



Westfield's Elementary School Project

Purpose: To construct or renovate the current Franklin Avenue Elementary School site to accommodate students in grades K-4 and close Abner Gibbs Elementary School.

General FAQ's:

What is the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA):

The MSBA is the Massachusetts School Building Authority. They are a quasi-independent government authority created in 2004 to replace the former school building assistance program administered by the Department of Education (now the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education).

The Mission of the MSBA is to partner with Massachusetts communities to support the design and construction of educationally-appropriate, flexible, sustainable and cost-effective public school facilities.

How does the public get informed about the Building Committee meetings?

All meetings are open to the public. Everyone is encouraged to attend. All meeting agendas will be posted on our website and the City Website.

What happens during the Feasibility Study performed by the MSBA?

An Operating Project Manager and Architect are hired. As a team, they will look at all factors that would assist the MSBA in making the decision on what would happen with the site. (Traffic patterns, safety, cost, utility upgrades, infrastructure, play fields, busing and pick up and drop off)

What will happen to students that are currently enrolled at Franklin Avenue during the construction or renovation of the building?

During the Feasibility Study, the needs of the students will be assessed.

If the new school doesn't come to fruition, what is the plan for the school buildings that are in desperate need of upgrades, safety, etc.?

The School Department is currently working on a district Capital Improvement Plan.

Why renovate Franklin Avenue when there are so many issues with it? How does the MSBA decide what is the best course?

The MSBA's initial visit indicated that the location of Franklin Avenue (downtown) is an adequate location. Any and all issues with Franklin Avenue will be thoroughly reviewed through the Feasibility Study. The MSBA considers cost, time, and what has a longer life span. In addition, they look at the safety of the students when considering options.

Will the Westfield Public Schools remain a K-4 model?

There are no plans to move away from the K-4 model. The School Department is looking to increase Preschool opportunities classes to each elementary school.

Will the School Department and City look at making one way streets in the area?

During the Feasibility Study, traffic studies will be completed and recommendations will be brought forward to the Traffic Commission.