

SOMERVILLE NEW SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT

SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Virtual Meeting

Monday, June 8, 2026

Via Zoom

4:30pm

Members (15) – Present in bold:

Emily Grandstaff-Rice (Chair)

Jake Wilson, Mayor

Rich Raiche

Ruben Carmona

Courtney Gosselin

Ed Bean

Chris Ames

Daniel Grayton

Eric Weisman

Andre Green

Kathleen Seward

Jesse Clingan

Suraj Rajbanshi

Courtney Koslow

Rich Heidebrecht

Guests Present:

Khin Mar (CoS)

Ralph Henry (CoS)

Ralph Henry (CoS)

Danielle Barry (SPS)

Darryl Nash (SPS)

Sean Burke (PMA)

Nick Masse (PMA)

Lisa Pecora (PE)

Robert Bell (PE)

Dan Arons (PE)

Matt Hoffman (PE)

Ryan Dirks (PE)

Peter Darrouzet (CMTA)

Colleen Soden (SS)

- **Call to Order – 4:32pm**
 - The Chair called the meeting to order
 - Roll call attendance was had.
 - The SBC mentioned they are aware that there were some SPS staff that were unable to attend, due to a previous commitment scheduled during this time.

- **Meeting Minutes**
 - Approve meeting minutes from May 4, 2026.
 - Rich Raiche motions to approve as presented. Courtney Koslow seconds the motion.
 - Discussion: none.
 - VOTE (roll call): 9 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain, 6 not present
 - Yes: Emily Grandstaff-Rice, Mayor Jake Wilson, Rich Raiche, Daniel Grayton, Eric Weisman, Andre Green, Suraj Rajbanshi, Courtney Koslow, Rich Heidebrecht
 - No:
 - Abstain:
 - Not Present: Ruben Carmona, Courtney Gosselin, Ed Bean, Chris Ames, Kathleen Seward, Jesse Clingan

- **Review Project Schedule & Workplan**
 - PE did an overview of the project timeline and workplan, showing where the project is at and what is ahead of us. PE highlighted the milestones within the project schedule.
 - PE noted that the soil borings were completed last week at the 115 Sycamore St site.
 - Grade Reconfiguration
 - PMA presented an overview of the MSBA requirement for the committee to formally review grade reconfiguration in any school consolidation project. The MSBA would like the City to advise why they believe grade reconfiguration is best for the project. The School Committee will be required to take a vote of grade reconfiguration during our PSR submission, and also require the Mayor’s sign off.
 - Committee members had a couple of clarifying questions that PMA responded to satisfaction.
 - PMA noted that they will have a draft for the Building Committee’s review at the next meeting.

- **New Business**
 - Preliminary Sustainability Goals
 - Mass Timber / Construction Manager v General Contractor
 - PE presented the concept of Mass Timber construction at the New School, and what it brings to the project.
 - PE presented other MSBA projects that have used hybrids of Mass Timber and structural steel.
 - PMA presented the differences between Construction Manager and General Contractor. PMA noted that costs will increase approximately 5-7% with Construction Manager at Risk, in lieu of General Contractor. PMA also noted that it is the project team’s recommendation that if Mass Timber were to be used, we would recommend Construction Manager at Risk project delivery method.
 - Passive Solar
 - PE presented passive solar concept, noting that this revolves around natural daylight into spaces to limit mechanical needs in spaces. PE noted that their goal

is net zero energy and net zero carbon, but there will be difficulties with the size of the building. PE is proposing an all-electric building and explained the reasonings that all-electric ties in with passive solar.

- Building Systems
 - PE passed it over to their mechanical consultant, CMTA, to present to the committee. CMTA provided options – noting Ground Source Heat Pump, Air Source Heat Pump, and a hybrid of those two. CMTA then explained each of these options to the Committee.
 - CMTA recommended that the committee should consider costs with practicality with the options presented.
 - Committee member asked 1) due to the narrow site, is a drill rig appropriate? 2) is a gas backup generator needed? 3) how does the MSBA contribute to systems like geothermal that is expensive to install. CMTA responded that the drill rig can go anywhere on site, but it depends what is going on it, because if it requires maintenance it could be costly to remove and reinstall items that may be there. CMTA responded about gas, noting it is up to the Building Committee – but we will need to have a generator. PMA responded to the third question noting that MSBA reimburses a percentage of the project cost, with site work capped.
 - Committee member spoke that she is against natural gas use. She then also asked about battery storage, which PE responded.
 - City asked if there are challenges that underground geothermal requires – CMTA explained that it depends what overburden is on top of the system.
- Certifications – Passive House, TEDI, LEED, Well
 - We will pursue LEED certification for the project
 - We can also look at Passive House and Well certification – which PE explained the differences between the certifications and requirements to obtain those certifications.
 - Soden Sustainability, PE’s consultant for sustainability, spoke further about the certifications of the proposed sustainability concepts. Soden noted that we are confirmed with version four, and that the goal of the project is to be LEED Platinum, though that will depend on energy systems designed, and how the final design would result.
- Other Sustainability Goals
 - Soden spoke about health, wellness and student experience.
 - Soden spoke about sustainability education and curriculum.
 - Soden spoke about transportation and community access.
 - Soden spoke about building operations and long-term stewardship.
 - Soden spoke about indoor air quality.
 - Soden spoke about carbon and climate leadership.
 - Soden spoke about materials and healthy buildings.
- Site Circulation
 - PE proposed some site circulation concepts, and recommendations they would make to the loading dock, vehicular traffic patterns, bike lanes, speed bumps, etc.
 - Committee member asked clarification questions which PE responded to satisfaction.
 - Committee member asked about the site circulation and parking garage proposal and how that ties in with the proposed site circulation graphic. PE and City responded to satisfaction.
 - Committee member provided some feedback to the graphics, and noting that he is concerned with Thurston St becoming backed up due to the Stop sign that is located at bottom of hill at Medford St.

- **Community Engagement Update**
 - PE gave an overview of the most recent community engagement events that the project team participated in, as well as what is ahead for events that the project team will be attending to further inform the community of the project's status and receive feedback.
 - PE highlighted the Community Workshop, OST Task Force, and Slice of Somerville events that the project team attended since our last meeting.
 - From the Community Workshop, the PE shared some of the community members' requests they'd like to have in the project.

- **Public Comment**
 - The Chair opened it up to the public to ask any questions or make any comments.
 - Ian Neill: recommended using mass timber for this project and explained his reasons why he believes it is the best option.

- **Adjournment**
 - Vote to Adjourn
 - Daniel Grayton motions to adjourn. Rich Raiche seconds the motion.
 - VOTE (roll call): 9 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain, 6 not present
 - Yes: Emily Grandstaff-Rice, Rich Raiche, Ruben Carmona, Daniel Grayton, Eric Weisman, Andre Green, Suraj Rajbanshi, Courtney Koslow, Rich Heidebrecht
 - No:
 - Abstain:
 - Not Present: Mayor Jake Wilson, Courtney Gosselin, Ed Bean, Chris Ames, Kathleen Seward, Jesse Clingan

Minutes Signed by:

NAME: Nicholas Masse, PMA Consultants

DATE: 06/19/2026