



**JANUARY 2021**  
PROJECT UPDATE

[www.fhsbuildingproject.org](http://www.fhsbuildingproject.org)

OFFICIAL DOCUMENT OF THE FARMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

## HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT OVERVIEW

Dear Farmington Resident,

A new year is upon us, and the Farmington High School Building Committee (FHSBC) wants to update you about the proposed high school project. As with other Connecticut cities and towns, COVID-19 has been disruptive and difficult for our community. Despite the challenges of 2020, our committee has been working diligently to assess and recommend options for the high school.

FHSBC was established by the Farmington Town Council on March 26, 2019. The Committee includes community members, elected officials, and administration and staff members from the Town of Farmington and Farmington Public Schools.

The FHSBC's work is progressing in **two phases**.

**Phase 1** Evaluate conceptual design options from multiple architects to provide the Town Council with the information they need to set the net municipal project cost range and overall project scope.

**Status: Complete.** The Farmington Town Council has recommended and approved the option to build a new high school.

**Phase 2** Design a comprehensive solution to address the **Board of Education's Statement of Needs** that falls within the net municipal cost range and overall project scope set by Town Council.

**Status: In process.** On May 12, 2020, the Town Council placed the FHSBC on pause due to the economic conditions and uncertainties from COVID-19. The Town Council recently removed the FHSBC from pause, which allows us to continue our work in accordance with the committee charge and begin regular communication with Farmington residents.

**The last two pages of this newsletter include a brief survey that will help us best inform you about the proposed high school project and the planned referendum date. We appreciate you taking the time to respond to this survey. Please respond by February 8, 2021.**

A Special Town Council Meeting will be held in February, where an analysis of the community survey results will be presented to Town Council. During this meeting we anticipate setting a timeframe for the referendum. In the upcoming months, you will receive another newsletter that will report results of the community survey, project timelines, construction cost estimates and tax impact details.

FHSBC wants Farmington residents to have all the information you require to make an informed decision once a referendum date is set. We will continue to reach out to you regularly with updates.

Sincerely,

Meghan Guerrero, Farmington High School Building Committee Chair

Please visit our website, [www.fhsbuildingproject.org](http://www.fhsbuildingproject.org) for project information and updates.



# Q&A Farmington High School Building Project

## 1 Why is the high school building committee recommending a new high school?

The Farmington High School Building Committee (FHSBC) evaluated three options from two architectural firms. They included maintaining the current facility, doing major renovation on the current facility, or building a new school. The committee evaluated each option based on the following **criteria**:

- Local, state, and federal requirements
- Programmatic needs
- Consolidation of space
- Building systems
- Site improvements
- Benefits to the community
- Fit and feel for the Town of Farmington

After a rigorous review process, the FHSBC recommended building a new high school, designed by Hartford architectural firm, TSKP Studio, to Town Council. On February 4, 2020, the Town Council unanimously voted to select the TSKP new building option as the project scope and set a new municipal range for the project at \$105M to \$110M.

The new high school building will include efficient, functional, and flexible learning spaces that meet safety, health local and state regulations.

## 2 What are the major issues that led the committee to recommend construction of a new high school building?

**Accreditation and Accessibility.** The New England Association of Schools and Colleges has placed FHS on “warning” status for “serious facility deficiencies, including ADA access, heating and ventilation problems, leaky roof, inadequate science, cafeteria, auditorium, and library and media facilities, and other facility issues that limit educational opportunities for students.”

**Security Compliance.** FHS has already experienced seven additions/renovations before heightened security expectations were a consideration.

**Sprawling Layout.** FHS is a large, inefficient, mostly one floor facility with too many long and narrow hallways.

**Educational Programming.** FHS is nearing its capacity to provide 21st century programming and learning spaces that prepare students for the future.

**Energy Efficiency.** FHS is not energy efficient and is not cost-effective.



### **3 Did you look at an alternate site for a new high school?**

**Yes.** The Site Evaluation Subcommittee conducted a full review of potential alternate sites in Farmington. After a comprehensive analysis, it was determined that the current municipal site was the only viable option. A detailed analysis is available on <https://fhsbuildingproject.org/>.

### **4 Does the design of the new building provide safeguards against future pandemics?**

While maintaining proper social distancing and wearing face coverings are probably most effective in reducing the risk of exposure to a virus, certain features in the design of buildings can certainly help. The new FHS building will have larger classrooms, wider corridors, easily cleanable surfaces and touchless plumbing fixtures. It will have new ventilation systems, a higher level of air filtration, and the ability to automatically flush air out of the building on a regular basis. Also, the ventilation system will have separate zones that will make it easier to separate different cohorts of students and staff, and to isolate zones in order to prevent cross-contamination.

### **5 Who are the town officials and committees in charge of the process?**

Members of the Town Council, Board of Education, and Farmington High School Building Committee are working collaboratively on the FHS building project. **See list of members on page 4.**

### **6 How disruptive will building a new school be for students, teachers, and others?**

There will be no disruption to teaching and learning during construction. There will be a fenced off section that will be clearly marked that separates the current high school from the building site.

### **7 When will the town referendum be held?**

We anticipate that the Town Council will determine a referendum time frame in mid-February. Once the Town Council decides on a date, it will be posted on the Town, Board of Education, and FHSBC websites.

### **8 What are the costs for building a new building, and tax implications for a homeowner?**

The Town Council set the net municipal range for this project at \$105M to \$110M. In the coming months, we will provide project cost estimates and the tax implications for Farmington homeowners.

### **9 How will a new high school building benefit the community?**

High quality schools protect property values. Realtors routinely cite the quality of our school system for promoting home ownership in Farmington. Farmington High School also is home to many recreational and educational programs. Over 150 Adult and Continuing Education classes and more than 125 groups use the school's classrooms, library, cafeteria, gymnasium and auditorium. These classes and group activities generate additional revenue. The new facility will better serve sports and recreation, performing arts, and clubs and organizations in our community.

# Committee Members

## Voting Members

Meghan Guerrero, Chair  
Chris Fagan, Town Council Member  
Ellen Siuta, Board of Education Chair  
Johnny Carrier, Resident  
Michael Smith, Resident  
Sharon Mazzochi, Resident  
Wendy Ku, Resident

## Non-Voting Members

Alicia Bowman, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations  
Beth Kintner, Board of Education Liaison  
Devon Aldave, Clerk of the Committee  
Kathleen Blonski, Town Manager  
Kathleen Greider, Superintendent  
Kathryn Krajewski, Assistant Town Manager  
Sam Kilpatrick, Farmington Public Schools Director of Facilities  
Scott Hurwitz, Farmington High School Principal

## Contact info:

Please go to <https://fhsbuildingproject.org/contact-us> and fill out form.