District: Arlington
School Name: Thompson Elementary School
Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
Date: February 9, 2011

Recommendation:

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the Town of Arlington as part of its Invitation for Feasibility Study, to proceed into schematic design for the replacement of the Thompson Elementary School. MSBA staff has reviewed the feasibility study and accepts the District's preferred solution to replace the existing school with the construction of a new K-5 Thompson Elementary School on the existing site.

District Information	
District Name:	Town of Arlington
Elementary Schools:	1 – Menotomy Pre-School (PK) 7 – Breckett (K-5) - Cyrus E Dallin (K-5) - Hardy (K-5) - John A. Bishop (K-5) - M Norcross Stratton (K-5) - Pierce (K-5) - Thompson (K-5)
Middle Schools:	1 – Ottoson Midd (6-8)
High School:	1 – Arlington High School (9-12)
Priority School Name:	Thompson Elementary School
Type of School:	Elementary
Grades Served:	K-5
Year Opened:	1956
Total Square Footage:	55,000
Additions:	None
Acreage of Site:	3.1 Acre Flat Site
Building Issues:	The District noted deficiencies in the following areas: - Windows and doors - Building envelope - Electrical systems - Life safety systems - Mechanical systems, and - Accessibility In addition to the physical plant issues, the District reported overcrowding.
Original Design Capacity:	330 - 340 (estimate from District)
2009-2010 Enrollment:	316
Agreed Upon Enrollment:	330-380
Enrollment Specifics:	A mutually agreed upon design enrollment of 330 students serving

District Information	
	Grades K-5, excluding plans to re-district. Upon implementation of re-districting, this will increase by 50 students resulting in a design enrollment of 380.

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Feasibility Study:	March 25, 2009
Preferred Schematic Authorization:	February 9, 2011
Project Scope & Budget Authorization:	The District is targeting Board authorization on July, 2011

Consultants	
Owner's Project Manager	PMA Consultants, LLC
Designer	HMFH Architects

Discussion

The Thompson Elementary School, the District's prioritized Statement of Interest, is located on a three acre site in a relatively densely populated area of Arlington. The District and the MSBA mutually agreed to consider options that included increasing the design enrollment for the Thompson Elementary School from 330 students to 380 students to address projected growth in the K-5 student population. This increase in the design enrollment is contingent upon the District implementing a redistricting plan. The District considered options that included an Early Childhood Center, a Daycare center, and a central space for the preparation and distribution of food to all Arlington District elementary schools.

The District considered student assignments within the District, potential opportunities for tuition agreements with adjacent districts, the use of existing educational space through leasing or acquisition, and the use of existing town-owned facilities. The District determined that none of these options are viable due to the age and inadequacies of the existing buildings, overcrowded school facilities, and increasing enrollment projected throughout the District. The District, in conjunction with its Designer, initially considered a number of options, including a renovation only option, one addition / renovation option and four new construction options, on the existing Arlington Thompson site and on the abutting town-owned Lussiano Park site. These options were compared and evaluated to determine which options best met the community, educational, design (building and site), facilities, environmental and fiscal goals (basic comparative costs were included in this evaluation) established by the School Building Committee and its Designer. Subsequent efforts by the District and their Designer resulted in five options being compared, as set forth below.

On December 15, 2010, the Town of Arlington and its Designer presented their proposed project to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee during which the District expressed a preference for a new facility. MSBA staff questioned the District and its Designer regarding the renovation potential of the existing building.

After final evaluation of the design alternatives, the Thompson School Building Committee decided not to pursue option #3 (relocating a new facility on the adjacent town-owned park site) since this option would require a lengthy approval process from the National Park Service and State Legislature. Due to the site constraints, the District decided to remove the early childhood center and daycare center from the project leading to the final two options investigated.

Based upon the estimated costs and evaluation summarized in Table 1 below, the District and its Designer have determined that the most cost effective solution that meets the District's educational needs and priorities is to replace the existing Thompson Elementary School serving grades K-5 with a new elementary school serving the same grades, with a new design enrollment of 380 students if the District implements a redistricting plan. The District has selected Option 2, a new elementary school located on the existing site as its preferred option to proceed into schematic design.

Table 1 – Summary of Preliminary Design Pricing

Option (Description)	**Enrollment (Grades)**	**Total Gross SF**	**SF of Renovated Space (Cost/SF)**	**SF of New Construction (Cost/SF)**	**Estimated Total Construction (Cost/SF)**
Option 1 *Reno / Addition*	*380 (K-5)*	*66,618 GSF*	*26,460 GSF ($239.6 / SF)*	*40,158 GSF ($335.0 / SF)*	*$19,792,713 ($297.1 / SF)*
Option 1a *Reno / Addition*	*380 (K-5)*	*66,618 GSF*	*26,460 GSF ($239.6 / SF)*	*40,158 GSF ($311.9 / SF)*	*$18,866,036 ($283.2 / SF)*
Option 1b *Reno / Addition*	*380 (K-5)*	*69,813 GSF*	*57,480 GSF ($263.6 / SF)*	*12,333 GSF ($311.9 / SF)*	*$18,995,886 ($272.1 / SF)*
Option 2* ***New on existing site***	***380 (K-5)***	***66,618 GSF***	-	***66,618 GSF ($311.9 / SF)***	***$20,780,153 ($311.9 / SF)***
Option 3 *New on alternate site (park site)*	*380 (K-5)*	*66,618 GSF*	-	*66,618 GSF ($312.4 / SF)*	*$20,812,129 ($312.4 / SF)*

***District's Preferred Option**

The District and its Designer noted that, although the renovation/addition options would provide the required programmatic spaces, there are a number of significant shortcomings with these options. Renovation would require the replacement of the roof, windows, mechanical / electrical and plumbing systems, the installation of additional fire alarm and fire protection systems, and full upgrades for handicapped accessibility. This scope of work would trigger structural seismic upgrade requirements. Also, any new building area around the existing facility would further restrict use of the site for play areas, vehicular and pedestrian access and parking. Existing groundwater intrusion in the basement would require extensive repairs. Option 2 provides better educational adjacencies in the building, better traffic flow for parking and drop-off areas, and more outdoor play area compared to Option 1.

Option 2 proposes the construction of a new facility on the existing Thompson site. Option 2 includes two alternative plans, one with a two story building and the other with three stories, which the District will study further during schematic design. The existing building will be demolished before construction of the new building commences, with students temporarily relocated as needed to other District elementary schools.

MSBA staff has reviewed and discussed the options and corresponding space summaries with the District and the Designer to better understand which educational program is most beneficial and efficient for the Town of Arlington in accordance with MSBA guidelines. MSBA staff has received, reviewed and accepts the Designer's feasibility study submission that identifies the options that have been explored on behalf of the District and the preferred option selected by the District.

MSBA has reviewed the conclusions of the Feasibility Study and the enrollment data with the District and found:

1) All initial paperwork required has been processed including an executed Initial Certificate of Compliance, the composition of the School Building committee and the enrollment information.

2) MSBA has completed an enrollment projection and reached a mutual agreement with the District on a design enrollment of 380 students for the Thompson Elementary School, conditional on re-districting as noted above. If the District does not implement a redistricting plan, the design enrollment will be 330.

3) MSBA reviewed the feasibility study and subsequent supplementary material and finds that the options investigated were sufficiently comprehensive in their scope, that the approach undertaken in this study was appropriate, and that the District's preferred option is reasonable and cost effective.

4) An operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget have been submitted to the MSBA for review.

5) MSBA staff will work with the District to establish a design budget and an understanding of MSBA considerations and levels of funding.

Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the Town of Arlington be approved to proceed into schematic design to replace the existing grade K-5 Thompson Elementary School with the construction of a new grade K-5 Thompson Elementary School on the existing site.