

At a meeting convened yesterday (10/24) by Representative Cory Atkins, State Treasurer Steve Grossman announced that the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) will be reinstating funding for our Concord-Carlisle High School project.

As part of the reinstated funding, our School Committee and Building Committee will implement a revised communication plan and will submit monthly progress reports to the MSBA. These progress reports will also be provided to the public.

The meeting participants included State Treasurer Steve Grossman, Representative Cory Atkins, MSBA staff, Concord and Carlisle town officials (including me), and several citizens who have done extensive research on the project. Representative Atkins' press release is attached below.

This reinstatement of funding is great news for our community and gives us a renewed opportunity to move forward together to build a high school that will serve many future generations of Concord-Carlisle students.

In reviewing the events of the last few months, and in the spirit of moving forward together, I'd like to offer a few thoughts as we restart our project work.

When the MSBA suspended our funding in June, it did so for one specific reason: the MSBA determined that our project had gotten out of compliance with the Project Funding Agreement (PFA), which is the contract that the School District signed with the MSBA in February 2012. The MSBA was correct in both its assessment and its action.

Over the following two months, under the leadership of its new Chairperson, Stan Durlacher, the Building Committee brought our project back into compliance and submitted its revised plan to the MSBA in August. The MSBA rigorously reviewed this plan. At yesterday's meeting the MSBA indicated that while there are still some variances with the PFA, the intent and scope of our revised plan is consistent with the PFA and the project is back in compliance. This was a critical factor in the MSBA's decision to reinstate our funding and I hope that the MSBA's assessment will provide reassurance to citizens who may have been concerned about this issue.

As noted in Cory's press release, a number of concerned Concord citizens have done extensive research on the building project. I believe that these citizens share a common goal of building the best high school for Concord-Carlisle and in that spirit researched and developed alternative approaches. I was glad that a number of these citizens had the opportunity to present their views directly to State Treasurer Grossman, Representative Atkins, and the MSBA at yesterday's meeting. I also believe that our new high school has been and will be improved by the work of concerned citizens. I would like to thank them and all citizens for their time, effort and creativity in support of a new high school, and I look forward to their continued support for our high school project as we move forward under the plan as indicated at yesterday's meeting.

In yesterday's press release, Representative Atkins' stated: "It was extremely helpful to me during the negotiations that this project has almost universal support in my communities." I hope we will now all build on this support together to create a wonderful high school for our community.

Fabian Fondriest, Chair, Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee