



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
PRESS CONTACT:

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Ellington Selects DRA Architects for Windermere Elementary Renovation

Early design process to sketch out educational and community needs
Project estimated to be complete by fall 2025

ELLINGTON, CT – The Ellington Permanent Building Committee (PBC) unanimously selected DRA Architects of South Windsor, CT as the architect for the \$61M renovation and expansion of Windermere Elementary School. DRA previously worked with the Ellington Public Schools in 2018-2019 to develop a long-term facilities study.

“DRA’s focus on designing for educational spaces stuck out during the selection process. The Committee was impressed with DRA’s recent experience with elementary schools across the State. We’re looking forward to working through the design over the coming months.”

- Peter Welti, Permanent Building Committee Chair

DRA and the PBC will host a public event in October as the schematic design of the building begins to take shape. Input from the community will allow DRA and the PBC to shape the final design of the school to meet a broader set of needs.

Windermere Community Design Session

October 19th at 6:00 p.m.
Windermere Elementary School
2 Abbott Road

Jennifer Hill, Windermere Elementary School Principal, said, “Input from Town residents is a crucial part of the design process. The new Windermere will primarily be a school, but also a great asset for the broader Ellington community for decades to come.”

After receiving approval from the State in the 2022 legislative session, the Permanent Building Committee has worked to maintain an aggressive schedule for the project. With the selection of the architect, it is anticipated that construction would begin in the fall of 2023 with completion of the project by the fall of 2025.

“The Board of Education is excited to see the project moving ahead to the next phase with DRA. Having an architect on board is a concrete step to review the work done to date and update it to ensure our needs are met in the future.”

- Gary Blanchette, Board of Education Representative to the Permanent Building Committee

The legislature also approved an increased reimbursement rate of 70% to address pyrrhotite, a mineral found to cause crumbling foundations, in a section of the building. The new rate is estimated to save the Town up to \$9 million.

DRA recently completed the Orchard Hill Elementary School in South Windsor and dual elementary school addition/renovations in Stonington. DRA is currently working with the South Windsor Public Schools on Pleasant Valley Elementary School, which is currently under construction. Next year marks the one-hundredth year anniversary of DRA in serving communities like Ellington in the planning, design, and construction of educational facilities like Windermere School.

“This project has fought through some unforeseen delays, including the COVID-19 pandemic, and I am proud of the perseverance and diligence shown by our School and Town Officials, as well as the members of the Permanent Building Committee, to get this next phase up and running. Creating a cohesive design for this new environment will further enhance our students’ educational experience.”

- Lori Spielman, First Selectman

Members of the Permanent Building Committee, who volunteer their time to help ensure the success of Town building projects, include:

Peter Welti, Chairman

Gary Magnuson, Vice Chairman

Thomas Adams

Gary Blanchette, Board of Education Rep.

James Fay, Board of Finance Rep.

Gary Feldman, Sr.

Dale Gerber

Sean Kelly, Planning and Zoning Rep.

Patrick Stavens

Ronald Stomberg, Board of Selectmen Rep.

Ken Radziwon, Public Works Director (ex officio)
