

Lincoln Historical Commission Decision, June 4, 2024

At its June 4, 2024 meeting, the Historical Commission (LHC) granted the application of the Community Center Building Committee (CCBC) to replace the Hartwell Pods with the proposed new Community Center building. The LHC is the town body that reviews requests to demolish buildings and structures in town under the Demolition Delay By-Law. The By-Law charges the LHC with determining whether buildings have historical, cultural, or architectural significance to the town. At its February 6, 2024 meeting, the LHC determined that the Pods had such significance, and under the By-Law, the LHC held a second hearing to evaluate the proposed replacement design in comparison with the Pods.

In reaching its June 4 decision, the LHC evaluated the contribution that the proposed new building would make to the Modern design history of the Ballfield Campus and specifically to the Modern design heritage that Lincoln architect Henry B. Hoover established through his work the Pods and the Hartwell campus site. The LHC found that the new building would contribute significantly to the Modern history of the school campus, one of the first Modern school campuses in the country, and would enhance the Hoover's design philosophy which recognized that the built and natural environments play an important role in enriching students' educational experiences. Hoover, a nationally recognized Modern architect and landscape designer, paid careful attention to the massing of the Pods and their architectural detailing, particularly in terms of the fenestration and entry canopies. The LHC found that the new building design honored and furthered Hoover's design heritage through creating (1) exterior volumes that establish a human scale, (2) interiors that provide light-filled gathering spaces, and (3) architectural detailing that closely connects the interior of the building to surrounding nature, both visually and physically. Finally, the LHC found that the new building would continue Hoover's site design heritage by creating porches, patios, and green spaces that welcome the community to enjoy being together out-of-doors.