FALL BROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROJECT – Leominster, MA

FALL BROOK BUILDING COMMITTEE (FBBC) MEETING #33

Tuesday, September 9, 2025 In-Person 1:00pm

Office of Emergency Management
37 Carter Street, Leominster, MA

Peter Angelini Mark Bodanza Greg Chapdelaine Bill Charpentier
Robin Desmond Jacob Fleming Steven Mammone Dean Mazzarella, Chair
Melanie Mikels Elliot "Butch" Nadeau Jennifer Reddington
Brandon Robbins Jeffrey Sullivan

Meeting Minutes

A publicly posted meeting of the Fall Brook Building Committee (FBBC) was held at the above listed date, time, and location. Committee members and participants were:

Voting Members (Quorum = 7)	Present	Notes
Mr. Peter Angelini		City Councilor
Mr. Mark Bodanza		City Councilor
Mr. Greg Chapdelaine	X	City Purchasing Agent
Mr. Bill Charpentier		City Building Inspector
Ms. Robin Desmond	Partial - Remote	Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Jacob Fleming	X	Leominster DPW Business Manager
Mr. Steven Mammone	X	Asst. Superintendent of Schools
Mayor Dean Mazzarella, Chair	X	Mayor and School Committee member
Ms. Melanie Mikels	Remote	School Business Manager
Mr. Elliot Nadeau	Remote	School Facilities Director
Ms. Jennifer Reddington	X	City Comptroller
Mr. Brandon Robbins	Remote	City Councilor
Mr. Jeffrey Sullivan	X	Fall Brook Elementary School Principal
Other Participants		
Meredith Tarr	X	City of Leominster
John Roseberry		Leominster DPW Senior Engineer
Christine Silverman		Leominster Public Schools

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Richard Bergeron		Leominster Public Schools
Will Sullivan		Leominster Public Schools
Craig DiCarlo	X	LeftField, Project Director
Jay Faxon		LeftField, MEP Expert
Linda Liporto	Remote	LeftField, Senior Project Manager
Jim Rogers		LeftField, President
Adele Sands		LeftField, Education Liaison
Nereyda Rodriguez	X	Miller Dyer Spears, Principal In Charge
Danyul Cho	X	Miller Dyer Spears, Project Manager
Amy MacKrell		Miller Dyer Spears, Principal
Erica Patten	Remote	Miller Dyer Spears, Project Architect
Lena Owens		Studio 2112
Lynne Giesecke		Studio 2112
Dana Geva		Studio 2112
Frank Holmes		Langan
Maggie Laracy	Remote	Langan
Keith Lane		GGD Consulting Engineers
David Pereira		GGD Consulting Engineers
Louis Vieira		GGD Consulting Engineers
Matthew Woodward		GGD Consulting Engineers

1 – Call to Order

Mr. Robbins called the meeting to order at 1:03pm.

Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

2 – Administrative Actions

2a – Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on August 15, 2025, was made by Mr. Chapdelaine and seconded by Mayor Mazzarella. There was no discussion. A show of hands vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously.

2b – Invoice Log and Warrant Approval

LeftField presented the invoice log and warrant for August invoices which included OPM services designer services, advertisement during bidding, and construction costs in Ricciardi's Application for Payment 1, for a total of $537,801.98.

A motion to approve warrant number W12FY26 in the amount of $537,801.98 was made by Mr. Chapdelaine and seconded by Mayor Mazzarella. There was no discussion. A show of hands vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously.

2d – Designer Contract Amendment No. 5

LeftField presented Designer Contract Amendment No. 5 for Miller Dyer Spears to continue work on the project from Detailed Design through project Closeout. A comparison chart showed the proposed architectural and engineering fees to be aligned with the average of six recent MSBA projects with new construction and similar design enrollments.

A motion to approve Contract for Designer Services Amendment No. 5 for Designer services for Detailed Design though Close-out for an additional Base Fee of $8,436,920.00 and an additional Reimbursable Fee of $1,137,630.00, for a total additional Fee of $9,574,550.00" was made by Mr. Chapdelaine and seconded by Mayor Mazzarella.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken.

Voting Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Not Present
Mr. Peter Angelini				
Mr. Mark Bodanza				X
Mr. Greg Chapdelaine	X			
Mr. Bill Charpentier				X
Ms. Robin Desmond				X
Mr. Jacob Fleming	X			
Mr. Steven Mammone	X			
Mayor Dean Mazzarella, Chair	X			
Ms. Melanie Mikels	X			
Mr. Elliot Nadeau	X			
Ms. Jennifer Reddington	X			
Mr. Brandon Robbins	X			
Mr. Jeffrey Sullivan	X			

The motion carried 9-0-0.

2e – Designer Contract Amendment No. 6

LeftField presented Designer Contract Amendment No. 6 for additional designer services related to the culvert repairs and sewer realignment scopes of work, to apply for a permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers for the construction associated with the culvert work, to prepare additional front end

specifications sections, and to prepare a quantity take-off form requested by the bidders to facilitate the bidding process.

A motion to approve Contract for Designer Services Amendment No. 6 for Designer services for the culvert and sewer scope of work for an additional Fee of $30,882.00 was made by Mr. Chapdelaine and seconded by Mayor Mazzarella. There was no discussion. A show of hands vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously.

2f – Culvert and Sewer Change Order No. 1

LeftField presented the steps in the Change Order review and approval process that will be used for the project:

1. LeftField and MDS will review each Proposed Change Order (PCO) for appropriateness.
2. If not appropriate, MDS & LeftField will reject in writing.
3. If appropriate, then LeftField and MDS will review supporting documentation for scope, price, rates, etc. MDS & LeftField will send comments back to the General Contractor (GC) to revise and repeat as necessary until the PCO is complete, correct, and clear. MDS will add the PCO to a CO, ideally in batches for efficiency, but depending on the timing and content (e.g., a large, time-sensitive PCO may be the only item in a CO).
4. MDS will sign; LeftField will sign; the GC will sign. LeftField will submit the draft CO to Mr. Chapdelaine and Ms. Reddington via email with a brief explanation for each PCO.
5. With agreement by Mr. Chapdelaine and Ms. Reddington, LeftField will present it to the FBBC for approval.
6. If approved by the FBBC, the Mayor will sign/execute.
7. The GC's contract will be thusly amended; the GC may add the executed CO to their next Application for Payment.

LeftField presented Change Order CS-01 for the culvert and sewer project. The prefix "CS" is used to differentiate Change Orders on the culvert and sewer construction from eventual Change Orders on the main construction project.

A motion to approve *Construction Change Order CS-01* for the culvert and sewer scope of work for an increase to the Construction Sum of $1,500.00 was made by Mr. Chapdelaine and seconded by Mayor Mazzarella. There was no discussion. A show of hands vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously.

2g – Budget Update

LeftField presented the Feasibility Budget/Schematic Design Budget through July 2025. Of the $2.5 million in the budget, the project has committed 77% and expended 72%. Budget Revision Request (BRR) #4 to fund Designer Contract Amendment #4, for culvert and sewer construction phase design

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services, has been submitted to the MSBA, however the MSBA previously advised that BRR #4 is on hold until the Project Funding Agreement is executed.

LeftField presented the Total Project Budget including the recent OPM and Designer contract amendments. Of the $114.8 million in the budget, the project has committed 13% and expended 2%. Expenses are in line with the progress of the work.

2h – Project Schedule Update

LeftField presented the current project schedule. The project continues in the Detailed Design module and is currently about three months into the Design Development phase. An overview of designer activities that are anticipated for the next three months will be presented in the *Next Steps* portion of this meeting.

2i – Project Schedule Update

LeftField provided the FBBC with a refresher on the MSBA's funding methodology and reimbursement rate.

The MSBA does not fully fund school projects, rather the MSBA and District each fund a portion of the project. The District pays its portion directly to its vendors and the MSBA pays its portion in the form of monthly reimbursements to the District.

Reimbursement rates are calculated based on need using socio-economic factors, similar to Title 1 allocations. First, the MSBA calculates a reimbursement rate for the Feasibility Study Agreement; Fall Brook FSA reimbursement rate was 74.01%. Second, the MSBA calculates a reimbursement rate for the Project Scope and Budget Agreement (which forms the basis of the Project Funding Agreement); Fall Brook PSBA reimbursement rate is 79.93%. Reimbursement rates are capped at 80.00%.

The MSBA advertises the reimbursement rate that applies to ***eligible costs only***. Every project also includes costs that are ***ineligible*** and ***eligible up to a cap***. This can be a point of confusion for the public. Combining the three categories together produces an "effective" reimbursement rate. The "effective" reimbursement rate is always lower than the "advertised" reimbursement rate for eligible costs. The MSBA's reimbursement rate policies are intended to maximize the number of communities served and to be fair.

LeftField presented a series of charts comparing Fall Brook Elementary School with seven recently completed MSBA projects and showed that the "effective" reimbursement rate for Fall Brook is in line with the average for similar projects.

In conclusion, The MSBA shares in the cost of school building projects but never pays the full amount. The "effective" reimbursement rate is always significantly lower than the "advertised" reimbursement rate for eligible costs, which is a source of confusion for many communities. Fall Brook Elementary School's "effective" reimbursement rate is in line with the average for recent elementary school projects

involving new construction.

3 – Designer Report

3a – Recap of Recent Working Group Meetings

MDS presented discussions and outcomes of the Working Group meeting held on August 9, 2025, on the topics of site design, roof plans, finishes and materiality, and exterior views.

Key takeaways for the site design included the following:

- Various walking paths and loops are used as a concept to organize the site plan.
- The landscape design is being developed with a mind to native plantings, low-maintenance concepts. Two regional examples were provided by the landscape architect, Major Howard W Beal elementary School and Worcester South High School.
- There are approximately 166 parking spaces in the new design, which was maximized per the district's request, a significant increase over the 100 spaces currently available.

Mr. Nadeau asked that ground cover plantings be held back from the building 4' to 7' to discourage rodent problems. Mayor Mazzarella suggested hydroseeding with wildflowers in some areas, which can be managed with minimal labor effort.

Mr. Chapdelaine inquired about reconfiguring the rain garden and retention pond to allow for more parking spaces. MDS responded that the 100-ft wetland buffer area is a limiting factor.

Key takeaways for the exterior design included the following:

- RTUs will be relocated to the central knuckle of the building for structural reasons, better acoustic treatment, and more area for solar panels.
- Roof access will be by an interior stair to the main roof and a door from the mechanical room to the lower roof.

Mr. Chapdelaine inquired about a solar canopy above the outdoor lunch area. MDS will investigate it as a design option but advised that canopy mounted solar panels are expensive.

Key takeaways for the materials and finishes included the following:

- The exterior will be clad in brick, metal panels, manufactured wood-look materials, PV panels, and granite trim.
- Physical samples will be presented to the Working Group on September 30, 2025

Key takeaways for the exterior views included the following:

- The design team is refining the shapes and sizes of windows and material locations.
- The design team is considering different brick patterns.

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MDS presented discussions and outcomes of the Working Group meeting held on September 2, 2025, on the topics of the gymnasium, typical classrooms, classroom corridors, and Project Breakout rooms.

Key takeaways for the gymnasium discussion included the following:

- The layout includes a middle school sized court with two side courts, adjustable height basketball goals, volleyball, and pickleball.
- The school's branding will be incorporated.
- The bleachers include approximately 150 seats.
- There will be visual divider, not an acoustic separation.

Key takeaways for the classroom, corridor, and Project Breakout room discussion included the following:

- Touch screens on the teaching wall, with dry erase boards on the right and left.
- Project Breakout spaces design direction was identified.
- The design team will continue to design the corridor walls, floors, and ceiling lights.

3b – Upcoming Open House

MDS presented design images that will be presented at the Fall Brook Open House event scheduled for September 18, 2025. Images will include floor plans with furniture and labels, a site plan, and exterior views.

3c – Other Design Discussions

Mayor Mazzarella inquired about obtaining bid alternates for new sidewalks between Samoset Middle School, Fall Brook Elementary School, and Union Street. LeftField responded that the Project Scope and Budget Agreement has already been executed with the MSBA, and it does not include sidewalks beyond those in the proximity of Fall Brook. Mr. Fleming advised that the Massachusetts Dept of Transportation (MassDOT) Safe Routes To Schools may be able to help fund new sidewalks, outside the scope of the Fall Brook project. The city may procure sidewalk construction in parallel with the Fall Brook Elementary School project.

Mr. Chapdelaine and LeftField asked Ms. Mikels about the district's vendor, Retrofit, producing a list of technology equipment, including servers, computers, phones, printers, etc., and procuring them for the project. Ms. Mikels will coordinate with Laureen Cipolla.

4 – Items not Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting

There were no items not anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

5 – Public Comment

There were no public comments.

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6 – Next Steps

LeftField presented the meetings and activities planned for the next three months. The Design Development package is scheduled to be delivered to the cost estimators at the end of October, the cost estimates will be prepared in November, and the MSBA Design Development submission is scheduled for December 5, 2025. The November FBBC meeting falls on Veterans Day, so will be re-scheduled to Tuesday, November 18, 2025.

Mr. Chapdelaine reported that the Project Funding Agreement is anticipated to be approved by the City Council on September 22, 2025. One City Councilor requests the PFA be presented at an upcoming public hearing.

4 – Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Chapdelaine and seconded by Mayor Mazzarella. There was no discussion. A show of hands vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:08pm.

Documents and Exhibits

- Fall Brook Building Committee Meeting #33 slideshow presentation by LeftField, dated 9/9/25
- Fall Brook Elementary School, School Building Committee Meeting slideshow presentation by MDS, dated 9/9/25

Attachments

- None

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