

# Officials dig new Wellesley High School construction

By Staff reports

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Wellesley —

Although proponents of a new Wellesley High School building probably wondered if this day would ever come, the school's construction officially began this morning.

"We look on this day with great pride as it is another milestone in this long journey for a new high school for this town," said Katherine "Gig" Babson, selectwoman and chairwoman of the School Building Committee, at the official ceremony marking the groundbreaking for the \$130.6 million school. "If you can believe it, we're putting shovels in the ground."

Standing in the parking lot at the high school, Babson and dozens of other town and school officials, ranging from the police chief to state lawmakers to past School Committee members, gathered to mark the occasion.

The road to this point has been anything but smooth. When the idea was first brought up, controversy erupted over whether the town should build a new school or renovate part of the 1938 structure. Then state officials said plans for a new building were simply too expensive, forcing Wellesley to go back to the chalkboard. And at the last minute, the Massachusetts Historical Commission stepped in and Wellesley officials had to find ways to preserve elements of the original building.

Despite everything, the new high school is on its way.

"We're not here to break any hearts anymore," said Katherine Craven, the executive director of the Massachusetts School Building Authority, an organization that widely criticized the original cost of the school. "We believe in your project. We're very happy we're a part of it."



A ceremonial groundbreaking was held at Wellesley High School, for the new school, on Tuesday, Sept. 29. After a few remarks "ground was broken" for the new school. Katherine Babson from the School Building Committee, Joel Seeley, architect, from Symmes, Maini & McKee Associates, Alice Peisch, State Representative, Katherine Craven, Executive Director, Mass. School Building Authority, Suzanne Littlefield from the School Committee, Michael Eby from the Permanent Building Committee, and Charles Buuck from Turner Construction (L to R) break ground.



Katherine Craven, executive director of the Mass. School Building Authority, speaks at Wellesley High School's groundbreaking ceremony on Tuesday, Sept. 29. Looking on (L to R) Michael Eby, Permanent Building Committee, Alice Peisch, State Representative, Suzy Littlefield, School Committee, and Katherine Babson, School Building Committee.