

Virtual Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee Report
Wednesday, May 12, 2021
Broadcast from the Media Arts Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA

Called for the purposes to discuss the health & safety working group recommended changes/updates to the safety manual, the planned temporary move of the Tobin School and discuss the request from the Cambridge Election Commission

Members Present: Member Rojas, Member Fantini, Vice Chair Bowman

Others Present: Mayor Siddiqui, Member Rachel, James Maloney, Chief Operating Officer

Member Rojas started the meeting at 5:30 p.m. Member Rojas shared the goals of the meeting:

- Discussing the request from the election commission, updates to the safety policies and the ventilation and space at the Tobin School and the Longfellow building.
- Provide opportunity for community members to ask questions and ideas on these topics to the administration, the health & safety working group and others.

Member Rojas turned the meeting over to the Election Commission and [their request](#).

Ethridge King asked if there is going to be a vote. Member Rojas discussed how there cannot be votes in a Sub-Committee, they will forward the recommendation to the Committee of the whole.

Discussion followed on the request. Election Commissioners discussed the different considerations that need to be made and the challenges that COVID has presented. Ms. Ford discussed how they hope they can come to some middle ground. She discussed past safety issues and that if they occur, get in touch with her immediately.

Member Rojas summarized the request. Member Rojas opened the meeting to other Sub-Committee members.

Member Fantini discussed the importance of helping the Election Commission. He asked for clarification on what schools they are currently using.

- Mr. King confirmed historically: Peabody, Baldwin, Grahams & Parks, Morse
- In 2020 they were permitted to use: Kennedy Longfellow, CRLS, Haggerty

Larry Ward discussed having extra people there to make sure people are going to the right place to vote.

Vice Chair Bowman expressed her concerns about spacing and learning time.

Mr. King went into detail about the different elections, he expressed timeline concerns. They have to send out voter cards to inform voters where their polling location is.

Member Rojas asked for further clarification on the timeline. Ms. Ford shared that the beginning of October is when they send the voter cards out but they need to know at least some point in the summer. Ms. Ford discussed how they are no longer allowed at the fire stations.

Member Fantini suggested forwarding the recommendation to the Committee of the Whole for the June 1, 2021 Regular Meeting.

Mr Maloney talked about how the Election Commission should have a safety manual for each different school ASAP.

Vice Chair Bowman asked if religious institutions could be utilized.

- Ms. Ford confirmed they have.

Member Rojas moved the meeting onto the safety manual.

Mr. Maloney provided an update on the safety manual. He touched upon the issues of having masking outside.

Elinor Acipitis expressed her concern about having children wear masks outdoors.

Vice Chair Bowman discussed the importance of the health and safety departments on why they are making the decisions to be part of this conversation. She recommended tabling this conversation until the health experts come.

Member Rojas moved the discussion to Tobin.

Mr. Maloney addressed concerns around open space, air quality and parking. Also discussed how any delays in the project, means a delay in the next school.

Vice Chair Bowman asked if we could get the dates for the move.

Mr. Maloney confirmed that the schools will close on the 23rd, the move will probably be in early July.

A parent expressed her concern over moving into a smaller school and doing the required three feet and the students having the same teachers.

Mr. Maloney discussed how he heard no discussion on having different teachers and will double check. Mr. Maloney discussed how they will be able to have three feet distancing.

Member Rachel asked if we could maximize green space by coordinating with the City.

Jenny Chung asked when the Longfellow was built.

Amanda Trombley asked if this is the right time to put extra stress on teachers/families

Mr. Maloney talked about how they compensate the teachers for the extra time to move and other considerations.

The meeting was extended ten minutes.

Member Fantini shared that he visited the Longfellow and that a lot of planning has gone into this move.

Jenny Chung shared her experience with moving schools.

Member Rojas summarized the meeting.

The meeting ended at 7:36 p.m.



Allison Daley
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