

## MEETING RECORD

Perkins Eastman  
Architects DPC

Meeting Date	09/23/2020		
Project Name	Tobin Montessori Vassal Lane Upper Schools	Project Number	79131.00
Subject	Community Meeting – Schematic Design #2		
Meeting Location	Video Conference	Date Prepared	09/24/2020
Prepared By	Carmen Torres	c.torres@perkinseastman.com	T: 617-449-4026
Presenters	City of Cambridge: Louie DePasquale, Lisa Peterson Perkins Eastman (PE): Dan Arons, Omar Calderon, Carolyn Day, Sean O'Donnell Vanesse Hangen Brustlin (VHB): Sean Manning Traverse Landscape Architects: Kris Bradner		
Attendees	City of Cambridge: Brendon Roy, Kate Riley, Meaghan Mulvey, Kathy Watkins, Owen O'Riordan, Iram Farooq, David Kale CPSD: Kenneth Salim, Jim Maloney, Joanne Johnson, Jamie Frost, Daniel Coplon-Newfield DHSP: Ellen Semonoff, Michelle Farnum Perkins Eastman: Caitlin Gilman, Emily Ercolano, Carmen Torres WT Rich: Davida Flynn Community: Attendance not collected		

The following is a record of the conversation following a viewing of the pre-recorded presentation posted on the project website.

COMMENT	RESPONSE
<b>From: Robin Bonner</b> Traffic impacts of late afternoon pickup from preschool was addressed. What is the impact of pickup from after-school programs that serve Tobin and VLUS.	<b>Response by: VHB</b> Preschool is difference form Tobin and VL. Coming and going is much spread out in nature. What we are anticipated spread of vehicles 4:00-6:30pm. Far lower even in current conditions. Those parents are going to be required to come into the building so they will use the short-term parking.
<b>From: Robin Bonner</b> Can someone talk more about the roof-mounted solar arrays? What part of the building do they sit on and what is the orientation of the arrays?	<b>Response by: Perkins Eastman Architects</b> The PV solar arrays are a combination of ballasted and canopy mounted arrangements with a 5-degree slope along the roof, giving a corrugated profile along Vassal Lane.
<b>From: Email topic send before meeting</b> What is the total volume change for traffic?	<b>Response by: VHB</b> This is based on an understanding of how the school is going to change in enrollment and staff. The blue colors in the chart are occurring in 2019 Pre-COVID. In orange is new traffic related to increase in student enrollment and staff.

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<p><b>From: Email topic send before meeting</b> What changes in the Standish St. &amp; Vassal Lane intersection can address safety?</p>	<p><b>Response by: VHB</b> There are tons of opportunity to improve Vassal Lane to be more multi-modal and flexible. We want pedestrians to feel safe and motorists to drive slowly. Flooding will be another challenge to deal with going forward. This will go beyond crosswalks and stop signs.</p>
<p><b>From: Robin Bonner</b> Is the parking garage open 24-hours or is it closed evenings and weekends?</p>	<p><b>Response by: School Representative</b> In current schools, we have employee only with no access to the public. This may change depending on the needs for this particular school and community.</p>
<p><b>From: Jan Devereux</b> Curious about how many cars would be inside garage for pick up or drop off (not ST parking) and the wait time of the queue and ventilation with cars idling...have you talked to any other schools that route pick up and drop off lines through garages?</p>	<p><b>Response by: Perkins Eastman Architects</b> Cars are not allowed in the idle in Massachusetts, it is against the law. Queuing, from the beginning of the ramp coming from Vassal Lane to the drop off main entry at the garage, is stretched to fit the maximum number of cars, which is close to 50 cars. Ventilation has not been fully designed but a ventilation system has been included on the narrative for pricing.</p>
<p><b>From: Phyllis Simpkins</b> Please address this question: how will you address the increased traffic on Huron Avenue (heading towards Concord) which will compete with BB&amp;N pick-ups and commuter traffic from Brattle coming up to Appleton and crossing Huron heading to Walden and Concord.</p>	<p><b>Response by: The City</b> Currently this project does not include Huron Avenue. We have seen several comments about looking at that road that far from the school. We can look into it if it makes sense to tag to this project or in parallel as a separate study.</p>
<p><b>From: Anonymous Attendee</b> Both buses and cars use Vassal lane. From my experience living at the intersection of Vassal and Standish I know that it only takes one car stopping between the school and Fayerwhether to stop all traffic. during the sewer separation the direction of Standish was reversed. This did wonders by presenting a second exit. It was a great improvement. Has the idea of reversing Standish been looked at?</p>	<p><b>Response by: VHB</b> The basement design is based on the community comments and seeking to improve existing pick up and drop off conditions. Additionally, this decision was a direct response related to the community request for maintaining open fields and no surface parking. Thinking about school operations and each of the three have an arrival and dismissal at various times. Preschool and Tobin will have many parents going to park in short term parking. Vassal Lane is less likely to drive in and park or curb drop off. Each family is going to come up with their own system to get to school. The goal is to minimize and eliminate activity on Vassal Lane, not distributing it to other streets, but to this basement. The main goal is to minimize impact on the neighborhood, however, there is a level of human behaviors that we can design to discourage certain ones by providing better alternatives for pick up and drop off, but the project cannot guarantee that stopping on the street will be eliminated.</p>
<p><b>From: Jay Yesselman</b> Just looking at the basement, temporary parking in order to back up, you will impede traffic in the graphic. Is that correct?</p>	<p><b>Response by: Perkins Eastman Architects</b> The vast majority of short-term parking will be for Tobin not for Vassal Lane.</p> <p><b>VHB:</b> Drop off and pick up times are not the same for all schools – they vary in timeframes. The peak number of</p>

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	cars is 12 to 15 cars which we can accommodate comfortably without overflowing to the street. Vassal Lane students are older and parents may not need to use the short term parking. That said, if needed, Vassal Lane can use the parking once Tobin drop off/pick up is completed. The goal is for people to go slowly and for this will need to be actively be managed by the school.
<p><b>From: Jay Yesselman</b> Would there be someone managing traffic?</p>	<p><b>Response by: School Representative</b> As VHB mentioned, this turns into an operational item. The short answer is yes. In a new school recently, we have worked with safety officers and staff for a few weeks to manage traffic to get to a point that people got into a routine. We have managed it in other schools before and are confident it can be managed here.</p>
<p><b>From: Jay Yesselman</b> What about late-night parents and school sponsored events?</p>	<p><b>Response by: School Representative</b> We don't generally open the parking garage for parents, but this is a matter still to be worked out. We want to do what is best for the school as well as the neighbors and surrounding communities.</p>
<p><b>From: Jan Devereux-</b> Follow up question — how do you not idle while queueing in the garage?</p>	<p><b>Response by: Perkins Eastman Architects</b> Will plan for that and will have an exhaust that will accommodate for that. Electric cars are becoming more prevalent, however we are designing to accommodate all gas automobiles.</p>
<p><b>From: Jan Devereux</b> Do parents use the garages at CRLS or CSUS? I thought they were only staff?</p>	<p><b>Response by: School Representative</b> <i>Refer to answer for "What about late night parents and school sponsored events?"</i></p>
<p><b>From: Jan Devereux</b> Thanks for the answers to my questions! I realize these are operational questions re the garage queue but they do have a bearing on the planning. Pick up lines are among the most challenging situations for schools to manage and oversee.</p>	<p><b>Response by: The City</b> Thank you. We will continue to look for ways to improve the logistics.</p>
<p><b>From: Anonymous Attendee</b> Could you answer my question about whether the idea of reversing Standish St. is being looked at?</p>	<p><b>Response by: The City</b> Discussed previously during a project in West Cambridge. Feedback from the community was split. Ultimately, the Fire Department was clear on the direction it needs to be, and because of this we have not looked at this concept as an option.</p>
<p><b>From: Anonymous Attendee</b> How has COVID effected projections for enrollment that were made pre-COVID?</p>	<p><b>Response by: School Representative</b> Enrollment projections have not changed at this point in time.</p>
<p><b>From: Janet</b> People drive down Alpine ALL the time, park, and walk their kid(s) to the school</p>	<p><b>Response by: The City</b> Thank you for the comment. We will continue to look into how we can improve the logistics of the pickup and drop off.</p>
<p><b>From: Anonymous Attendee</b> From your point of view, is the footprint and the massing finalize at this point?</p>	<p><b>Response by: Perkins Eastman Architects</b> The size of the building has been determined to accommodate the curriculum and program and allow for the flexibility that allows change over time. We have settled on this with the feedback we have received both</p>

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	with the city and school but also with the community considering open space. As a result, we believe we have arrived to the optimal balance of building and open space and program within the building as well.
<p><b>From: Anonymous Attendee</b> Do you think that the Armory footprint would influence the design?</p>	<p><b>Response by: The City</b> Need to clarify, currently the Armory owners are not interested to sell the site – not even partially. It is considered an active site. It would help in terms of the site flow and open space configuration but would not impact us in terms of the footprint.</p>
<p><b>From: Anonymous Attendee</b> Why not consider if you are able to acquire it [Armory]?</p>	<p><b>Response by: The City</b> The National Guard expressed that they need the site and are not interested. It is not considered realistic to acquire the site at this time.</p>
<p><b>From: Janet</b> What is the involvement of Public Safety have to do with the armory?</p>	<p><b>Response by: The City</b> The National Guard is under the Department of Safety.</p>
<p><b>From: Janet</b> Presentation mentioned that the building went from 3 to 4 stories, has this made the footprint grow?</p>	<p><b>Response by: Perkins Eastman Architects</b> The presentation video is not explaining a design change, rather is meant to give a recap from the last presentation video. The building footprint has not grown since the last time we talked – the east side of the building that is closer to the neighbors is three stories and the west end towards Fresh Pond is four stories.</p>
<p><b>From: Janet</b> Was disturbed to see that the assumption that there would be 0 additional cars on Alpine - want to hear more about how these assumptions are made?</p>	<p><b>Response by: VHB</b> You cannot get to the school on Alpine St., only accidentally. For this study, we only consider what the path of travel is supposed to be to get to the school, not necessarily accidental paths people may use.</p>
<p><b>From: Janet</b> Answer did not respond to the questions. Now I am more concern about it, the reply seem to not recognize that many (many is 13-29 many people) drive down Alpine, park on Alpine, and take their kids to walk down to the school. I am just concerned that it is not recognized.</p>	<p><b>Response by: VHB</b> Assumption is that no <i>new</i> traffic is going on Alpine. What we want to do is provide a design that works, that is the whole point of the design. A solution - provide the opportunity for the people to do what they want us to do and the other is an operational effort.</p> <p><b>The City</b> Currently, parents do not have a good place to park and cannot all be on Standish St. With this design, we are making it more attractive to do it on site and that is the way we reduce off-site parking. No additional over what is currently happening.</p> <p><b>School Representative</b> As the school opens the relationship between our neighbors will be to get that feedback. I have never had a conversation about the parents parking in the neighborhood - if we don't get the feedback it is hard to respond. As we work in the neighborhood, to get that feedback is important to us.</p>
<p><b>From: Email topic send before meeting</b> How does the Traffic Study work while we are in a pandemic?</p>	<p><b>Response by: VHB</b> MASS DOT and the City of Cambridge are using combinations on age data from 2018 and 2019. We are currently working with a firm called StreetLight that</p>

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	<p>specializes in collection of anonymous cellphone usage data to understand where we have traffic. We have done detailed analysis with traditional counts and are now overlaying with the cellphone usage data. We worked with the traffic department and believe its good reliable data. We cannot get hard data at this time and is unknown if traffic will come back to normal.</p>
<p><b>From: Email topic send before meeting</b> Site PV and shade structures: what is happening on the site? How will these work with baseball fields? What about shade during recess?</p>	<p><b>Response by: Traverse</b> We have worked with other projects with baseball fields and had discussions with PV manufacturers to confirm that proximity is not a problem. Details will be developed through design development. In terms of shade, looking at the existing playground and the school they are in a similar location than the proposed location. It's a wide-open space with indirect light throughout the day and sun in spots throughout the day. The preschool courtyard will have a similar condition with indirect light. <b>Perkins Eastman Architects</b> Preschool prefers shaded playgrounds. This is seen as an asset.</p>
<p><b>From: Email topic send before meeting</b> How has COVID impacted the design with respect to ventilation systems and operable windows?</p>	<p><b>Response by: Perkins Eastman Architects</b> Based on the best studies and recommendations on how to provide clean air, we feel that we will be able to exceed expectations made. As discussed previously, the project has two modes: Enhance mode - which is better than the ASHRAE/ Code (minimum) and a Public Health mode that increases ventilation if required. The School and City can choose depending on the situation. Both utilize MERV 13 filtration. For the academic wings, we are considering air source heat pumps with 100% filtered outdoor air combined with air heated, cooled, and filtered again locally. The design intent is to provide as many operable windows wherever possible. Some open automatically and some manually. There are limitations that are built into the code about how much a window can open. Windows can open only 4 inches. That said we are trying to make the façade as open as possible.</p>
<p><b>From: Email topic send before meeting</b> How is design, program, teaching, and learning changing from COVID-19?</p>	<p><b>Response by: Perkins Eastman Architects</b> With 25 year of design, these are the types of questions that we ask ourselves as a practice. We have been putting together round tables and studying how to cope and move forward. We are still learning, but what this pandemic is demonstrating is the power of the place we call school. Social interaction being at the forefront of children's development. Technology distribution and resources have been accelerated through the process and continues to change. We plan on these types of unforeseen changes when we design these buildings. The building is designed for 60+ years of flexibility to deliver education. Older buildings are one size fits all - this</p>

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	<p>building is different. We have a building in front of us that can handle these types of changes.</p> <p><b>School Representative</b> Continuing to learn a lot. A combination of virtual and personal learning is the optimal goal and it is critically important. As we are opening schools in remote settings and combating the isolation that some students are feeling, we are learning nothing can replace social interaction and development.</p>
<p><b>From: Email topic send before meeting</b> Has COVID-19 and the current economy influenced the funding for this school project?</p>	<p><b>Response by: The City</b> This is the third school of a multi school plan made several years ago. This is part of the overall planning exercise and we have 50-year bond projections. We feel we have done enough planning to prepare. This is the best time to borrow money; a little over 1% before, now it is below, and this is the time to take advantage of that rate. We also have \$1.8 million for maintenance and general funding and \$13 million for school improvements in the last 4 years. We are looking at feasibility studies for other building work for ventilation and additional staffing. These are long term objectives that we are being fulfilled. Those have a plan to have all schools ventilated and to provide PPA. The City of Cambridge is one of the few cities that feels comfortable moving forward. Schools are top priority. We take financials very seriously, and the money allocated will stay for this project. The money is not going just to the elementary school program, there are two other schools, and there is stormwater management. On a square foot basis its comparable to other school projects, but with these additional items the total cost is higher</p>

Attachments: PDF of presentation slides. A recorded version of slide presentation is available at

<https://youtu.be/Y4cseSgFZWY>.