



**Summary report for the Farmington Town Council
of the FHS Building Committee newsletter and survey
sent to all Farmington* households in January 2021**

**Includes: All of Farmington and Unionville*



Overview of Tall Timbers Marketing

Tall Timbers Marketing, Glastonbury, was retained to counsel the Farmington High School Building Committee's (FHSBC) goal of informing Farmington residents about why a new high school is being recommended, and to respond in a timely manner, using various communication tools, to town residents' questions.

They have over 30-years' experience with similar types of public schools' capital projects, and most recently with Mansfield, Windham, and East Granby.



JANUARY 2021
PROJECT UPDATE

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 for project information and updates.

The Process

The first step was to understand what the community does and does not know about the project. The survey is part of a comprehensive planning process and is based upon the FHSBC proposed recommendation to build a new high school facility on the current municipal complex.

It was sent to every household in Farmington. The responses provided FHSBC the best ways to communicate on the progress of the project.

There were two components of the survey:

- The first component is a summary of the quantitative findings.
- The second component provides the qualitative (anecdotal) comments.

The comments, along with the detailed quantitative findings, mostly reflect the qualitative findings and will be listed in its entirety on the website.

Farmington High School Building Committee Community Survey

The Farmington High School Building Committee has proposed that a new high school to be built on the current site. This committee has worked on the proposed project since 2019 and believes this is the best building option for the children of Farmington's future growth and success. We also recognize input from the community is vital to support the project. Your feedback will help us with our communication efforts by providing you the facts to make an informed decision when the referendum vote is held. *Note: Due to the disruption of the Coronavirus pandemic, the Farmington Town Council put a pause on this project this past Spring and it is anticipated that they will determine the next steps and a referendum timeframe in the next month as a result of this survey.*

This newsletter and survey are being sent to every household in Farmington. You can fill it out as a family or individually, and in that case, make a copy of the survey only and send back per instructions. A follow up newsletter with the results of the survey and future plans will be sent to every household in March.

Please answer all the questions. It should take under 5 minutes. **Once you finish, fold over and tape it and send back the pre-paid postage survey only section by February 8, 2021.**

Thank You

Please use a **PEN** to fill in circles completely like this: ● not like this: ☉ ☒ ☓ **FOR OFFICE USE ONLY** Survey # _____

- The Farmington High School Building Committee has worked during this year on a course of actions to ensure the project will be designed to meet the educational and programmatic needs of the school district.
Are you aware of this committee's work?
 1 Yes 2 No 3 Somewhat
- How important is it for you to have current and future information of the project sent to you?**
 1 Very important 3 Important
 2 Somewhat important 4 Not important
- Are you aware or have read the "Statement of Needs" which outlines the primary reasons for taking action of the Farmington High School building project, and the decision to build new on the existing site?**
 Note: If not, please go to <https://fhsbuildingproject.org/statement-of-needs-1>
 1 Yes 2 No 3 Somewhat
- Have you been to the Building Committee's website to view the architect's schematic and comments?**
 1 Yes
 2 No If not, go to <https://fhsbuildingprojects.org>
- We would like to know your priorities for the H.S. Project to focus on.**
Please rank the following factors from 1 (high) to 6 (low)

High priority	←	→	Low priority			
1	2	3	4	5	6	Current facilities limitations and issues
1	2	3	4	5	6	Enhancing current educational programming
1	2	3	4	5	6	Improving the learning environment (classroom)
1	2	3	4	5	6	Improving the school non classroom facilities (sports, music, arts, etc.)
1	2	3	4	5	6	Security and safety (physical and health)
1	2	3	4	5	6	Flexible and adaptable spaces for community use
1	2	3	4	5	6	Cost and tax implications
1	2	3	4	5	6	Other, please identify _____
- How are you getting your information for the H.S. project?**
Please select all that apply.
 - 1 Town meetings (Building Committee, Board of Education or Town Council)
 - 1 School District Newsletter
 - 1 Social Media, please identify _____
 - 1 Building committee website
 - 1 Town website
 - 1 Town newsletter
 - 1 Teacher or staff
 - 1 Newspaper, please identify _____
 - 1 Word of mouth from friends or neighbors
 - 1 Other, Please identify _____

Please fold in half here, tape closed, DO NOT STAPLE. Thank you for time!

7. How would you get your information for the H.S. project? Please rank 1,2,3 etc. as your preference.

- 1 Town meetings (Building Committee, Board of Education or Town Council)
- 1 School District Newsletter
- 1 Social Media, please identify _____
- 1 Building committee website
- 1 Town website
- 1 Town newsletter
- 1 Teacher or staff
- 1 Newspaper, please identify _____
- 1 Word of mouth from friends or neighbors
- 1 Other, Please identify _____

8. How many years have you lived in Farmington?

- 1 Less than 3 years
- 2 4 to 10 years
- 3 11-20 years
- 4 More than 20 years

9. Do you 1 own or 2 rent your home?

10. Current employment status.

- 1 Work full or part time
- 2 Full and part-time student
- 3 Retired
- 4 Not currently working
- 5 Stay at home parent

11. Do you currently have a child or children that attend Farmington Public Schools?

1 Yes, identify grade level 2 No

Grades: PK Pre-K 3 3 6 6 9 9 12 12

1 1 4 4 7 7 10 10

2 2 5 5 8 8 11 11

Other, please identify:

- 1 Private (Prep or religious)
- 2 Out of district (Trade/technical, magnet, regional)
- 3 Other (tutored, home schooled, etc.)

12. Comments are appreciated:

The Statistics:

- The newsletter/survey was sent to 11,600 households (25,422 population in 2020, CERC town profile).
- There were 1111 responses, a 9.8% response rate, which is much higher than average (2% to 4%).
- Twenty-three of the surveys were either unreadable or unscannable.
- There is confidence level of 97% of the responses. This means that even if every household responded the responses would have been the same level of confidence.

8. How many years have you lived in Farmington?

		Count	Percent
1	Less than 3 years	86	7%
2	4 to 10 years	168	15%
3	11-20 years	227	20%
4	More than 20 years	648	58%
Total Responses		1129	

10. Current employment status:

		Count	Percent
1	Work full or part time	575	51%
2	Full and part-time student	3	0%
3	Retired	490	45%
4	Not currently working	23	2%
5	Stay at home parent	23	2%
Total Responses		1114	

11. Do you currently have a child or children that attend Farmington Public Schools?

		Count	Percent
1	Yes	239	23%
2	No	817	77%
Total Responses		1056	

1. Are you aware of the building committee's work?

		Count	Percent
1	Yes	544	50%
2	No	142	13%
3	Somewhat	395	37%
Total Responses		1081	

2. How important is it for you to have current and future information of the project sent to you?

		Count	Percent
1	Very Important	459	43%
2	Somewhat Important	249	23%
3	Important	325	29%
4	Not Important	49	4%
Total Responses		1082	

3. Are you aware or have read the "Statement of Needs" which outlines the primary reasons for taking action of the Farmington High School building project, and the decision to build new on the existing site?

		Count	Percent
1	Yes	662	62%
2	No	168	16%
3	Somewhat	246	23%
Total Responses		1076	

High School Project Priorities to Focus On

- Enhancing Current Educational Programming 75%
- Current Facilities Limitations 76%
- Improving the Learning Environment/Facility 79%
- Security and Safety 81%
- Cost and Tax 84%

Comments Overview (180 comments from 1088 surveys)

- Costs, taxes, and negative comments 70
- Covid-19, security, ADA and safety 12
- Questions (Timeframe, enrollment, accreditation) 27
- Recommendations and general comments 40
- Positive comments about the project 31

Areas to focus on for community outreach and communications

- Enrollment Projections
- Specific Educational Enhancements (Learning and Facility)
- Tax Implications for the future
- Covid-19 safety and health issues

Observations

- Reach out to Pre-K to 6th grade parents (they will be the most affected by this effort)
- Nothing surprising about the survey results except for number of retired responses (Over 65+ years old make up 17% of the town population, but made up 45% of respondents)
- Survey provided great insight on how the FHSBC should communicate & provide information to residents so they can make an informed decision at referendum.