

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, December 4, 2017 – Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. - Board of Aldermen's Chambers – Somerville City Hall

Members present: Mayor Curtatone, Mr. Futrell, Ms. Palmer, Mr. Roix, Ms. O'Sullivan (7:04 p.m.), Ms. Normand, Alderman White, Mr. Green and Ms. Pitone.

Members absent:

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Pitone called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. with a moment of silence a salute to the flag of the United States of America.

Ms. Pitone asked the Superintendent to call the roll, results of which were as follows: PRESENT – 7 – Curtatone, Futrell, Palmer, Roix, Normand, White, Green and Pitone and ABSENT – 1 – O'Sullivan.

Ms. Pitone took a few minutes to mention that this is the first meeting at which there will be opportunity for public comment and read a synopsis of the regulations and procedures.

II. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Student Representative Emily Nash reported that students returned from Thanksgiving break and things have been getting busy especially with the start of Winter sports.

Recently, there was also a "Know your Rights" assembly held at SHS, facilitated by Harvard regarding immigration, etc. This went very well and students found it very informative.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- November 20, 2017 Regular Meeting

MOTION: Ms. Normand made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the minutes of 11/20/17. The motion was approved via voice vote.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no speakers this evening.

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

Ms. Pitone announced that items would be taken out of order from the Superintendent's Report and announced that the first item, one of her favorites, would be the Duhamel Grant Awards and turned things over to Mrs. Skipper.

A. DISTRICT REPORT

- Duhamel Grants

Chairman Laura Pitone announced that the next item would be taken out of order and announced that we are blessed to have the crew from DEI as our guests this evening. Ms. Normand asked Duhamel President Larry Siraco to step to the podium to talk about the DEI and this year's awards. Mr. Siraco gave a history of the late Mr. Paul Duhamel and the Organization started to honor his memory and carry on his work of dropout prevention and helping the disenfranchised. He also introduced other members of the Board who were present this evening – Janice Siraco, Doris McDaniel, and Christine Hardy. Tonight, there were nine (9) awards presented to the following staff members. One award was given in memory of Warren T. Bambury, Jr., the son of some of our founding members. Award recipients and projects are as follows:

- Elizabeth Doneghey, Next Wave/Full Circle, Strongwater Farm Equestrian Therapy
- Nichole Artavia, West Somerville, My Rock
- Christy Burbidge, Somerville High School, Path Program
- Suzanna Alter, Somerville High School, Improving Efficacy for Struggling Students
- Tom Serino and Nicole Hazard, Next Wave/Full Circle, Community Garden
- Claudia Seara-Galvez, Winter Hill Community Innovation School, Young Scientists in Action
- Anne Berkwitz, Kennedy, Cooking, Culture and Costumes
- Maureen Robichaux, Next Wave/Full Circle, Bike to School
- Angela Rodriguez, Argenziano, Meeting Diverse Needs through Flexible Seating
- Julia Allen and Aileene Martinez, East Somerville, Book Bags for Achievement (Bambury Award)

The School Committee recessed at 7:26 p.m. so members could congratulate the grant recipients.

The meeting resumed at 7:33 p.m.

- **Somerville High School**

Interim Headmaster Sibby LaGambina and Associate Headmaster Leo DeSimone made a presentation on the new Somerville High School that included a very engaging video and informative PowerPoint presentation that have information on the various phases of construction throughout the project. This presentation had animations that more clearly illustrated the changes.

Following the presentation discussion ensued that included the following:

- Members loved the 3-D visualization in the presentation and the video
- The addition of gender neutral toilet rooms throughout the new high school
- The upcoming use of modular classrooms starting in April as the C Wing goes off-line. There will be a covered, secure hallway constructed that will allow students to move from the existing building to the modular.
- Location and capacity of the auditorium and will it be large enough
- The request for the development of a concise timeline of the phases to share with parents, students and community that will let people know what things will be like at the school during the various phases.
- The request to keep communicating with families as much as possible.
- The assistance that the City's beefed-up engineering staff has been able to bring to this and other projects such as the Green Line extension.
- Suffolk Construction is a great general contractor to work with

- **Powder House Studios Update**

Mrs. Skipper was asked to provide an update on the progress on the Powder House Studios Innovation School. Discussion ensued that included the following:

- Attorney Long is working with the Teachers Association on this.
- How can the project be pushed forward?
- The hope for an MOA with the STA in the next month or so and then to School Committee for deliberations
- What are the School Committee's options if no progress – it would be arbitration with a state mediator
- Members expressed that this is an exciting opportunity and to act as quickly as is prudent
- The Community deserves more and we need something to bring to them and to be able to plan public hearings on the project to get community input
- Further updates as things change

- **Update on planning for conversations on Racial Equity for Long Range**

As part of Long Range Planning, work is being done to find at least one facilitator to lead discussions about racial equity. Mr. Green and Ms. Palmer are working with Mrs. Skipper on this topic and have been conducting phone interviews with various entities in the hope of having someone in place in January to start the discussion.

B. PERSONNEL REPORT

Mrs. Skipper announced the following retirement announcements, thanked the employees for their service and wished them many years of health and happiness:

- Grace Kennedy, Somerville High School Teacher, after 24 years
- James Teixeira, Brown School Teacher, after 35 years
- Cynthia Finn, West Somerville Community Schools Lead Teacher, after 10 years

VI. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

C. Finance and Facilities Subcommittee: November 15, 2017 (Mr. Futrell)

This report was deferred to our next meeting.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. School Committee Office Hours Report

School Committee members took turns reporting on a few key takeaways from their recent office hour sessions. Below please find a few highlights from each member's office hours report:

Ms. Normand

More PK on the west side of the city

Mr. Green

Increased information re: employment opportunities in the Somerville Public Schools

How to advocate for children

Parents of young children looking for general information

SCALE

Titles of High School leaders

Ms. Palmer

Recess

Sugar content of foods

Information on volunteering

Facility concerns at Winter Hill

Mr. Futrell

Testing for mold, lead in water, etc.

Happiness of families with the Wilson Reading Program

Caseload of teachers and how to make class lists "equal" by considering the needs of each student

Disparity in parent/teacher conferences

More foreign language offerings

Mr. Roix

Homework

The GOAL Program and SCALE

MCAS and Spanish requirement

Bilingual Ed Bill and the Seal of Biliteracy – lack of AP class participation prohibiting some students from eligibility

Ms. Pitone

Common planning at the middle grade level

Inclusion and supports

Retention

Electives

Lunch quality

B. School Committee email list

Discussion about how to set up a separate email list for School Committee members to post on our website so that constituents can email members directly. Discussion of open meeting law limitations on responses by members, guidelines on referring those reporting issues to the appropriate staff member and the need to review guidelines and establish a policy. More to follow at a future meeting.

C. Resolution regarding Recess

MOTION: Ms. Palmer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green, to waive the reading of the Resolution and approve.

Members offered input and questions

Mr. Futrell does not want the reading waived and Ms. Normand agreed.

MOTION: Ms. Palmer made a motion, seconded by Mr. Green to amend that motion so that the Resolution is read aloud and approved.

Ms. Palmer read the Resolution, as follows:

***Resolution to Support Bill H.235: An Act to Mandate
Recess for Elementary School Children.***

Whereas: The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) states, "Through play at recess, children learn valuable communication skills, including negotiation, cooperation, sharing and problem solving as well as coping skills, such as perseverance and self-control;" and

Whereas: A number of national organizations (National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education, and the National PTA) recommend that schools provide daily recess for elementary school-aged children; and

Whereas: While recess and physical education are different, and each is recognized to provide unique benefits; and recess provides unstructured play opportunities that allow children to engage in physical activity and should not replace physical education classes that provide sequential instruction to enhance the development of motor skills, movement concepts, and physical fitness; and

- Whereas:** Elementary school children who have more recess time have been found to have better classroom behavior; and recess is important for children’s socialization, school adjustment, and overall social development;
- Whereas:** Increased physical activity time during the school does not adversely affect student achievement; and children who engage in more physical activity have better physical and mental health; and
- Whereas:** Children’s physical fitness and children’s engagement in physical activity are associated with greater academic achievement and cognitive functioning; and
- Whereas:** The National PTA and its constituent associations support at least one period of recess for at least 20 minutes for each elementary student every school day; oppose denial of school recess as a disciplinary measure for academic reasons or inappropriate classroom behavior; recommend that school districts develop and implement policies for school recess that include unstructured outdoor play and unstructured indoor play for inclement weather days, educate students on safe playground rules, ensure the safety of playground equipment and develop an adequate adult to student ratio; and support both adequate recess and physical education classes; now therefore be it
- Resolved:** that the School Committee of Somerville Public Schools supports Bill H. 235: An Act to Mandate Recess for Elementary School Children. Bill H. 235 states the following: “All children in grades kindergarten through five attending public schools shall receive one hundred minutes of supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess each week so that there are at least twenty consecutive minutes of free-play recess per day. As used herein, the term "free play" means an unstructured environment, but which is supervised by appropriate school personnel or staff. Regulations promulgated by the department may not exclude recess from structured learning time requirements for elementary school children and may not increase the total number of hours required in the school year to meet the provisions of this subsection.” and therefore be it
- Further Resolved:** that a copy of this resolution be delivered to the Governor, Attorney General, and the Somerville state and local legislative delegations and otherwise widely distributed.

Discussion ensued following the reading. Some members prefer to delay the vote so that they may read the resolution more carefully.

Mrs. O’Sullivan questioned whether recess time counts as part of the 900 hours of instructional time required of elementary aged students.

The resolution will be amended and on the next agenda for acceptance and research will be done to answer Mrs. O’Sullivan’s question.

At this point in the meeting, which was at 9:50 p.m., the broadcast of our meeting was abruptly ended due to issues with the recording equipment.

The following items were not acted upon and will be taken up at our next meeting.

D. Acceptance of Donations (recommended action: approval)

The Superintendent recommends the acceptance, with gratitude, of the following donations:

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program donated to
Monetary	Bent Electrical Contractors, Inc.	Somerville, MA	\$568.00	To purchase aprons for CTE Electrical students
20 Thanksgiving Baskets	Ryan Harrington Foundation	Somerville, MA	\$TBD	To various families in the Somerville Public Schools
Monetary grant	National Park Foundation	Washington, DC	\$8,887.50	For transportation costs to allow grade 4 students to visit national parks and landmarks

VIII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 p.m. via voice vote.



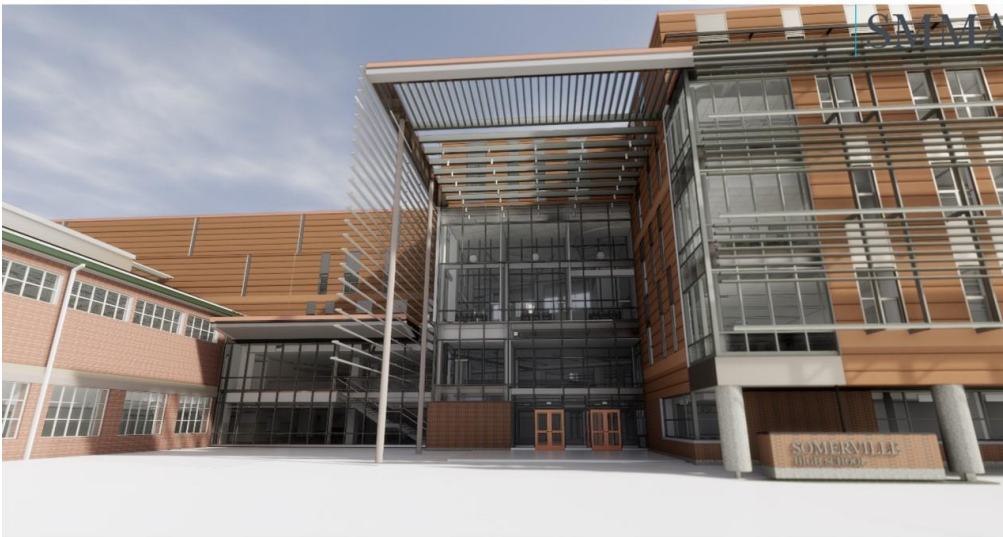
Somerville High School

School Committee Update

December 4, 2017



Symmes Maini & McKee Associates | SMMA



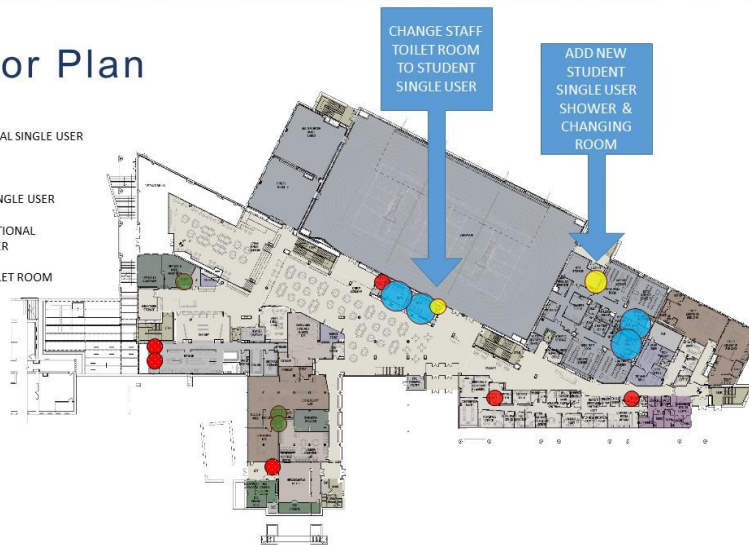


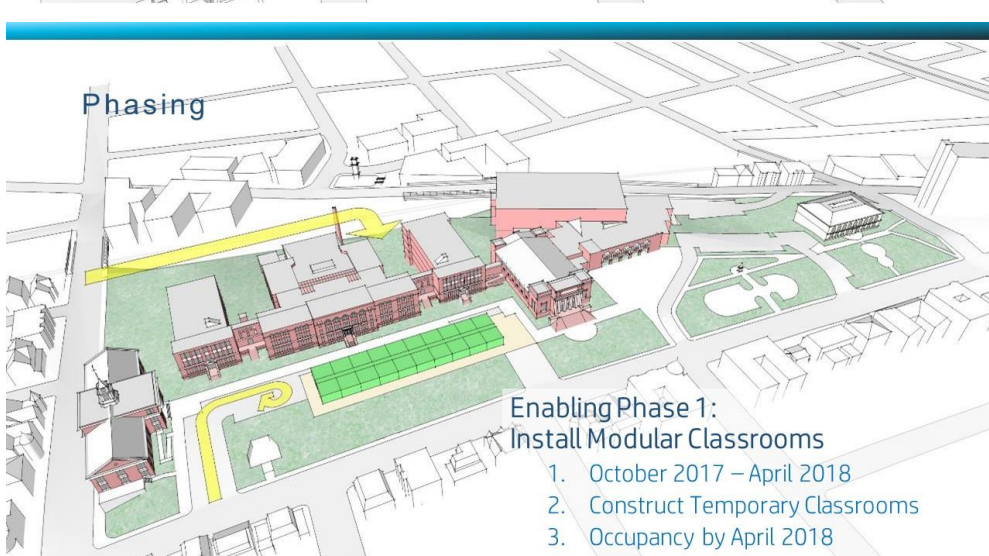
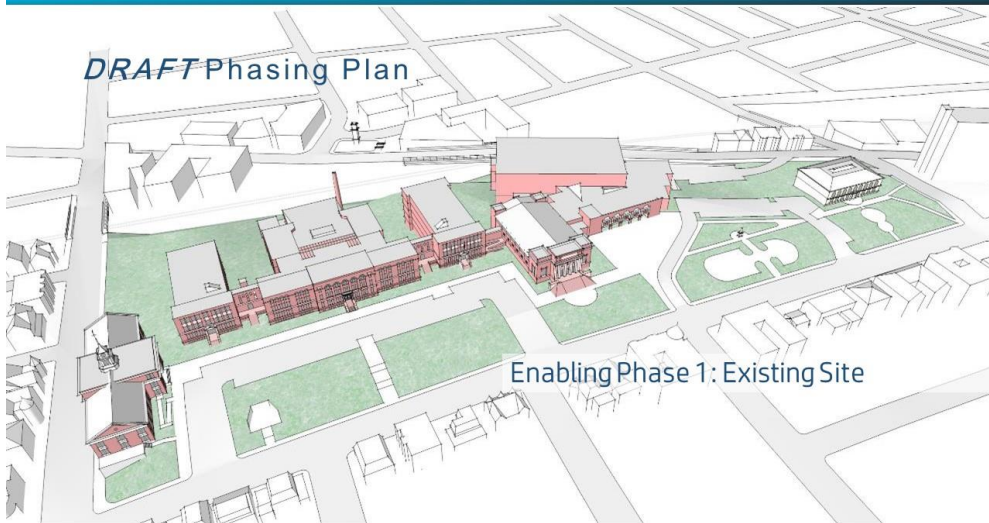
Gender Neutral Toilet Rooms

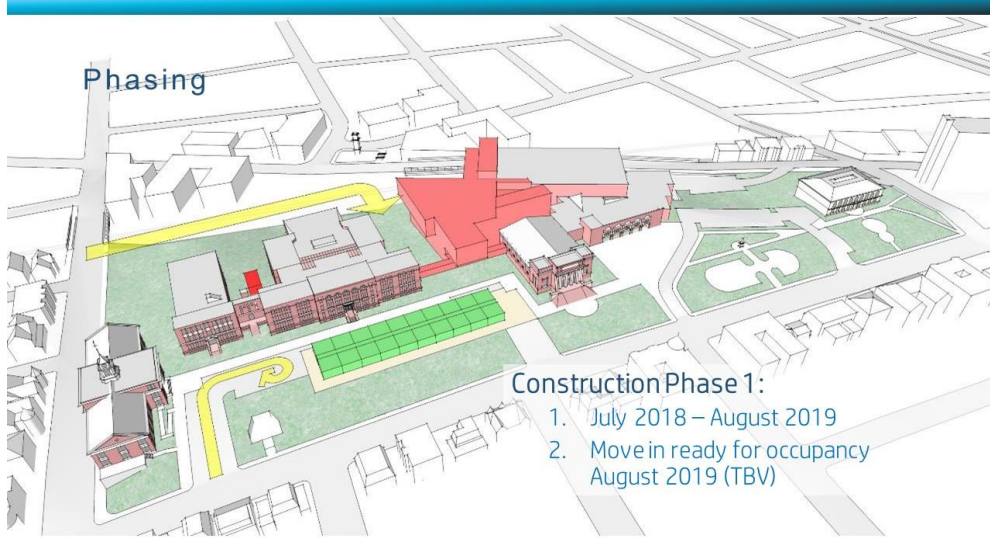
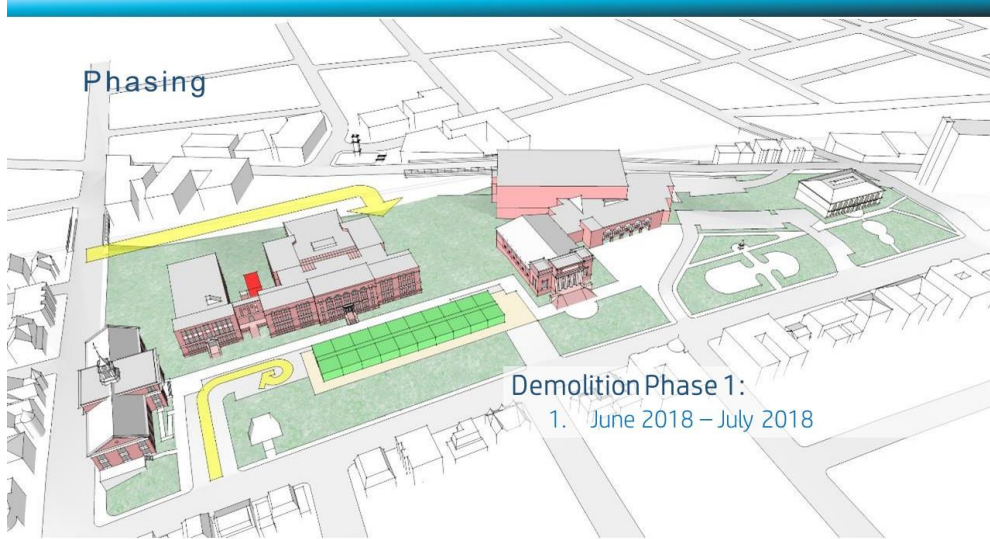
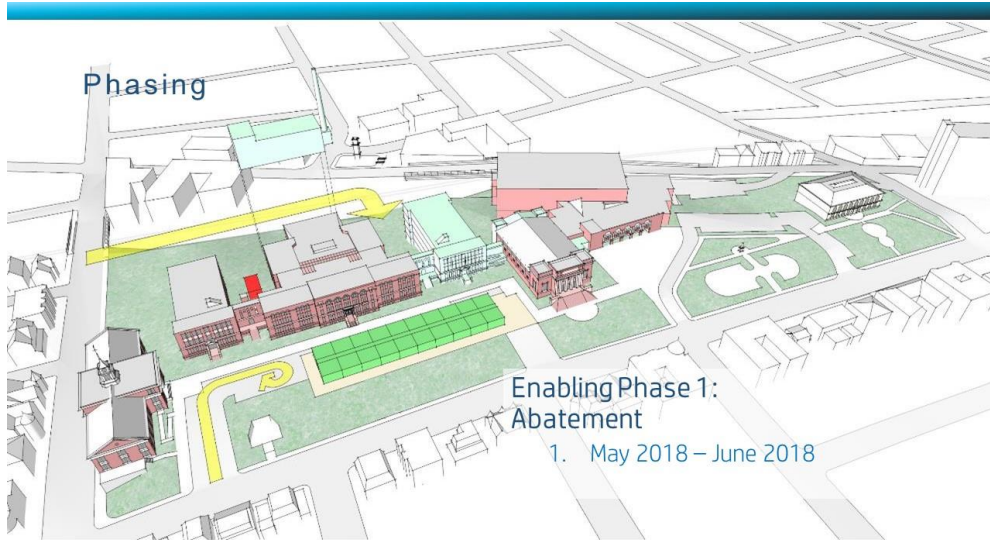


1st Floor Plan

- TOILET ROOM LEGEND:**
- STUDENT - GENDER NEUTRAL SINGLE USER
 - STAFF - SINGLE USER
 - STAFF - SPECIAL ACCESS SINGLE USER
 - STUDENT - WITHIN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT SINGLE USER
 - STUDENT MULTI-USER TOILET ROOM







Phasing

Construction Phase 1a

1. May 2019 – October 2019
2. Move from 1986 Wing Lower level
Abate & Renovate shops at
Lower level of gymnasium

Phasing

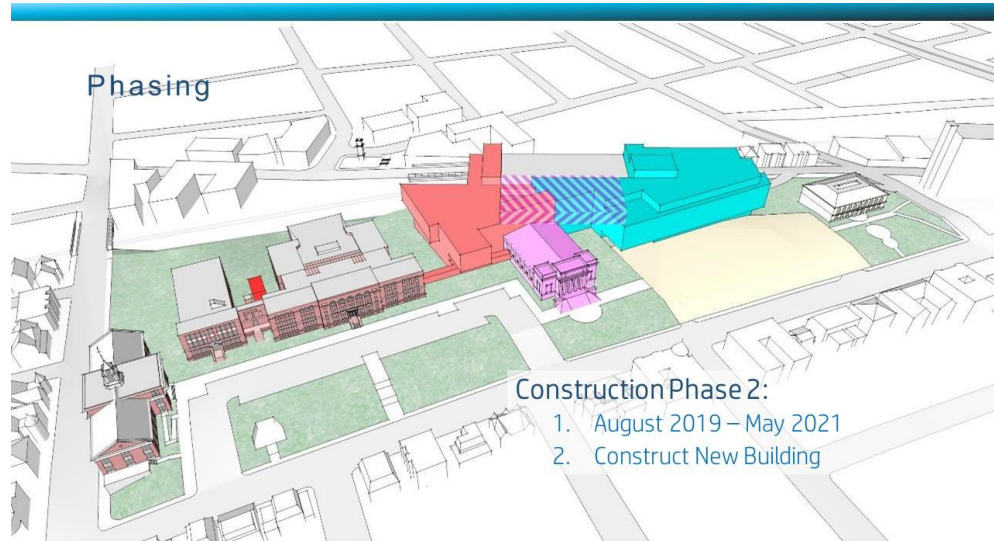
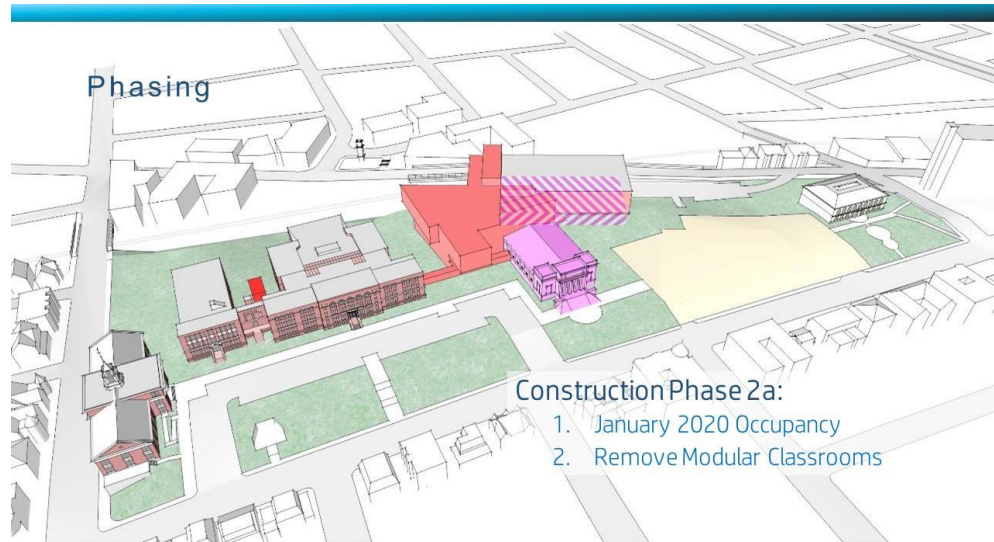
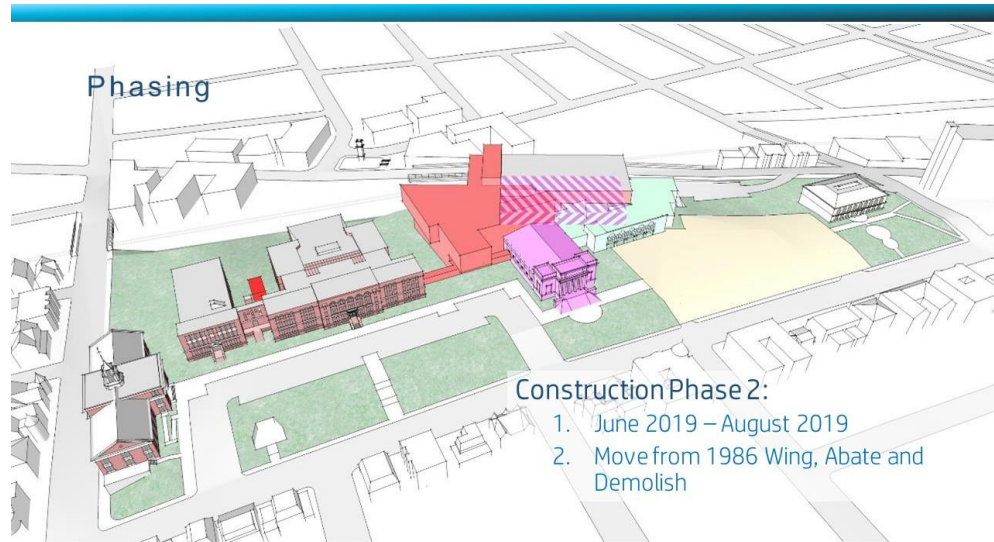
Construction Phase 1b:

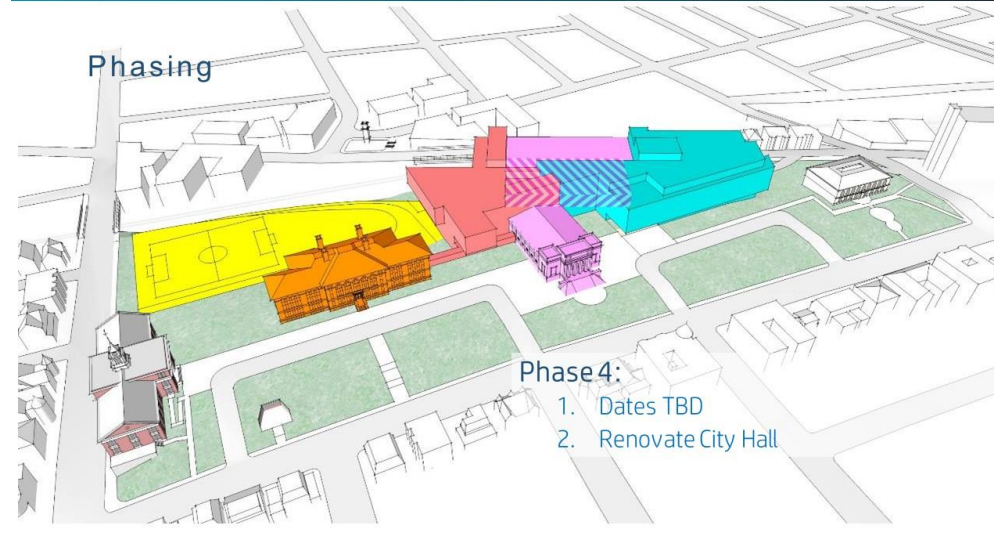
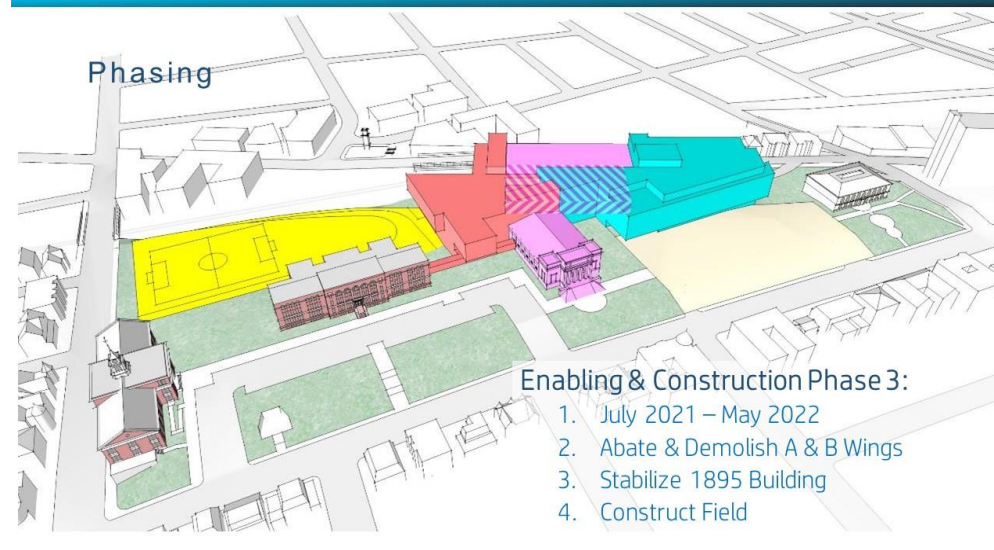
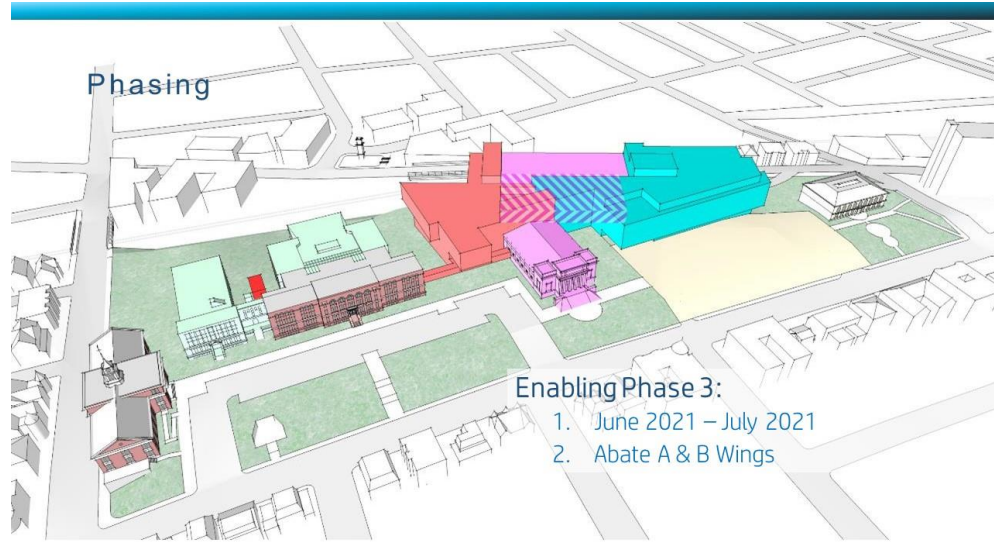
1. April 2019 – January 2020
2. Abate and Renovate Gymnasium

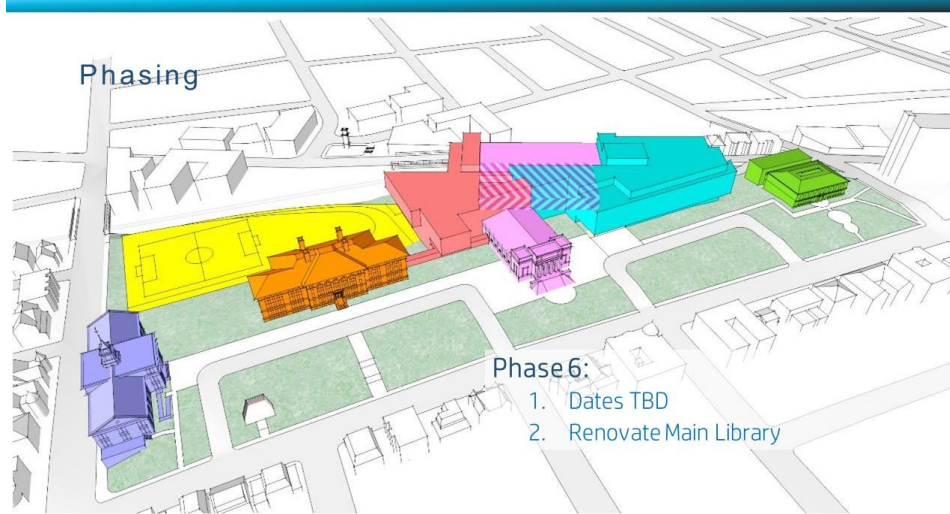
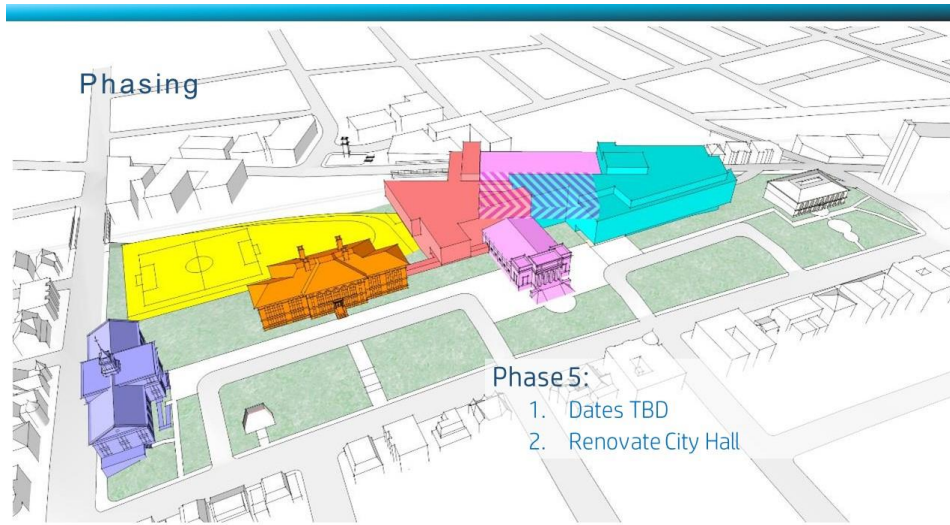
Phasing

Enabling and Construction Phase 2a:

1. June 2019 – January 2020
2. Move from 1929 Wing,
Abate Wing & Renovate







Link to youtube video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctBN61MIIWE&feature=youtu.be>