

John F. Doherty, Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools

82 Oakland Road  
Reading, MA 01867  
Phone: 781-944-5800  
Fax: 781-942-9149



Christine M. Kelley  
Assistant Superintendent

Sharon Stewart  
Interim Director of Student Services

Gail S. Dowd, CPA  
Chief Financial Officer

# Reading Public Schools

*Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow*

TO: Reading School Committee

FROM: Gail Dowd

CC: John Doherty, Superintendent of Schools  
Robert W. LeLacheur, Jr., Town Manager  
Joseph Huggins, Director of Facilities

DATE: June 25, 2019

RE: Update on Capital Projects

As discussed during previous School Committee meetings we plan to provide the School Committee updates on a quarterly basis throughout the year as to the status of the various capital projects. We have prepared the following high-level summary of the progress on the three capital projects since the last update provided to the committee on March 28, 2019. We are also providing this high-level summary memo to the Town Manager. The Director of Facilities and the Town Manager will be present at the School Committee Meeting on June 27th to answer questions as they relate to these specific capital initiatives.

## **Elementary School Space Needs**

November 2018 Town Meeting approved the request to redirect \$207,500 set aside from the override for this purpose away from the Permanent Building Committee (at their request) and made available to the schools through the Facilities department. Town Meeting further approved an additional \$20,000, redirected from other school capital projects, at the request of the School Committee. The School Department will continue to provide updates as they become available for this project. Below is an update since the March 28<sup>th</sup> memo.

- Gienapp Design Architecture was selected as the “House Doctor” in mid-January 2019 and continues to be the main firm executing all phases of the Elementary Master Plan project.
- NESDEC, through the Gienapp contract, was engaged to prepare the enrollment study. The School Department directed NESDEC and Gienapp to prepare a more comprehensive demographic study rather than a simple set of 10-year enrollment projections. The School Department has provided all requested historical enrollment information and has been reviewing the results with NESDEC and Gienapp. It is the expectation of the School Department to have NESDEC come to a School Committee in the fall to present the results of the study as well as to present a formal report.
- NESDEC has been in contact with the Assistant Town Manager to discuss the various economic development and building activities occurring within the Town. In addition, the NESDEC consultants, with the assistance of the Assistant Town Manager, have reached out to real estate agents in the Town to discuss recent trends in

housing sales. The results of these meetings and discussions will be incorporated into the overall enrollment study/report.

- In March, Gienapp Design along with Facilities, conducted tours of all five elementary schools to gather information that will be utilized in the enrollment study and in the overall master plan study. On May 28<sup>th</sup>, Gienapp Design, along with Facilities met with each building principal and the Interim Student Services Director to obtain their input on space utilization and constraints. These meetings encompassed enrollment as well as programmatic discussions.
- An update was provided to the Community during the April 2019 Town Meeting and it is currently anticipated that an additional update will be provided during the November 2019 Town Meeting.
- We are projected to come in at the approved level of funding for this project

At Thursday evening's School Committee meeting, Dale Gienapp from Gienapp Architects will be presenting a high-level summary of the results to date. We have invited other elected and appointed boards to attend this update.

Future updates will be scheduled in the fall and we will continue to invite other elected and appointed boards to attend meetings once dates and updates are available.

## **Turf II**

November 2018 Town Meeting approved FINCOM's request to fund \$200,000 to fund design services for Turf 2. As previously discussed we continue to articulate to those impacted that Turf 2 will need to be scheduled as 'down time' for the fall 2019, due to the need for advance field planning coupled with the uncertainty of completion of construction projects. The Athletics Director continues to work with the Recreation Department to ensure all scheduling activities and considerations are being addressed. The School Department will continue provide updates as they become available.

- As a reminder, thoughts to expand the length of Turf II were deemed unnecessary through consultation with Athletics, Recreation and a review with outside legal counsel. Based upon these discussions the School Committee directed School Department not to proceed with obtaining pricing to expand Turf II.
- Town Meeting, during the April 2019 Annual Town Meeting, approved the debt funding of \$2.25 million to fund the replacement project for Turf II.
- The working group (comprised of the Town Engineer, Director of DPW, Director of Facilities and School CFO), with Activitas narrowed the focus of the project to the following scope - Turf II replacement in-kind with new lights. The working team developed a list of add alternates that were prioritized and brought forth to the larger decision-making group (which included the Superintendent, Town Manager, Athletics and Recreation).
- Meetings were held throughout the planning and design process with Athletics and Recreation to ensure all questions and concerns were addressed timely. A final planning meeting was held on May 23<sup>rd</sup> with the Town Manager and Superintendent of Schools to present and review the design documents and to make final designs on the various design aspects of the project.
- The project was bid out through the Town's Procurement Office with the assistance of Activitas in early June. A site visit was held on Tuesday June 11<sup>th</sup> for all interested parties to visit Turf II and to ask any clarifying questions.
- Bid proposals are due back on June 26<sup>th</sup> and will be reviewed by DPW/Engineering, Facilities, Activitas and School CFO once compiled.
- Once the project is awarded, we anticipate being in construction late summer into early fall.

At Thursday evening's School Committee meeting, Mark Novak from Activitas will be presenting a high-level summary of the Turf II design and will be available to address questions from the Committee.

## **Building Security Study**

This building security capital project remains the highest priority of both the Superintendent and the Town Manager. November 2018 Town Meeting approved a change in the purpose of \$500,000 already approved in FY19 to be shifted to School & Town Building Security design services, instead of starting with a renovation of the Dispatch Center. Subsequently, at the April 2019 Town Meeting, an additional \$4 million in debt was authorized to proceed with executing on the suggestions from the Security Study.

- An Executive Session was held on April 11<sup>th</sup> which the Select Board, School Committee, Board of Library Trustees and the Finance Committee were all invited to attend. Additional smaller informal meetings were also held in preparation for April 2019 Town Meeting. As in previous Executive Sessions, details will not be shared for security reasons, but a lot of progress on process has been accomplished by town and school staff that will be reviewed.
- The Town Manager, Superintendent of Schools, Deputy Police Chief, Director of Facilities and CFO of Schools presented an overview to Town Meeting members over two nights during the April 2019 Town Meeting. Of concern as an Instructional Motion that would have replaced all involved Town and School staff on this project by unspecified volunteers – the motion did not pass.
- The Town continues to work with STV of Newton, Massachusetts who is serving as the OPM (as a reminder, projects estimated to over \$1.5 million require public agencies to hire an OPM).
- Since Town Meeting approval of the funding, several meetings have been held with the working group (comprised of the Director of Facilities, School Department CFO, OPM, Security Consultant and Designer) to develop a scope of work that will fit within the overall budget of \$4 million.
- The working group has completed walkthroughs of all Town and School buildings to ensure the suggested security measures are fully vetted and challenged through each person's lens.
- Preliminary recommendations along with questions and suggestions were presented to the Town Manager and Superintendent of Schools in June. The purpose of the meeting was to ensure that the working group was on task.
- The next steps in the process are to have a conceptual design completed with a cost estimate. The target is to have this information available for November 2019 Town Meeting, or later.