. At the close of the master plan, the Board of Education will turn over the building to the town and the Town Council will decide at that time whether the building should be razed or repurposed.

How can I get involved with the PAC, Support South Windsor Schools?

Support South Windsor Schools is not affiliated with the Board of Education. However, community members interested in learning more about joining or supporting *Support South Windsor Schools* can visit their website: www.supportsouthwindsorschools.org.

MILESTONES TO-DATE

- **September 2011** Strategic Plan adopted by Board of Education
- **July 2013** School conditions assessed by construction professionals
- **October 2013** Elementary Facilities Plan approved by Board of Education
- **December 2013** Master Plan presented to Town Council by Board of Education
- **December 2013** Education Specifications approved by Board of Education
- **March 2014** PBC appointed as building committee by Town Council
- **March 2014** Referendum passed by South Windsor residents
- **June 2014** ED049 Grant Application filed with the State of Connecticut
- **July 2014** Architect selected by PBC
- **August 2014** Owner's Representative selected by PBC
- **September 2014** Education programming meetings held with stakeholders to begin design process
- **October 2014** Geotechnical site exploration
- **November 2014** PREP meeting with Office of School Facilities (OSF)
- **December 2014** Public Information Session held for community members
- **December 2014** Construction Manager selected by PBC
- **January 2015** Surveying work conducted
- **February 2015** Schematic Design documents approved by PBC
- **March 2015** Planning and Zoning reviewed the project as required in CGS 8-24 and provided a "favorable recommendation" to the Town Council
- **April 2015** Commissioning Agent selected by PBC

Don't Miss the Next Community Meeting:



Thursday, May 28, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.



Room Alt 6 - Timothy Edwards Middle School (Second Floor)



SOUTH WINDSOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board of Education

David S. Joy, Chairman
 Lisa Maneeley, Vice Chairman
 Craig Zimmerman, Secretary
 Diane Behler
 Joseph Durette
 Jamie Gamble
 Michael Gonzalez
 Phil Koboski
 Rick Stahr

Administration

Kate Carter, Ed.D.
 Superintendent of Schools
 Daniel S. Hansen
 Assistant Superintendent
 Colin J. McNamara
 Assistant Superintendent
 Chris M. Chemerka
 Director of Finance and Operations
 Patrick Hankard
 Director of Facility Operations

PUBLIC BUILDING COMMISSION

Howard E. Fitts, Chairman
 Carol Kelley
 Charley Lyons
 Matthew Montana
 James Neary
 Ed O'Connell

PROJECT PROFESSIONALS

Architect:

Drummeey Rosane Anderson (DRA)

Owner's Rep:

Colliers International (formerly,
 Strategic Building Solutions (SBS))

Construction Manager:

Gilbane Building Company



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