

To: Somerville School Committee

From: Laura Pitone, Ward 5 SC Representative and Co-Chair of Joint School Committee and City Council Committee on School Building Maintenance

Regarding: Summary Report on first meetings of the Joint Committee (February 1st 2023, May 1st 2023)

The School Committee members: Laura Pitone, Co-Chair, Sara Dion, Vice-Chair and Emily Ackman. The City Council Members: Beatriz Gomez-Mouakad, Co-Chair, Lance Davis and Jesse Clingan. SPS: Chad Mazza, SPS Assistant Superintendent for Operations. Meetings included City representatives such as Jill Latham Director of DPW, Rich Raiche Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management (IAM), and Mark Hamel, Superintendent of School Buildings (DPW).

Status of Committee:

Although this committee has representatives of both the School Committee and the City Council and is called a "joint meeting", it is a City Council meeting chaired by Ward 5 City Councilor Beatriz Gómez-Mouakad. Therefore, all minutes of the meetings will be posted on the Somerville Legistar website.

<https://somervillema.legistar.com/DepartmentDetail.aspx?ID=48510&GUID=CB507A56-F81B-4205-B374-EA318100D9D8&Search=>

### **HVAC Assessment and Upgrades**

- Kennedy temporary chillers are up and running. HVAC Construction documentation is complete and final work planned to be done by Spring 2024.
- Progress continues on planned assessment and upgrades of the Healey and West Somerville Neighborhood school HVAC Systems, including construction document completion and out to bid in summer 2023
- Next two schools scheduled for retro commissioning (assessing status and efficiency) are Capuano and Argenziano.
- Plan is to address 1-2 school buildings per year over five years to bring all HVAC systems in order and move forward with a regular maintenance plan.

### **Timing and process for addressing Brown and Winter Hill Community Innovation School**

- City working on "Gap Analysis" for WHCIS, Brown School Gap Analysis is complete. Gap Analysis includes assessing building conditions and cost analysis to bring building systems up to code and perform necessary repairs, information necessary to consider building renovation, retrofit or rebuild decisions.
- WHCIS assessment report was predicted to be available in June (as of May 1st meeting).
- Feb: Discussion on sequencing of activities - and push for some being done in parallel versus in series - and benefits and risks of MSBA application now or later. Different perspectives and the City, SPS and School Committee need to align on an approach and timetable.

- May: City shared presentation to clarify terminology and process for addressing school facilities. The presentation outlined components and phases of the school building plan, explaining the processes involved, e.g., building capacity study, enrollment study, gap analysis, feasibility study and community process, design and construction. This document, titled “School Building Planning” is in the May 8th SC packet and can also be found on the City Council meeting webpage. The disconnect between the City’s high level timeline and the SC desired acceleration of that plan, including considering work that can be done in parallel was expressed, as well as the need to resolve these differing perspectives.
- Liz Galloway was named as the project manager for the school building feasibility study for the city in May meeting. CC and SC want to be sure that staffing is appropriate to move this forward.

### **East Mechanical System Noise**

In response to constituent complaints, the DPW verified that the ESCS mechanical systems are within the normal parameters of the city’s volume control ordinance.

### **Preventative Maintenance Plans for School Buildings**

Presentation on the new database that is being developed and the city has begun to use to monitor all PM work on school buildings. This system will track a variety of information about school and city building assets, e.g., HVAC, plumbing devices, backup generators, fire pumps, etc. and will eventually include roof condition.

### **School Building WiFi challenges**

The city pays for network infrastructure in the schools and the School Department purchases its Wi-Fi equipment. Network infrastructure has been updated, per a government grant. Mr. Mazza will clarify the WiFi challenges in schools.

### **School Building Repair Reports**

Received first report dated January 5th. Plans for quarterly reports, which include major repairs and 311 reports. May update, the elevator at the WHCS is operational, but has a low fluid level occasionally, and this will be addressed with the elevator contractor

### **East Somerville Community School Facades**

Quotes for this work are out, considering bollards for area near loading dock to protect facade

### **Request that City Administration respond to WHCIS parent and staff concerns:**

TBD

### **Status of the Cummings School Building**

Request that documentation on the Cummings will be shared with this committee and the SC. Cost to repair the west wing roof is more than the city is willing to pay. The boiler has been replaced but there is a problem with the temperature control, the east wing is occupiable. The clothing exchange is in the building, as well as musical equipment storage. The long-term

disposition of the building will be included in the school building master plan, however, there are no plans to use this building in future. The building is not ADA accessible.

### **High School Field House floor and bleachers**

There was a soft spot on the floor created by exposure to water, but the source was not identified. The damaged section was cut out and temporarily replaced. A permanent repair, with the correct floor color, is pending. Extra flooring material is on order to repair damage caused by the wheels of the bleachers. This problem has been reduced by installing limit switches on the bleachers to stop the wheels from burning into the floor.

### **Surface Materials for Parks and Playgrounds**

Access to some play areas can be limited due to snow coverage and challenges with snow removal. City balancing need for ADA accessibility, maintainability, and safety preference for poured in place surfaces (over mulches or blacktop). The snow can be removed with the proper equipment (is it available.) DPW prioritizes snow removal efforts to address ADA ramps, bus stops and crosswalks. Consideration for heated sections of playgrounds raised, but would require a retrofit for current playgrounds. Any shoveling of spaces must be done with appropriate equipment (such as rubber tipped shovels). Students are allowed to play in the snow. District to create protocol for play space use when there is snow on the ground.