

Community Meeting

Project Name	Tobin Montessori Vassal Lane Upper Schools
Project Number	79131
Meeting Date	24 June 2024
Meeting Location	Concord Avenue Site Entry at Gate 2
Attendees	<p><u>City of Cambridge</u>: Kristen Kelleher, Brendon Roy, Evan Silva, Augusto Trento, Matt DeVoe</p> <p><u>Cambridge Public Schools</u>: Daniel Coplon-Newfield, Vedad Konjic</p> <p><u>Cambridge Traffic and Parking</u>: Stephen Meuse</p> <p><u>Cambridge Inspection Services</u>: Dave Power</p> <p><u>Perkins Eastman</u>: Lisa Pecora, Dan Arons</p> <p><u>W.T. Rich</u>: Dan Blumberg</p> <p><u>CDM Smith</u>: Mark Salvetti, Kate Murphy</p> <p><u>VHB</u>: Sean Manning</p>

Below are the questions and response from the community meeting on June 24, 2024

1. Community comment: Machines banging on the piles of dirt and on the ground are causing the houses to vibrate.
Response from WTR: If the machines are banging then they encountered something large in the ground that needs to be broken up, the banging is not on purpose or intentional but a necessary process to mitigate the site

2. Community question: What are the green tanks that have appeared on the Concord Ave side of the site?
Response from WTR: The green tanks are part of the water treatment system to control rainwater. These tank have always been on site they are now being relocated to the north of the site so that work can begin in the location where the tank were previously located.

3. Community question: How is the ground water being addressed in the future
Response from CoC: The permanent solution is a 1.25 million gallon storm tank to mitigate the storm water from Vassal Lane and curb drainage at Concord Ave.

4. Community question: Is the soil that is being dug up toxic? The dust and dirt in the air is getting into the houses (heavy rain last night washed the cars and by noon they are covered in dirt). How is toxicity being addressed?
Response from CoC: The top 3' layer of soil on site is clean fill, the dirt deeper down is dirty from the landfill and is being mitigated in place so that it never comes out of the ground before it is treated. Dust mitigation is in place, the site is sprayed with water to keep dust levels down

5. Community question: Piles of dirt have lost their covers along Alpine Path
Response by WTR: The piles along Alpine path are clean fill, the tarps are used to keep the dirt from drying out and minimize dust. Sometimes the covers are removed to take or add fill to the pile but are covered at the end of the day.
There has been treated material stock piled on site but the city and construction team has followed a plan that was developed by CDM Smith to mitigate the soils and keep the site and neighborhood safe

6. Community question: Where does the stormwater go and what do the test show for rainwater
Response from CDM: The rainwater that is collected in the tank is filtered to remove silt before it enters the storm system where it then goes into Alewife Brook
The testing of the water has shown levels of copper, led and nitrogen. These test are done monthly and results are sent to the EPA. The ph levels are also tested but the have stayed below the exceedance levels
7. Community question: Where will the teacher's park
Response from CoC and CPS: The parking garage below the building will have 150 parking spaces, 100 spaces will be for the teachers and staff and 50 spaces for parent drop off and pick up. Vassal and Tobin teachers and staff that are non Cambridge residence will share the parking spaces in the garage. The faculty and staff that are residence of Cambridge will park on the streets.
8. Community question: What is the number of faculty and staff that are Cambridge residence?
Response from CPS: This information will need to be looked up and cannot be accurately answered at this time
9. Community question: What time does the school day begin
Response from CPS: the Tobin school begins at 7:45am and the Vassal school begins at 8:45am
10. Community question: Did the old parking lot have more space to park on site
Response from CoC: the old parking lot had 60 spaces and by parking on the access drive they crammed in 80 spaces. The new parking garage has almost doubled the amount of spaces on site (in the garage)
11. Community comment: The universal playground is causing more parking issues around Concord Ave. What will happen when the Callanan Park reopens?
Response from Traffic and Parking: The city traffic and parking department can look at this once the park reopens and we understand what the new impacts are
12. Community comment: Has the city been granted the Armory property (where the trailers are currently located)
Response from CoC: The City has not purchased the Armory property at this time, if purchased it is unknown how the area would be developed
13. Community comment: Where will the busses come in an out?
Response from CoC: There will be no buses on Concord Ave. The busses will enter the school from Vassal Lane onto the bus loop where all of the busses will be able to cue off of the street.
There are 5 buses at drop off and pick up time. Tobin and Vassal have staggered drop off and pick up times. Pick up is at 2:15 for Tobin and 3:15 for Vassal. There will never be 10 busses on site at once
14. Community question: How many parents drop off their kids?
Response from CPS: There have been about 20-30 parents who have dropped off their children in past years
15. Community question: Where is the garage entry
Response from CoC: The parking garage entry is off of Vassal Lane
16. Community question: is there bicycle parking on site
Response from CoC: There are multiple bike racks on site and dedicated bike storage inside of the school for staff and a shower is located in the school

17. Community question: Will neighborhood parking be allowed in the garage during snow emergency when no one can park on site?
Response from CoC: There is no current plan to use the garage for snow emergency parking
18. Community question: When will the project be complete
Response from CoC: The school will open in September of 2025
19. Community Question: Can speed bumps be added to the streets
Response from Cambridge Traffic and Parking: The city does not currently have a program to install speed humps. We use other types of traffic calming such as curb extensions, raised crossings/crosswalks, rectangular rapid flashing beacons (flashing crosswalk signs), and pavement markings, to name a few. The conditions in the neighborhood can be further reviewed by TP+T staff once the school reopens and we have a better idea of what has changed. All streets in this vicinity have been rebuilt within the last 10 years with traffic calming in mind and with special attention paid to being near a school.
20. Community comments: Need to look out for the safety of the children, was there a traffic study done?
Response from the CoC: A traffic study was done in 2019 and is posted on the project website. The information was gathered before the pandemic and work continued during the pandemic but the proper data was used to complete the report. Sidewalks have been added to the site and pick up and drop off is now inside of the school where it is safer below grade in the garage
21. Community question: How is the school going to make the parents drop off and pick up inside of the garage?
Response from CPS: The parents will be starting new at the new school, they have been removed from the site for a few years and there are no bad habits to break. The school will administer rules for proper drop off and pick up procedures
22. Community Comment: The school will also be used beyond the school day for after school activities and sports, need safety on the streets to protect the children
Response from CoC: The city's traffic and parking department can look at this once the school opens to determine if additional changes may be required. All streets in this vicinity have been rebuilt within the last 10 years with traffic calming in mind and with special attention paid to being near a school.
23. Community comment: The color of the brick does not match the rendering and is not what was presented to the community.
Response from PE: The design team feels that the brick is not far off from the brick shown in the renderings and under direct sun light the brick matches the rendering. The brick that was presented to the community was in the specifications as the basis of design. However the public bidding process requires an additional 2 equal manufacturers. It is nearly impossible to get an exact match between manufacturers. The brick that was submitted by the contractor is a slightly different tone than the basis of design brick that was presented. When asked who does not like the brick, only a few of the community members raised their hands as the design is subjective to one's opinion
24. Community question: Will there be lights on the athletic fields
Response from CoC: There will be lights along the pathways but the athletic fields will not have field lighting
25. Community question: Why is there not a policeman directing traffic on Concord Ave every day. At the start of the project more police were present and now there is less police directing traffic
Response from CoC: The construction team has been requesting police details at the construction gate on Concord Ave. but the police are not always available and they need to use construction workers to help direct traffic when they are not able to have a police detail at the site.

26. Community questions: Are there air conditioners being installed around the buildings?
Response from WTR: There are currently 2 AC's units that have been brought onto the site at this time to help keep the humidity down inside of the building. Sound blankets are being installed around the units to keep the noise contained. The AC units are in the same locations as the heating units.
27. Community questions: Generators run 24/7 when will permanent power be connected?
Response from CoC: The building is scheduled to have permanent power in January of 2025 but the City is working with Eversource to see if they can get a temporary power wired connection to the site to omit the use of generators.
28. Community question: Will the lights remain on in the building at night?
Response from PE: The lighting can be programmed with the light control system to turn on and off lights during school hours however there will be emergency lighting that is required to stay on at all times. The temporary construction lights in the building are required by the fire department to remain on at night but the city has worked with the fire department to keep this lighting to a minimum when the workers are not on site
29. Community question: will the new housing development behind Trader Joe's increase enrollment in the school.
Response from CPS: The city has school choice therefore families in the area would not necessarily go to the Tobin or Vassall School's. The school administration department would balance the enrollment out between all schools
30. Community question: What is the projected enrollment for the school and will the school be at full capacity when it opens in 2025
Response from CPS: The school capacity will have a very similar enrolment when it reopens in 2025. The facility will have additional capacity for the growth of the schools over time.
31. Community comment: Trucks have been starting up on site at 6:45am and back up alarms are going off.
Response from CoC: The workers are not to start up trucks until 7:00am, if trucks are turned on before then the workers are yelled at and reminded of the start time at 7:00am. CoC and WTR continue to enforce this rule with all workers.
32. Community question: Does the ground water get pumped away from the building?
Response from CDM: There is an underslab drainage system that address the ground water because the basement of the building is below the water table. All of the ground water goes into a pump chamber where it is then filtered and conveyed into the storm system
33. Community question: Can the back up alarms be set to low frequency?
Response from CoC: The city has looked into changing the back up alarms but there is resistance from the construction workers for the safety of the workers on site. There is also too much equipment coming and going from the site to retrofit all of the trucks
34. Community question: Is the site designed to withstand the 100 year flood?
Response from PE/Nitsch: Consistent with City of Cambridge requirements, the school was designed to be able to recover from the 2070-100-year storm. The peak flood elevation in the present day 100-year storm is 22.7 and in the 2070, 100-year storm is anticipated to be 23.7 based on the City Flood Viewer 2022. The first-floor elevation of the building is set above the flood elevation at 25 and essential building mechanical equipment is located above elevation 23.7. The garage is located below the building and may receive water in the 2070, 100-year storm if flood protection measures (i.e. barriers) are not installed. However, this is a temporary condition that does not impact the function of the building and meets the City's intent to be able to recover from the flooding

35. Community question: Parking at intersection of Chilton Street @ Vassal Lane makes turns difficult - will this be addressed?

Response from Cambridge Traffic and Parking: This is not related to the school project and can be investigated through the normal TP&T review process. Please submit a SeeClickFix ticket so that TP&T staff can understand the complaint and send staff to review this location

36. Community question: Will there be adult gym equipment in the playground?

Response from PE: The playground equipment has been designed for students between the age group of pre-school through 8th grade