

Capital Projects Master Planning Working Group

Preview of Findings and Description of Process

June 2018

Laura Pitone, Ward 5 School Committee Representative

Mark Niedergang, Ward 5 Alderman

Summary Preview of Findings: The Master Planning initiative is lead by the City's Capital Projects and Planning Department. Initiated by the city in 2016 and joined by Somerville Public Schools, School Committee and Board of Aldermen representation in fall of 2017, the cross-functional group has been working with consultants from Kleinfelder, a construction and engineering firm, to assess the space needs of city and school administration and develop a long-term space-usage plan. The Master Planning Working Group has created a recommendation, with input from the Superintendent of Schools and the Mayor, which is being finalized for review by the Board of Alderman and School Committee in a joint meeting to be scheduled for fall 2018.

The Capital Projects Master Planning Working Group is in support of this plan, which over several years, (conditioned upon availability of financing for building renovations and improvements), facilitates:

- City and Somerville Public Schools consolidation of their administrations on Central Hill and at the Edgerly building, respectively;
- thoughtful department adjacencies and alleviation of overcrowding;
- the co-location of the Recreation Department with SPS administration at the Edgerly;
- creation of a larger, new, right-sized home for the SCALE adult learning center adjacent to the new High School in the 1895 building;

- a capital improvement plan which will include major renovations to the 1895 building, City Hall and the Edgerly; and
- transition out of the current Recreation building, TAB (Tufts Administration Building) building, City Hall Annex and the Cummings School.

Plans for either reuse or disposition of buildings proposed to be transitioned out of were not included in the scope of this work. Specifically, the fate of the Cumming School building would be considered by the School Committee, the remaining buildings through additional city planning efforts and by the Board of Aldermen. Three city departments may not be housed in the buildings considered in this plan, and options are being explored to identify future locations for them. Renovation construction is not proposed to be initiated until the completion of the new Somerville High School in 2021; however, design work is proposed to begin in 2019.

Working Group Membership: The Capital Projects Master Planning Working Group includes the following representatives:

Capital Projects (leading the initiative) – Robert King, Chris Rais, Robert Cassano

Board of Alderman - Mark Niedergang

School Committee – Laura Pitone

Finance Department – Mike Mastrobuoni

Inspectional Services Dept (ISD) - Goran Smiljic

OSPCD Planning Dept – George Proakis

Somerstat - Emily Monea, Alex Lessin

Somerville Public Schools- Mary Skipper, Jeff Curley

Construction and Engineering Consultants - Kleinfelder – Michael Epp, Warren Randle, Andre Martecchini

Scope and Objectives of the Capital Projects Master Planning Working Group -

The Working Group has focused primarily on the long range view (5+ years) as to the future facility use for city and school administration. The work has not included the school buildings currently occupied by pre-K-12 schools & programs with the exception of Edgerly, which is the current home of Next Wave/Full Circle (a 6-12 program that is planned to move to the new High School) and SPS Central Administration. Objectives of the master planning work were to:

- Alleviate overcrowding which in some cases has limited expanding capacity;
- Consider capacity of underutilized city buildings;
- Explore valuable adjacencies between departments;
- Improve delivery of services;
- Explore relocation of groups currently located in leased Tufts space (Tufts Administration Building);
- Improve working conditions to continue to attract and retain excellent staff.

Buildings under discussion:

City Hall

1895 building (the main entrance of SHS, which is not included in the future SHS plan)

Cummings School

Edgerly

City Hall Annex

Recreation Dept building

TAB (Tufts Administration Building) building

Process: The consultants from Kleinfelder augmented prior analyses of city needs with interviews with city staff and SPS administration. The Working Group reviewed and refined the findings, and identified valuable department adjacencies. Kleinfelder developed and refined possible layouts of space based on space needs and adjacency

analysis, exploring City Hall, 1895, Edgerly and Cummings and exiting the TAB and City Hall Annex, as well as relieving overcrowding at the DPW building. The final recommendation, which is in the process of being refined, resulted in City Hall continuing to be the primary city administration building, the Edgerly as the primary SPS administration, and co-location of both city and SPS staff in a renovated 1895 building. A draft of a several-year transition plan, including some intermediate moves and estimated timing for relocation, was created.

Former School Buildings - For the city to assume use of the former school buildings (1895, Cummings or Edgerly) would require the School Committee to authorize the release of the buildings. The SC has identified future enrollment strategy as a priority for long-range planning over the next 1- 2 years. These efforts may need to be accelerated for the SC to make informed decisions regarding these three buildings. The Capital Projects and Planning Dept is engaged in city-wide facility assessments to document the current state of all city facilities (including school buildings), which will also inform this process.