Meeting Minutes
Medford Comprehensive High School Building Committee Meeting
January 14, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at the MHS Library & on Zoom

I. Roll call

Voting Members: 14 Present 1 Absent
Non-Voting Members: 9 Present, 1 Absent

II. Communication Subcommittee
    A. Upcoming Meeting
    B. Additional Volunteer Interest

Interested Members should reach out to chairperson Jenny Graham

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes
    A. Meeting Minutes from November 24, 2025
    B. Meeting Minutes from December 22, 2025

Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes from 11/24/25 & 12/22/25 Full Committee Meetings as amended to include date of December 22 on 12/22 minutes by Ken Lord, second by Luke Preisner 13/0/2 - Approved

IV. Approval of December 2025 Invoices (LeftField & SMMA)
    A. LeftField Invoice #7: December 2025 = $25,000
    B. SMMA Invoice #1: November 22, 2025 - January 2, 2026 = $135,000
    C. Total = $160,000

Motion to Approve December Invoices by Ken Lord, second by Libby Brown 13/0/2 - Approved

V. Recommendation to Approve Amendment 1: SMMA
    A. Based on the findings of the phase one geoenvironmental work, this amendment allows ADS Environmental Engineering to proceed with phase two of the geotechnical to further the study on potential volatile organic compounds. This is related to the site's history of it being a potential dump, and existing underground oil tanks.
    B. Amendment Value = $25,300

Motion to Approve Amendment 1 by Aaron Olapade, second by Joan Bowen 13/0/2 - Approved

VI. Presentation of Alternatives Required by the MSBA

Work so far has included how architects arrive at what building size should be. Educational Plan guides the Educational Programming work to shape the overall building size. Alongside this work is existing building and site analysis.

SMMA showed 57 early design concepts, with 29 different cost models.

A. Code Update Option

This option brings all existing systems, ADA, fire safety up to code. This excludes transformation of spaces and their function, which does not support the educational plan the Committee is planning to submit. The building would remain 4 stories high, but would have new facade and energy requirements.

B. Add/Reno Options

SMMA showed designs where certain parts were taken down and where they would be replaced. These include wings of the building being replaced and renovated such as the existing "A", "B," or the vocational wings. In all options, Square footage would be added to the building to support the programming needs. These options include phased renovation ideas and building into existing parking lots or spaces that are on the site. Other options include building up on the existing building, compacting the spread of the building. SMMA noted that anytime construction is happening on the existing site, it involves a phased construction and movement of students.

C. New Building Options

These options would include a completely new building on the existing land that the High School sits on. This would include options that would build a new building in the front of the land close to Winthrop St, and options that would build on the back of the site.

VII. Interactive Input Session to Provide Feedback on Initial Design Options

SMMA led a table top exercise where building committee members placed stickers on their broad favorite designs. These designs were laid out on a table.

VIII. Questions Regarding Options

A. MCSHBC Members

Luke Preisner: The proposed square footage of a new building would be 100,000 square feet bigger. What is the gross square footage? Answer: The gross has not been determined due to final conversations being held to meet the programming and space needs of the building. The gross square footage will be shared at a later meeting once it is determined.

Luke Preisner: What square footage was dedicated to solar capacity given the sustainability goals of the project? Answer: This will be answered by the energy goals of the project. Once that is determined, the design team will work to create cost estimates and alternatives to support different energy needs and outcomes. The design team is already looking at the energy needs of the building.
Luke Preisner: Many of the design options interfere with the current athletic field setups. Is there a limiting factor that made that space undesirable? Answer: from a cost standpoint, building on the west option of the building where the field of dreams is increases the cost of the building given the height of it. There was no preference by quantity but were all based on different cost models. Design team wanted to show different options of where a building could be built on the site.
Aaron Olpade: What are the challenges of building a field on top of a parking structure. Answer: While there are construction and long-term effects, the design team believes this option is feasible enough that it is worth doing a cost estimate.
Paul Ruseau: In an add reno option, how do you convert the old structure into a new building? Answer: Any add/reno options involve ripping the building down to the structure because it does not meet modern instructional code. The interior spaces do not meet the spatial requirements of the MSBA. The LED/platinum designation will incorporate the renovated area but also includes the current structure that may get renovated.
Phil Santos: Have these options been investigated to be feasible to build before cost estimating has happened. Answered: The phasing is the only question that would drive feasibility of different designs. The design team will not eliminate designs based on potential feasibility issues without the committee's approval.
Design Team: In March, the design team will create a tool that will ask committee members which aspects of the project to prioritize in the design process. This includes examples such as cost, parking options, aspects of the design, and others.
Maria D'Orsi: We once talked about an option with a design of working with the Fells. Are there options that show this? Answer: there are no options that go directly into the Fells. The Fells is currently DCR property.

B. Public Comment

Andy 13 George St: Is there an ability to expand the building in the future based on design options? Answer: As part of the MSBA building requirements, you must leave space for the building to expand based on a potential increase in enrollment.
What is the plan for using the extra space that would be created if the building was built up rather than out? And what are the effects of Medford Rezoning efforts that may increase enrollment? Answer: When the MSBA initially certified our enrollment, they initially gave us a projection of 1,200 students. Project leaders worked with the MSBA and city department leaders to show the current projects and enrollment trends that exist.

Rick Orlando: Does the MSBA cover athletic fields and is there an option to expand to increase capacity at middle or elementary schools? Answer: Yes to athletics fields. The inclusion of Pre-k in the design of a new building will open up space and classrooms in the elementary schools. Paul Matterazo: Get advising on geotechnical work given the work in the neighboring apartment unit that is being built. Geotechnical work is undergone and they will show a map of all the rock underneath the surface.

IX. Next Steps

A. Guidance to SMMA on Design Options to be considered for Cost Estimators

Motion to move forward with initial cost estimating for all of the options presented at tonight's meeting by Ken Lord, seconded by Nicole Morell - 14/0/1

X. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Dr. Suzanne B. Galusi second by Joan Bowen - 14/0/1 - Approved

Meeting adjourned