Riley, Kate

From:	Michele Sprengnether [redacted]
Sent:	Tuesday, December 31, 2019 12:55 PM
To:	Riley, Kate
Cc:	City Manager; City Council; schoolcom@cpsd.us
Subject:	re: Tobin School construction

Dear Ms. Riley et. al.,

1) I am concerned about the future flood risk in our neighborhood and particularly at the Tobin School. Based on 10 year old 2010 FEMA maps, the school and park were in a 500 year flood zone, yet the site is projected to be in a 10 year flood area by 2070. A more appropriate approach to flood risk is to think about the risk of flooding over several years. For example, in a 100 year flood zone, over a 30 year period the risk of flooding is 26%. By 2070, the risk that the Tobin would flood during a student's 3 years in middle school would also be 26%.

I ran across an interesting Pew Trust report about schools in flood zones:

https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2017/08/flooding-threatens-public-schools-across-the-country

Their Recommendations:

"requirements for flood insurance should be enforced to protect federal investments." (How will Cambridge protect its investment?)

"When communities leverage federal funds to rebuild or repair damaged infrastructure, these investments must account for future risk. Where feasible, they should consider relocating schools out of flood-prone areas."

Below I'll paste a screenshot from the 2017 report. It indicates that in Middlesex County of 379 schools, 8 are in a FEMA flood zone, or 2% of all schools. That makes the Tobin one of just 8 schools in our county sitting in a flood zone.

These questions bring me to question placing so many preschool students at the Tobin School site. It looks like 8 classrooms or 160 students in the preK will be added to the Tobin. Based on the universal preK study, Cambridge needs a total of 39 preK classrooms now, so this proposal places 20% of the preK classrooms in a flood zone.

2) Has there been an analysis about the preK students' geographic locations and transportation given that they will not be riding a school bus?

3) Given the flood risk, if anything, the paved footprint of the building and infrastructure should be reduced, and not increased.

4) Are there more beneficial, natural approaches to storm risk reduction rather than ground disruption and installation of a costly, carbon-emitting concrete rainwater storage tank? Exactly what are environmental and financial costs and benefits to this proposed underground tank?

Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

Sincerely,
Michele Sprengnether
[redacted]