

The High School Building Committee met on Monday, March 21, 2022. Links to meeting agendas, as well as the schedule and links to attend future meetings can be found here:
<https://www.somervillema.gov/shsbcmeetings>

The contingency fund is now in the black due to additional funding recently approved by the City Council as well as the impact of the settlement with Suffolk. The remaining contingency stands at just under \$6M.

Denis Garriepy from Suffolk presented slides with a project update. As recently as January we were treating the entire future field site as containing asbestos-contaminated soil. This significantly hampered removal due primarily to the lack of sites that will accept asbestos soil. On the half of the site that is directly behind the 1895 building, we have now reached the bottom of the soil layers that contained asbestos. Therefore, everything down from that level can now be assumed to be without asbestos, with exception of two smaller spots. The other half of the area, closer to City Hall, is still undergoing sampling and we hope for further test results next week. About two thirds of the City Hall side looks to be natural soils (native soil) that should not have asbestos in it. If that proves true, we can significantly increase removal of soil due to additional receiver facilities.

On the completed phases, the punchlist is down to 34 exterior items and 55 interior items, which include signage, some warranty items, misc. patching etc.

COVID impacts are minimal at the moment.

In the field house, it looks like bleachers solution is working. Some minor repairs to the carpet/tiles due to prior indenting. It was also noted that, due to COVID restrictions during the winter sports season, we still haven't really been road tested the solution so they will continue to monitor it during spring events. They are also monitoring for humidity levels, which seems to be good, though some of that could be due to dry weather generally. If levels aren't where they should be, that should remain a covered issue and they city wouldn't be responsible.

The theatre/auditorium had its first big public events this past week/weekend with the Highlander Theatre Company's musical performance and it seemed to go well in terms of use of the stage technology, sound and lighting, etc. There were several reports of temperatures being a bit warm during performances. They are looking into the data and settings to determine if there is a specific cause and speculated that they system may have gone into a normally scheduled "unoccupied mode" rather than being adjusted for the event. This highlights the need for better communication between the building users and DPW/operator of building. There may need to be a clearer usage process, including who to contact in the moment for any issues that arise and coverage for individuals who might be unavailable/after hours. There may also need to be a more detailed "user manual"/videos so users can address issues where possible. It was also suggested that upcoming school building usage/events will be incorporated in the weekly (citywide) event meetings that DPW holds. There were also reports of frustration that only the two single-person restrooms at the main theatre entrance were available to the audience. The large restrooms facilities in the main area of the building are supposed to be available for the audience but there was reportedly conflicting information as to whether that was the case. This also highlights the need for improved communication and that will be addressed. It was noted that we are still in a bit of a learning period as "first" experiences with the building occur.

Finally, July 2023 remains the estimated date for substantial completion of Phase 3 and the field.