

**Town of Easton CT**  
**Board of Finance – Special Meeting Minutes**

Date/Time: Tuesday March 12 , 2024 – 7:00 pm

Location: Easton Senior Center, 650 Morehouse Road; also on Zoom

Recording: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/easton-board-of-finance>

**Attendees:** Members in person: Art Laske, Andy Kachele, Paul Skrtich, Ira Kaplan, Michael Gutowski  
Members on Zoom: Jackie Kaufman  
Alternates in person: Gregg Saunders, Joe Glavan

**Absentees:** Alternate Maureen Williams

**Guests:** Christine Calvert, Treasurer and Finance Director  
Dave Bindelglass, First Selectman  
Kristi Sogofsky and Nick D’Addario, Board of Selectmen  
Val Buckley, Senior Center Director  
Nanette DeWester and Elizabeth Boyce, Cemetery Committee Chair and member  
Danielle Alves and Lisa Farasciano, Park and Recreation Director and Recreational Programmer  
Rocky Sullivan, Park and Recreation Commission Chair  
Lynn Zaffino, Library Director  
MaryBeth Rassullo, Library Assistant Director and Head of Youth Services  
Peter Dacey, Library Board member  
Jon Arnold and Adam Goldstein, Emergency Medical Services Chief and Assistant Chief  
Ed Nagy, Public Works Director  
Todd Johnston, Region 9 Board of Education Chair  
Mike D’Agostino, ER9 Facilities and Operations Manager  
Michael Santangeli, Joel Barlow High School Athletics, Health and Physical Education Administrator

**Call to Order:** By Chair Art Laske at 7:05 pm

INSTR # M2024000205  
DATE FILED 03/18/2024 04:25:24 PM  
DEBORAH SZEREDI TOWN CLERK EASTON CT

**1. Review Budgets for the Following:**

- a. Senior Center (7:06)
- b. Cemetery (7:14)
- c. Park & Recreation, including Field Use and Activity Account overview. (7:40)
- d. Library (8:16)
- e. Emergency Medical Service (8:52), including a possible update on status and funding related to the EMS Building project from the First Selectman (9:29)
- f. Tree Warden (9:46)
- g. Public Works, 660 Morehouse Road, Recycling, Street Lights (9:48)

Val presented (a) and discussed custodial, transportation, and copy paper costs. Nanette and Elizabeth presented (b) and explained different levels of tombstone disrepair. They explained municipal responsibility for cemeteries.

Danielle, Lisa, and Rocky presented (c). They discussed credit card fees, relocation of playground, revenue levels, and their internal accounts. Ira and Andy recommend account transfers be voted on in a separate meeting, since such action is not on the agenda. Lynn, MaryBeth, and Peter present (d), discussing the elimination of a previously requested staff position. Chris clarifies that insurance and pension amounts need correction. They discuss cost for new chairs, and reduced internet costs, and present information on increased library usage. Andy asks about the accounting for new chairs.

Jon and Adam presented (e) and discussed staffing levels. Chris explains the services and fees line is overstated because of a recategorization that was not reflected. They explain collection levels and billing levels. Dave presents the building project update. Lawyers are finalizing the agreement, as parties have come to terms on the purchase of a parcel of land adjacent to the EMS building. There will be an early April joint BOS/BOF meeting where the Town Attorney will explain the terms and answer questions. The role of the State Grant and its limitations will be part of that discussion. The Town Attorney will also be present at the

Town Meeting on 3/25/24 to explain State Grant, environmental testing, and protection against any related liabilities. Andy requests that the BOF receive copies of the grant and the application. Andy expresses concern about extensive use of executive sessions at EMS Planning and Building Committee and suggests CCM training.

Ed Nagy presents (f) and (g). Ed explains changes in recycling costs, cost of roof top units at 660 Morehouse. Ed notes a bump in Public Works wages because it reflects a two-year increase.

2. Discuss and possible action on a request from the Region 9 Board of Education for a special appropriation for the NEST project at Joel Barlow High School (10:01)

Todd and Mike D'Agostino present, explaining the original plan to store wastewater in holding tank for regular pumping and removal was rejected, and they are required by CT DEEP to pump the NEST building bathroom wastewater uphill to existing school sewage treatment plant, creating unanticipated additional expense up to \$300,000. Region 9 has received a pledge from the Redding BOS of up to \$250,000 in funds allocated from ARPA grants, to the extent it is matched by Easton. They request that Easton also allocate ARPA funds to Region 9 to allow for the completion of this project in a timely manner.

Various objections are raised, and alternatives suggested. There is broad agreement that the BOF is not prepared to allocate ARPA funds for this purpose, and that there are difficulties in seeking other methods of obtaining the funds. Suggestions are made for Region 9 to limit spending in other areas. Dave expresses that Easton wants to see the project succeed, and for Easton to pay our share of it, even if a different approach needs to be taken. Todd accepts that the problem is for Region 9 to solve.

3. Any other budgets as deemed necessary. (10:58)

None

4. Motion to adjourn by Paul/Andy. Result: passes 6-0 at 10:59.

Next meeting: special meeting Tuesday, March 26, 2024 (after 3/25/24 Public Hearing on budget)

Submitted 3/15/24 by Ira Kaplan, BOF Clerk

# JBHS Nest Building & Fields Improvement Project

Easton Board of Finance  
Progress Update

March 12, 2024

# Agenda

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Phase 1: Synthetic Field - Completed	4
Phase 2: "Nest" Building - Launched	5
CT DEEP Challenge and Proposed Solutions	6
Next Steps	7

# Nest Buildings & Field Improvement Project Overview

## Background

- Approved by Region 9 Board of Education in January 2023 with estimated budget of \$4.5M
- Projected no increase to JBHS Operating Budget due to declining interest and principal payments on existing loans
- Passed Easton and Redding Town Referendums in May 2023 and obtained bond for \$4.5M
- Received pledge of \$250,000 - \$300,00 from community private fundraising group
  - Presented with \$35,320 of pledge to date
- Presented with pledge of \$250,000 donation matching American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from Redding Board of Selectmen
- Started construction on Phase 1: Field in May 2023

## Objectives

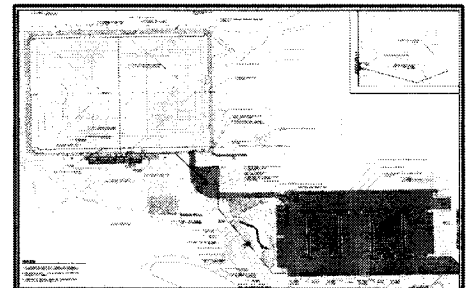
- Provide state code compliant restrooms
- Adhere to Title IX Education Amendments prohibiting sex-based discrimination for schools that receive federal funding
- Meet requirement for post season girls field hockey tournaments
- Improve usage of grass fields for student athletes and community
- Reduce late practice times for teams waiting to use existing stadium turf field
- Increase quality of team rooms, fields and parking to be on par with surrounding school districts
- Enhance "curb appeal" of JBHS for prospective home buyers in Easton and Redding

## Phase 1: Turf Field successfully completed in Fall 2023

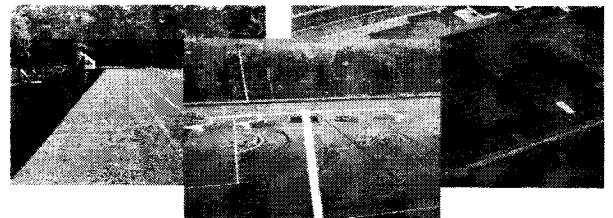
### Finished synthetic turf field & parking lot improvements

- ✓ Completed Synthetic Field and Parking Lot on schedule and budget of \$3.0M
- ✓ Resurfaced Field "J" with multi-use synthetic surface
- ✓ Installed field lighting
- ✓ Expanded existing parking lot for increased capacity and to eliminate overflow parking on street
- ✓ Installed perimeter fencing
- ✓ Initiated Town of Redding and state environmental and zoning approval processes for Phase 2 building
- ✓ Opened field to JBHS athletic teams and community

Design,  
Engineering &  
Development



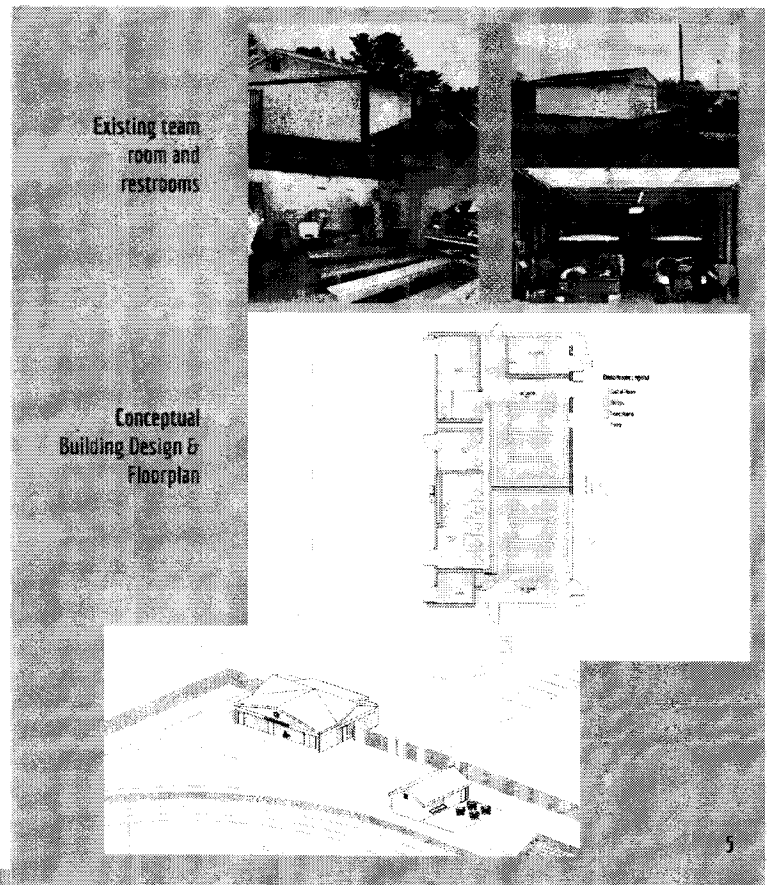
Completed  
Turf Synthetic  
Surface &  
Lights



## Launched Phase 2 in Fall 2023

### Phase 2: "Nest" Building design started

- Initiated Nest Building improvement with budget of \$1.5M to be completed before Summer 2024
- Completed RFP and hired design firm for architectural renderings and refined estimate to:
  - Renovate existing garage to single story building
  - Replace existing portable toilets with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant, family friendly, unisex bathrooms
  - Include 2 team meeting rooms
  - Demolish "Snack Shack"
  - Modify existing Shed building to create a concession building with limited seating



## Encountered challenge with wastewater treatment

### Forced to contend with CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) requirement for wastewater treatment

- Required by CT DEEP to pump the Nest building bathroom wastewater uphill to existing school building sewage treatment plant
  - Planned originally to store waste water in holding tank for regular pumping and removal
- Explored options with Town of Redding and CT DEEP with no success
- Unanticipated estimated expense of up to \$300,000 to meet the environmental requirement

***Phase 2 revised estimated costs of \$1.5M - 1.8M may exceed planned budget and bonded amount***

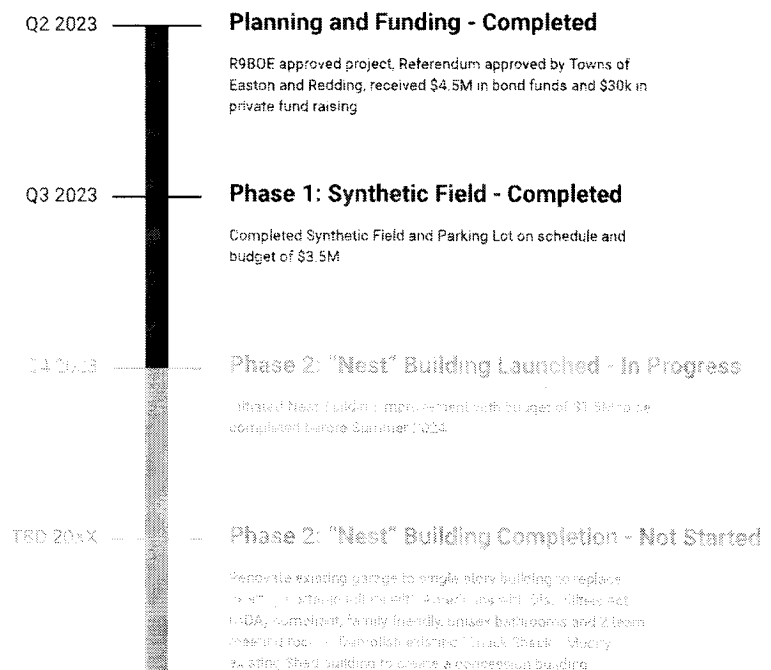
### Proposed solutions by Region 9 Board of Education

1. **Delay construction start** until additional funds are raised
  - a. Receive remaining pledge of \$250,000 - \$300,00 from community private fundraising group
  - b. Receive pledge of up to \$250,000 donation matching American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from Redding Board of Selectmen
  - a. Include additional Capital amount of up to 2% permitted by state of CT in 2023-2024 Operating Budget from unexpended funds
  - c. *Request pledge of ARPA funds from Easton Board of Finance*
1. If additional funds are not obtained, **phase construction** of Nest Building followed by "Snack Shack" over 2 years of R9BOE Operating Budget and Capital



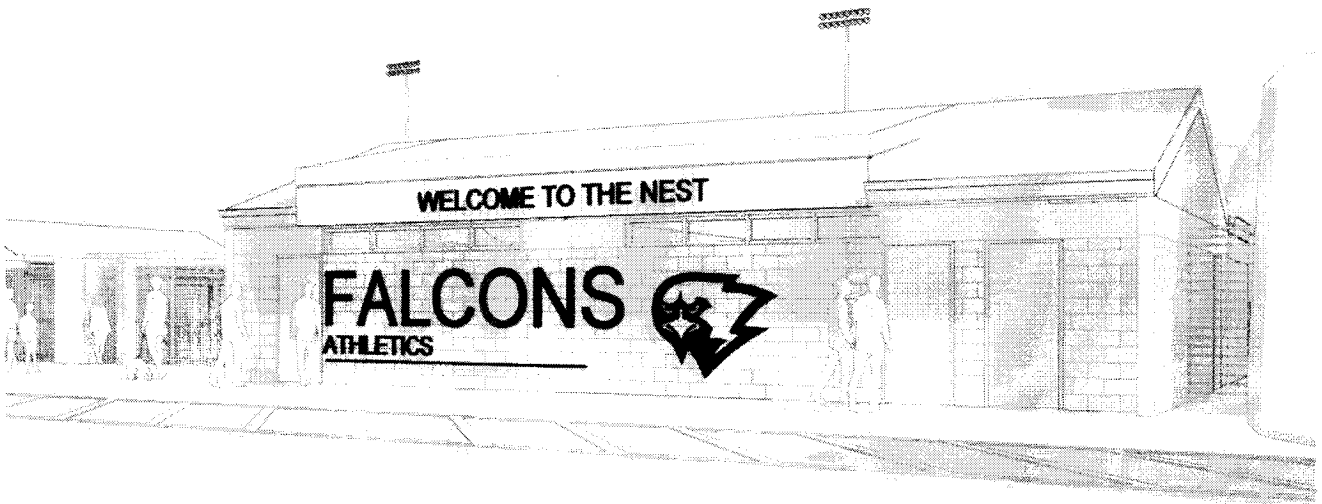
## Next steps

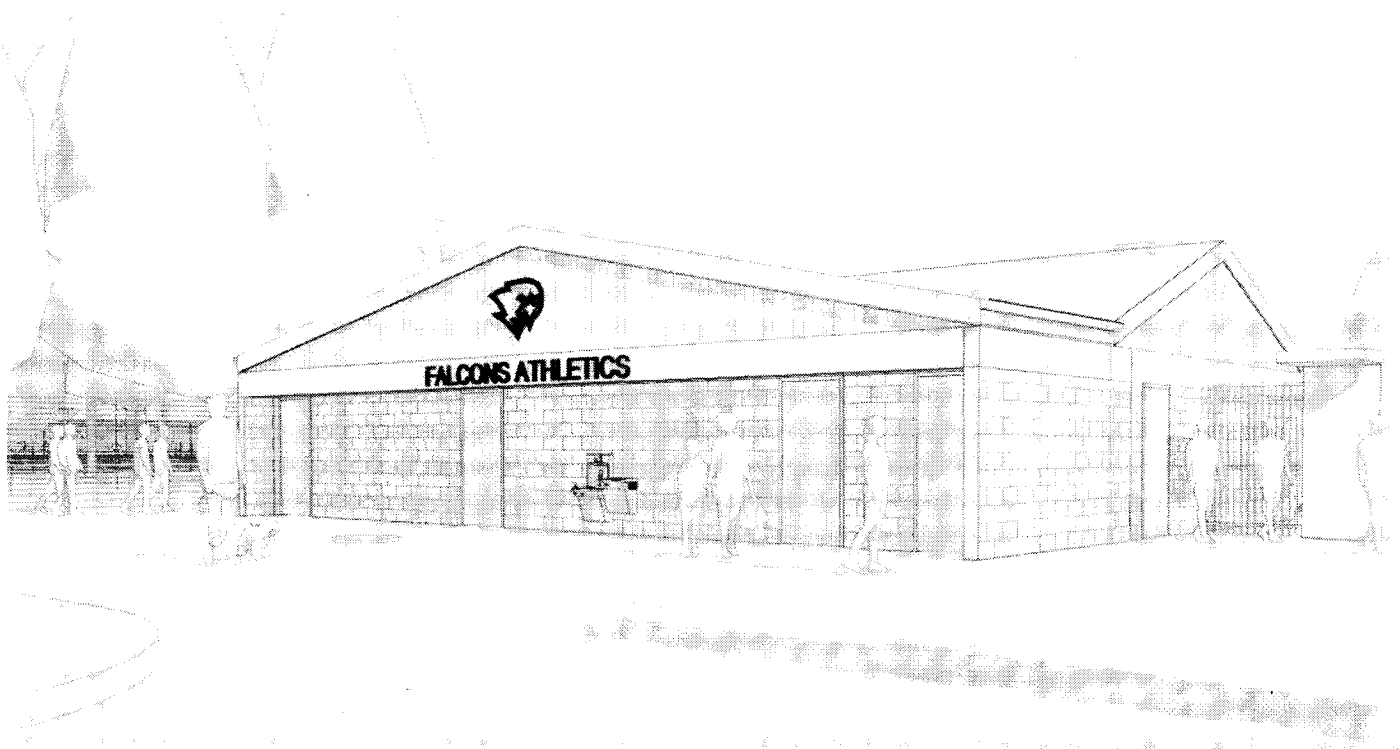
- Secure additional funding
- Conduct R9BOE Town Halls for project awareness and solicit feedback on Nest Building design
- Issue RFP and hire General Contractor
- Start construction on Phase 2



Thank you

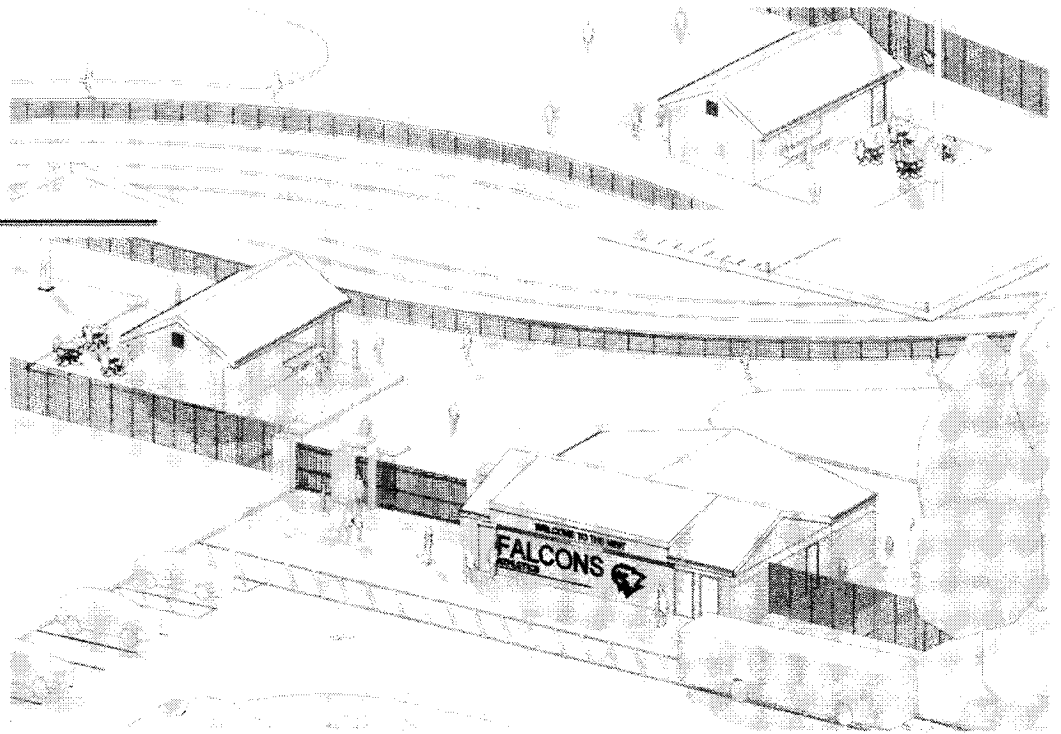


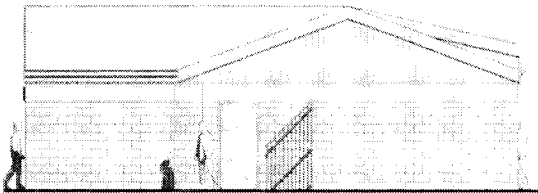




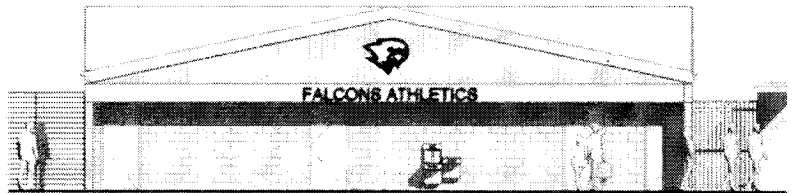
**1** STADIUM SIDE

**2** PARKING LOT SIDE

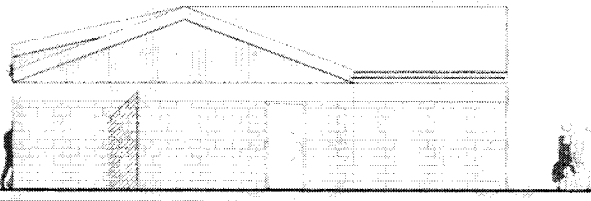




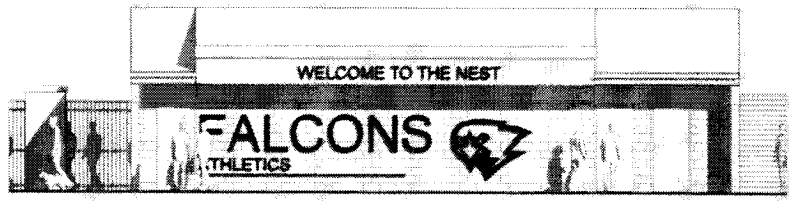
**4** SOUTH  
1/8" = 1'-0"



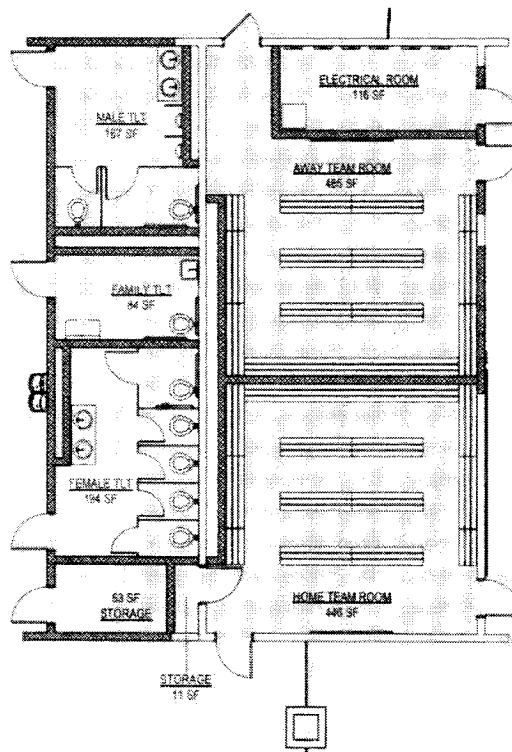
**2** WEST  
1/8" = 1'-0"



**3** NORTH  
1/8" = 1'-0"



**1** EAST  
1/8" = 1'-0"



### Department Legend

- ☐ Back of House
- ☐ Storage
- ☐ Team Rooms
- ☐ Toilets

EXISTING SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1090 SF  
PROPOSED SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1563 SF