

District: City of Springfield
 School Name: William N. DeBerry Elementary School
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
 Date: December 4, 2019

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the City of Springfield (the “District”), as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing William N. DeBerry Elementary School with a new facility that consolidates students from the existing DeBerry and Homer Street Elementary Schools on the site of the existing DeBerry Elementary School that will serve students in grades PK-5. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s Preferred Schematic, contingent upon the District gaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of the proposed site.

District Information	
District Name	City of Springfield
Elementary School(s)	13 Schools (PK-5) 20 Schools (K-5) 1 School (PK-8)
Middle School(s)	14 Schools (6-8)
High School(s)	3 Schools (6-12) 7 Schools (9-12)
Priority School Name	William N. DeBerry Elementary School
Type of School	Elementary School
Grades Served	K-5
Year Opened	1951
Existing Square Footage	43,969
Additions	1961
Acreage of Site	2.68 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structural integrity - Electrical systems - Plumbing systems - Envelope - Windows - Accessibility In addition to the physical plant issues, the District reported that the existing facility does not support the delivery of its educational program.
Original Design Capacity	Unknown
2018-2019 Enrollment	234
Agreed Upon Enrollment	Study Enrollment includes the following configurations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 800 students (grades K-5 – DeBerry and Homer Street Schools) (Preferred Schematic) - 400 students (grades K-5 – 3 sections) - 280 students (grades K-5 – 2 sections)

District Information	
Enrollment Specifics	Contingent upon the Board’s approval of the Preferred Schematic, the District will sign a Design Enrollment Certification for 800 students in grades K-5, for a project that will serve grades PK-5.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	No

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	February 15, 2017
Invitation to Feasibility Study	April 10, 2018
Preferred Schematic Authorization	On December 11, 2019 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on August 26, 2020
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	80.00%

Consultants	
Owner’s Project Manager (the “OPM”)	Skanska USA Building, Inc.
Designer	DiNisco Design, Inc.

Discussion

The existing DeBerry Elementary School is a 43,969-square foot facility located on a 2.68-acre site in the City of Springfield’s Old Hill neighborhood and currently houses grades K-5. The site is surrounded on two sides by a densely settled urban residential neighborhood, a park to the west, and industrial uses to the north.

The original school building was constructed in 1951, with a one-story classroom wing added in 1961. Some facility upgrades have occurred since the facility has been in service including a new roof in 2003 and window repairs completed in 1995. In 2009, an extensive project was undertaken to improve the grounds and the landscaping at the playing fields next to the school, including an outdoor classroom that was also constructed at that time.

The District identified numerous deficiencies in the Statement of Interest for the DeBerry Elementary School that are associated with the structural condition of the existing building, building envelope, and windows. The District has determined that the existing facility requires numerous system replacements including, HVAC and electrical. Additionally, the District has identified certain areas that need to be made accessible.

The DeBerry Elementary School is one of 33 elementary schools in the Springfield Public School System. As part of Springfield’s recent Brightwood Elementary School project, the MSBA requested that the District investigate opportunities to consider potential long-term, City-wide consolidation options for its large inventory of elementary schools to help the MSBA better understand how the District intends to improve its large inventory of older school facilities and how that proposed project and potential future projects fit into a long-term, City-wide consolidation plan.

As part of this Feasibility Study, the District has explored the opportunity for consolidation of two of its elementary schools. After review and consideration, the District selected to combine the DeBerry and Homer Schools.

The Homer Street Elementary School is located on a 1.93-acre site in the Upper Hill neighborhood of the City. The American International College adjoins the property to the west, while to the east is a dense residential neighborhood. The original school opened in 1898 with additions being added during the early part of the 20th century. The District identified numerous deficiencies in the Homer Elementary School including insufficient space for Special Education programs and inadequate bus drop-off and load zones. The District has expressed concern regarding its ability to deliver its educational program due to lack of programmatic space. Additionally, there is no gymnasium, or adequately sized and dedicated interior space for physical health and well-being; and the District has indicated there are many existing non-compliant accessibility features.

In conjunction with its consultants, the District performed a comprehensive assessment of the existing conditions and the educational program. The District also received input from educators, administrators, and facilities personnel. Based on the findings of this effort, the District and its consultants initially studied 11 preliminary options that include one base repair (code upgrade), four addition/renovation configurations, and six new construction options, as presented below.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
1	Base Repair (Code Upgrade) for 280 students + 40 PK at DeBerry site
2	Renovation/ Addition for 280 students + 40 PK at DeBerry site
3	Renovation/ Addition for 400 students + 60 PK at DeBerry site
4	Renovation/ Addition for 800 students + 120 PK at DeBerry site
5	New Construction for 280 students + 40 PK at DeBerry site
6	New Construction for 400 students + 60 PK at DeBerry site
7	New Construction for 800 students + 120 PK at DeBerry site
8	New Construction for 400 students + 60 PK at Wilbraham Avenue site
9	New Construction for 800 students + 120 PK at Wilbraham Avenue site
10	Renovation/ Addition for 800 students + 120 PK at Homer site
11	New Construction for 800 students + 120 PK at Homer site

The District advanced “Option 1”, Base Repair at the DeBerry Elementary School, and “Options 4 and 7” into the Final Evaluation of Alternatives to fully evaluate the impact of the potential consolidation of the two schools on the DeBerry site. Although the District determined that “Option 6” would resolve the educational and facility deficiencies with the DeBerry School, it did not address any of the Homer School deficiencies. The District has indicated this option did not merit further evaluation but has advanced it for further consideration for cost comparison purposes.

“Options 2 and 5”, were eliminated from further consideration because they do not meet the goals of the District’s Master Plan to consolidate schools. “Option 3” was eliminated from further consideration because it requires undesirable construction phasing or temporary swing space during construction, does not support the District’s study enrollment options, and also does not meet the District’s Master Plan to consolidate schools.

“Options 8 and 9” were eliminated from further consideration because the proposed Wilbraham site is located in an industrial district, has limited site access, and has an elongated geometry. The District has indicated the shape and configuration of this property would compromise the site layout, spatial relationships and adjacencies among educational spaces. “Options 10 and 11”, both options on the Homer School site, were eliminated from further consideration because the building footprint for these options would need to occupy 100% of the usable site area. The District has indicated this site would not accommodate vehicle drop off/pick up, parking, pedestrian access, outdoor play, and service/delivery areas.

MSBA staff and the District agreed to four final options for further development and consideration in the final evaluation and development of preliminary design pricing as presented below. “Option 1” is included for cost comparison purposes only.

Summary of Preliminary Design Pricing for Final Evaluation of Options

Option (Description)	Total Gross Square Feet	Square Feet of Renovated Space (cost*/sq. ft.)	Square Feet of New Construction (cost*/sq. ft.)	Site, Building Takedown, Haz Mat. Cost*	Estimated Total Construction ** (cost*/sq. ft.)	Estimated Total Project Costs
Option 1: Improvements & Code Upgrade at DeBerry site (280 students)	43,969	43,969 \$386/sq. ft.	N/A	\$7,171,925	\$24,130,790 \$549/sq. ft.	\$30,163,487
Option 4: Addition/ Renovation at DeBerry site (800 students)	158,338	23,928 \$330/sq. ft.	134,410 \$443/sq. ft.	\$7,830,474	\$75,240,871 \$475/sq. ft.	\$94,051,089
Option 6: New Construction at DeBerry site (400 students)	91,230	N/A	91,230 \$442/sq. ft.	\$8,121,319	\$48,422,981 \$531/sq. ft.	\$60,528,727
Option 7***: New Construction at DeBerry site (800 students)	154,608	N/A	154,608 \$431/sq. ft.	\$8,786,190	\$75,399,697 \$488/sq. ft.	\$94,249,621

* Marked up construction costs

** Does not include construction contingency

***District’s Preferred Schematic

The District has selected “Option 7”, new construction at the DeBerry School site that consolidates the DeBerry and Homer Elementary Schools, as the Preferred Schematic to proceed into Schematic Design. The District selected this option as its Preferred Schematic because it allows the District to address both antiquated elementary schools in the Old Hill and Upper Hill neighborhoods of the City, maximizes the efficiencies of a combined school, achieves the educational and programmatic needs for the elementary school, and provides ideal adjacencies for clusters/grades. This option locates the administration at the main entrance with core facilities to allow visibility of students, staff and visitors, provides separation of core facilities and academic spaces, and maximizes open space on the site.

“Options 1 and 6” do not support the District’s desire to consolidate the two smaller elementary schools. “Option 4”, the renovation / addition option, was not selected because the limitations of the existing site, coupled with the inefficient existing structure would compromise the educational program.

The District presented its proposed project to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”) on November 13, 2019. At that meeting, FAS members discussed a number of items regarding: appreciation for the educational program and its relation to the proposed building layout; the timeline and procedure associated with the Article 97 land disposition; potential opportunities for integrating world languages and culture into the curriculum; the proposed use of the Title I spaces; appreciation for efficient use of the site; considerations associated with stormwater management and drainage; building scale; opportunities for collaborative purchasing of FF&E; considerations regarding selecting furnishings and finishes made with non-toxic materials; and project costs.

MSBA staff reviewed the conclusions of the Feasibility Study and all other subsequent submittals with the District and found:

- 1) The options investigated were sufficiently comprehensive in scope, the approach undertaken in this study was appropriate, and the District’s Preferred Schematic is reasonable and cost-effective and meets the needs identified by the District.
- 2) The District has submitted an operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget statement for MSBA review.
- 3) MSBA staff’s recommendation to the Board for approval of the District’s Preferred Schematic is contingent upon the District obtaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of the proposed site. The MSBA will not sign a Project Funding Agreement until said conditions are met.
- 4) The District’s Schematic Design will be subject to final review and approval by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as part of the Schematic Design submittal, which is prior to executing a Project Scope and Budget Agreement.
- 5) Subject to Board approval, the MSBA will participate in a project that includes spaces that meet MSBA guidelines, except for variations previously agreed to by the MSBA. All proposed spaces will be reviewed during the Schematic Design phase.
- 6) Pursuant to the MSBA’s enabling legislation, the MSBA’s regulations, and District’s proposed plan to relocate students currently housed in the Homer Elementary School for which it received a school building grant from the Commonwealth for a prior project, the MSBA may recover a prorated portion of the financial assistance that the District has received for the previous project. Additional information may be required to complete the MSBA’s review. The exact amount to be recovered will be established at the conclusion of the Schematic Design phase.
- 7) As part of the Schematic Design phase, the District will work with the MSBA to determine a mutually agreeable methodology to differentiate eligible costs from ineligible costs.

Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the District proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing William N. DeBerry School with a new facility that consolidates students from the existing DeBerry and Homer Street Elementary Schools on the site of the existing DeBerry Elementary School that will serve students in grades PK-5. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District's Preferred Schematic, contingent upon the District gaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of the proposed site.