FALL BROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROJECT – Leominster, MA

FALL BROOK BUILDING COMMITTEE (FBBC) MEETING #45

Tuesday, July 14, 2026 In-Person 1:00pm

Office of Emergency Management
37 Carter Street, Leominster, MA

Mark Bodanza	Greg Chapdelaine	Sandra Cucchiara	Robin Desmond
Arthur Elbthal	Jacob Fleming	Suzanne Koehler	Steven Mammone
Dean Mazzarella, Chair	Melanie Mikels	Elliot "Butch" Nadeau	Jennifer Reddington
	Brandon Robbins	Jeffrey Sullivan	

In memoriam Peter Angelini (1956-2025)

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 = 8)	Present	Notes
Mr. Mark Bodanza	Remote	City Councilor
Mr. Greg Chapdelaine		City Purchasing Agent
Ms. Sandra Cucchiara	Remote	School Committee Member
Ms. Robin Desmond	Remote	Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Arthur Elbthal		Leominster Emergency Management, Director
Mr. Jacob Fleming		Leominster DPW Business Manager
Ms. Suzanne Koehler	Remote	Former School Committee Member
Mr. Steven Mammone	Remote	Asst. Superintendent of Schools
Mayor Dean Mazzarella, Chair	Remote	Mayor and School Committee member
Ms. Melanie Mikels	Remote	School Business Manager
Mr. Elliot Nadeau	X	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

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John Roseberry		Leominster DPW Senior Engineer
Christine Silverman		Leominster Public Schools
Lynn Fiandaca		Leominster Public Schools
Richard Bergeron		Leominster Public Schools
Will Sullivan	X	Leominster Public Schools
Craig DiCarlo	X	LeftField, Project Director
Jay Faxon		LeftField, MEP Expert
Linda Liporto	Remote	LeftField, Senior Project Manager
Bill Shaw	X	LeftField, Site Representative
Jim Rogers		LeftField, President
Adele Sands		LeftField, Education Liaison
Nereyda Rodriguez	Remote	Miller Dyer Spears, Principal in Charge
Danyul Cho	Remote	Miller Dyer Spears, Project Manager
Amy MacKrell		Miller Dyer Spears, Principal
Erica Patten		Miller Dyer Spears, Project Architect
Lena Owens		Studio 2112
Lynne Giesecke		Studio 2112
Dana Geva		Studio 2112
Frank Holmes		Langan
Maggie Laracy		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

Mayor Mazzarella called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM. Roll call was conducted, and a quorum was present.

2 – Administrative Actions

2a – Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 9, 2026, was made by Mayor Mazzarella and seconded by Mr. Bodanza.

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 for the June invoices which included OPM services, designer services, and newspaper advertisements for contractor prequalification and bidding, for a total of $413,231.77.

A motion to approve Warrant number W04FY27 in the amount of $413,231.77 was made by Ms. Reddington and seconded by Mr. Bodanza.

There was no discussion. A show of hands vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously.

2c – Budget Update

LeftField presented the Total Project Budget through June 2026. The text is too small to read on the slides, but the information is included in the monthly OPM reports that are forwarded to the FBBC members and will now be posted on the project website. The project has committed 15%, including the Materials Testing and Inspection contract with Yankee Engineering and Testing as well as the Early Site Package work being performed by Castello Landscaping this summer, and expended 8% of the approximate $114.8 million project budget. Expenditure continues to be in line with the progress of the project.

2d – Designer Contract Amendments #12, 13, and 14

LeftField presented the Contract for Designer Services Amendment #12 to test and pre-characterize the soil to inform bidders of the disposition of approximately 13,000 CY located in the footprint of the new school, for an additional fee of $22,775.00. This amendment is related to Additional Service Request 12 which was previously approved at the FBBC meeting on May 19, 2026.

LeftField presented the Contract for Designer Services Amendment #13 to provide landscape design services for the temporary playground and restoration of the northern baseball / soccer field resulting from the previous acceptance of the site logistics and phasing plans, for an additional fee of $16,950.00. This amendment is related to Additional Service Request 13 which was previously approved at the FBBC meeting on June 9, 2026.

LeftField presented the Contract for Designer Services Amendment #14 to provide services associated with the Turtle Protection Plan (TPP) as required by the Conservation Commission via the Order of Conditions and in conformance with MassWildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP), including contractor education, barrier inspection and clearing survey, site inspections and compliance monitoring, end of season summary report, and coordination, for an additional fee of $14,240.00. This amendment is related to Additional Service Request 14, which was previously approved in accordance with FBBC authorization for Mr. Chapdelaine, Ms. Reddington, and Ms. Mikels

to approve contract changes of less than $15,000 in between FBBC meetings when needed for timely execution of the work.

A Motion to approve *Designer Contract Amendment 12*, *Designer Contract Amendment 13*, *and Designer Contract Amendment 14* as presented was made by Ms. Reddington and seconded by Mr. Bodanza.

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

Voting Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Not Present
Mr. Mark Bodanza	X			
Mr. Greg Chapdelaine				X
Ms. Sandra Cucchiara	X			
Ms. Robin Desmond				X
Mr. Arthur Elbthal				X
Mr. Jacob Fleming				X
Ms. Suzanne Koehler	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 10-0-0.

Bill Sullivan asked how long the turtle protection perimeter will be in place. LeftField responded that the turtle protection, comprised of a perimeter of straw waddles, silt fence, and wood boards intended to prevent turtles from migrating into the construction site, will be in place for the duration of the Early Site Package construction then removed by Castello. When the main project contract has been awarded and construction is ready to begin in October or November, that contractor will install a turtle protection perimeter around their areas of work, which will remain in place until the completion of construction. The boards across paved areas can be raised or moved during the day but must be replaced at the end of each day.

2e – Schedule Update

LeftField presented the project schedule. Two processes are taking place simultaneously, the construction phase of the the Early Site Package (ESP) and prequalification and bidding for the main package.

2f – Contractor Procurement

LeftField presented the steps and milestones of the contractor procurement. The procurement process began with a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), which was made available on July 1, 2026, with Statements of Qualifications (SOQs) due on July 16, 2026. During the Filed Sub-Bidder (FSB) solicitation for elevators, only one response was received, which is not uncommon for elevator contractors. As a result, the elevator package will be re-solicited as part of the broader Filed Sub-Bidder procurement process.

Following the RFQ phase, the Invitation to Bid (IFB) and bid documents will be released on August 12, 2026. Filed Sub-Bidder bids, including the elevator re-solicitation, will be due on September 3, 2026, providing a three-week bidding period. General Contractor bids will then be due on September 30, 2026, allowing an additional four weeks for General Contractors to incorporate the filed sub-bid results into their proposals.

The City, building committee, and project team will have a couple weeks to award and execute a contract to get construction going in mid-October. LeftField noted that the first few weeks of construction entail the contractor setting up the construction perimeter and readying the site for sitework and excavation.

2g – Optional Groundbreaking Event

LeftField opened discussion on an optional groundbreaking ceremony that could be held around November 2026 to commemorate a major project milestone and celebrate the transition into construction. The event would provide an opportunity to recognize key contributors, including the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), while also building public awareness and support for the project. In addition, a groundbreaking ceremony can serve as a valuable community engagement opportunity, reinforcing the project's transparency, accountability, and commitment to keeping stakeholders informed throughout the construction process.

Mayor Mazzarella indicated an interest in holding a groundbreaking event in the fall. LeftField will be responsible for helping to organize the event and the city and school department will be responsible for executing the event. The target timeframe is November, once the general contractor is on site and before the Thanksgiving break.

3 – Designer Report

3a – Ongoing Design Work

The design team has been working on the bid documents, a draft of which are due Friday July 17, 2026. There are no other items for building committee review at this time.

4 – Construction Report

4a – Culvert and Sewer Scope

The Culvert and Sewer project started by Ricciardi Brothers last summer and continued to this spring and summer is substantially complete. Plantings and site restoration have been finished, pending a final punch list review, and erosion control measures have been removed. The remaining work consists of milling and overlaying the pavement patches, which is currently scheduled for August 2026.

4b – Early Site Package

The Early Site Package is currently underway by Castello Landscaping. The contract was awarded on June 18, 2026, and was subsequently executed, allowing work to begin in early July. This package represents the initial phase of site preparation activities in advance of the main construction effort.

Mayor Mazzarella inquired whether it is possible to remove the landscaping from the General Contractors scope of work in response to concerns that the General Contractor will do a bad job on the landscaping and it will not be worth the money. LeftField had some initial thoughts about that strategy; the landscape scope is part of the Project Funding Agreement with the MSBA and they may be hesitant to allow the District to perform the work outside of the main construction contract; the design team is nearly finished with the bid documents which show the work to be performed by the general contractor and removing it at this late date may be difficult; this is uncommon in LeftField's experience on school projects; and coordination between the general contractor and a separate workforce installing the landscaping could be problematic. MDS inquired whether the concern was about the plants or the full scope of landscape design which entails much more than plants. Mayor Mazzarella indicated that his concern was primarily with the design and execution of the plantings. LeftField advised that the design team previously shared images of recent projects designed with simple, durable, and easy-to-maintain planting designs. Mayor Mazzarella indicated that his experience on MassDOT projects is that the planting designs are expensive and poorly executed, so on upcoming projects they are turning over the execution of plantings to the City of Leominster. MDS will forward example projects to the mayor for his review. LeftField and the Mayor will discuss offline.

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

5a – Water Usage During Construction

LeftField presented options for paying for water usage during construction. In either scenario, the city pays for water usage, but the question is whether they want to pay directly or indirectly. In an offline discussion with the City's Purchasing Department, it was discussed that the city would pay for electricity usage during construction.

Under the first approach, the General Contractor (GC) would be responsible for paying for water usage, with the cost indirectly reflected in the contractor's bid. Advantages of this approach include encouraging water conservation and avoiding direct cost exposure to the city, i.e., for inappropriate use of a "free" water source.

Alternatively, the city could elect to pay for construction water usage directly. The advantages of this approach include reduced administrative paperwork and the potential for lower construction bids, as contractors would not need to include estimated water costs in their pricing. The committee reviewed the benefits of both options for consideration as part of the construction planning process.

There was a discussion. Mr. Fleming advised that typically the water department will meter the water usage but not charge the contractor for it. However, on this large, multi-year project, if the city does not charge for the water there is no incentive for the GC to conserve water. Mayor Mazzarella noted that for Skyview Middle School, the GC paid for water usage. On Samoset, water was trucked from Rockwell Pond. The committee decided to require the GC to pay for water usage to incentivize water conservation and control of costs.

Mayor Mazzarella inquired whether there was a restriction on the GC exporting and selling loam from the site. LeftField advised that the project has a net export, i.e., there is more existing soil on the existing site than the project requires, for both topsoil and fill material. The GC will strip and stockpile the material that is needed for the project, and excess volumes will be exported offsite for disposal. LeftField is not aware of the City of Leominster requiring a permit to remove soil from the site. Mr. Fleming responded that there are no City regulations on soil export. LeftField advised that the depths of topsoil are specified in the landscape areas, the nutrient contents of the soils used on the project, and minimum volumes of existing materials that are required to be re-used on site. Public construction projects have specifications that are highly detailed, the GC may not export high quality topsoil and import low quality topsoil as part of the project.

Ms. Reddington inquired about the disposition of other valuable materials existing on site. LeftField responded that the contract price will be a lump sum, and the GC will factor in whatever they can earn by recycling copper and steel from the existing school building.

Ms. Reddington inquired about the disposition of excess purchased building materials. LeftField responded that the project includes some surplus building materials that the city will pay for and the school will retain for maintenance purposes, such as boxes of spare carpet tiles, ceiling tiles, and HVAC filters. Other material surpluses are the contractor's responsibility, e.g., if they purchase too many metal studs, the city does not pay more than the original contract price because the contractor ordered surplus materials.

6 – Public Comment

There was no public comment.

7 – Next Steps

LeftField presented the meetings and activities planned for the next three months.

The bid documents will be completed July 17, 2026. Qualification packages are due from interested general contractors and filed sub-bidders on July 20, 2026. Bid documents will be available for prequalified GCs and filed sub-bidders on August 12, 2026.

Work on the Early Site Package continues and is scheduled to be completed by August 25, 2026, before the start of the fall term.

Mr. Sullivan inquired about a camera that was recently installed at Fall Brook Elementary School. Mayor Mazzarella responded that the camera belongs to the city and the intent is to record the progress of construction similar to past municipal construction projects.

8 – Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Bodanza 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 1:45 PM.

Documents and Exhibits

- Fall Brook Building Committee Meeting #45 slideshow presentation by LeftField, dated 7/14/26.

Attachments

- None

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