

# Leaders to outline top options for new school

By Ray Lamont Staff writer

Residents interested in learning more about the two options for a new East Gloucester elementary school will have the chance to do so Monday night. The East Gloucester School Building Committee is set to host an informational meeting on the project at 7 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 23, in City Hall's Kyrouz Auditorium.

"This meeting will provide an opportunity for the School Building Committee to address specific questions that have been asked," said Superintendent Richard Safier.

The focus will be on proposals for the Mattos Field site at Veterans School and a Schoolhouse Road site that would cover a portion of what is now the Green Street field.

The two options came out on top when the building committee earlier this month whittled down an initial nine choices. Both call for a merged school that could house the roughly 440 students who now attend East Gloucester and Veterans Memorial elementary schools.

Building on the Mattos Field site would cost an estimated \$69.1 million, while the Schoolhouse Road proposal would cost \$64.7 million, according to projections from designer Dore & Whittier, based in Newburyport. Either project would be eligible for the city to receive partial reimbursement through the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

A choice of the Mattos site would include moving the field elsewhere — likely to the Green Street field — officials have said. That is the primary reason the Mattos site carries a higher cost for a school.

Kathleen Clancy, one of two School Committee representatives on the 15-member building committee, said the committee will take written questions from those in attendance for discussion at the forum. The building committee also includes School Committee member representative and co-Chairman Jonathan Pope and parent representatives from both Veterans and East Gloucester schools in co-Chairman Jason Rogers and Aria McElhenny of East Gloucester.

Safier and Clancy emphasized that Monday's session is not a public hearing; a public hearing on the overall project was held Sept. 9. "Rather, it is a meeting to update the public on frequently asked questions along with any questions that are generated at the meeting as well," Safier said in an email.

Both sites have drawn intense neighborhood interest. Patti Amaral and members of the Light up Mattos Committee, which raised over \$270,000 for improvements to Mattos Field in 2017, are among those opposing the Mattos site. A number of area residents are opposed to the Schoolhouse Road site due to concerns about traffic and other issues there.

The committee has not yet set a date for a vote on the final site, Clancy said. The full School Committee must approve a single project and report it to the MSBA by Oct. 23.