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Skanska Building USA completes \$256 million renovations of Belmont Middle and High School

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Belmont, MA Skanska has completed the \$256 million, 451,000 s/f construction and renovation of the new Belmont Middle and High School. The project, awarded to Skanska by the town, aimed to replace the high school with a new facility to encompass grades seven through twelve. The existing high school structure remained in operation while the new structure was under construction. Then in phase two, the old high school was demolished and the connecting middle school was constructed. Renovation work to the existing field house was carried out over three summer breaks.

“The true vision of this project could not have become reality without the dedicated oversight of our project manager, CHA Companies, our inspiring design led by Perkins & Will, and the construction management expertise of Skanska Building USA,” said William Lovallo, chair of the Belmont Middle and High School building committee. “From accelerated schedules, difficult bidding climate, budget constraints, and pandemic hurdles, Skanska found solutions at every challenge to deliver this project on time and on budget, meeting the quality and excellence expected in Belmont, and for the benefit of the children which Belmont prioritizes above all else.”

To meet the town’s goals of building a zero fossil fuel and highly sustainable building, Skanska implemented a myriad of sustainable features throughout the project. The newly constructed structure utilizes a geothermal system to heat and cool the entirety of the building via the installation of 283 geothermal wells, ensuring it is 100% fossil fuel-free. Relying entirely on renewable energy, the Net-Zero structure additionally includes an array of solar panels on the roof that provides a third of the property’s overall energy and is currently going through the process of seeking LEED Gold certification.

The phased construction and renovation of Belmont Middle and High School consisted of replacing the existing high school structure with a facility to house the entirety of grades seven through twelve. The newly constructed four-floor structure includes new academic and science wings, media facilities, administrative and health suites, as well as a new dining common area. Additionally, the school's existing gymnasium and swimming pool amenities were renovated, new playing fields and landscaping were implemented, and new access entry points, drop-off circles and sidewalks were constructed.

Several key pieces of technology were utilized throughout the project to ensure overall operational efficiency, including using StructionSite to garner daily project photos and videos and consolidate project communications, documentation, and progress tracking. Laser scanning for key façade work and the use of drones to capture photo and video content were also implemented.

Construction at Belmont Middle and High School began in June of 2019. CHA Consulting operated as the owner's project manager and Perkins & Will served as the architects for this project.

"We're thrilled to be celebrating the completion of the transformative reconstruction of Belmont Middle and High School," said Bryan Northrop, executive vice president for Skanska USA Building's New England region. "Working in tandem with the Town of Belmont to ensure all goals were met, we utilized our extensive experience in building educational facilities to successfully execute this substantial renovation on time and with minor disruption to the students' and faculty's day-to-day operations. The fossil fuel-free facility will meet LEED Gold standards and sets the benchmark for sustainable school construction in Massachusetts."