

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

LIBRARY RENOVATIONS/ADDITION PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

July 20, 2016

LUCY ROBBINS WELLES LIBRARY –LIENHARD ROOM

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

- I. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Committee Chairperson Newell Stamm, Jr. at 3:29 PM.
- II. Roll Call – Members present: Newell Stamm, Jr., Chairperson; Laurel Goodgion; Maureen Lyons; and LeeAnn Manke. Others present: Leslie Burger and Alan Burger, Library Development Solutions; Lisa Masten, Library Director; Dave Langdon, Director of Facilities Management (arrived at 3:40 PM); and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.
- III. Public Participation - None.
- IV. Response to Public Participation – None.
- V. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – No action taken.
- VI. Welcome, Introduction to Library Development Solutions – Ms. Burger and Mr. Burger introduced themselves. They met with the Library staff and toured the site earlier in the day.
- VII. Working Meeting Discussions – Extended discussions took place between the Committee members and Library Development Solutions, regarding Library Development Solutions’ initial observations, what would be included in their report, and what would be expected of Library Development Solutions and their report. No formal action was taken. A summary of the discussion is as follows.

Ms. Lyons asked if the reports presented to Library Development Solutions to serve as the basis for the feasibility study were correct. Ms. Burger was not ready to say. There is room for modifications. The basic bones are there. There may be a need to re-think certain assumptions. Both collection size and technology will change dramatically in the future. She will make some critiques and provide alternatives. Mr. Burger asked about the role of the library now, in five years, and in twenty years. A community center for engagement will be different from a place to get free access to reading materials. There will be rapid changes in career paths also. Ms. Lyons observed that she has seen tremendous changes in just two generations. Ms. Burger stated that staff earlier had expressed that they were looking for shared quiet space, collaborative space, teen space, space for a

technology cluster, and meeting space. Mr. Burger noted that there were short term and long term accommodations that were possible.

Ms. Goodgion expressed a need to continue to keep the charm of the Library and the ability for people to linger with small meeting spaces. Other libraries, such as Darien, were very technology oriented, but did not seem to project a feeling of warmth. Also, the current Library can't effectively display the collection in a manner that is appealing. This applies to both the new and older collection. Ms. Manke mentioned that staff space was inadequate, and space for the Friends of the Library also. Space for the Library Board in the Library is non-existent. Mr. Burger observed that public demand is great, and the Library is telling residents that it can't accommodate them. There is a need to think about the long term affect this has on how they view the Library. Mr. Stamm asked Library Development Solutions how they will evaluate. Mr. Burger stated that many libraries have drop-in programs. There is a need to eliminate the wait for those programs that are filled to capacity and have waiting lists. Ms. Burger pointed out that program attendance has increased each of the last five years, and that circulation has also increased. Ms. Goodgion observed that parking is also an issue. Mr. Burger responded that this also becomes a question of accessibility.

Mr. Stamm requested that the report contain a list of obstacles, both physical and space obstacles. He asked if there was ratio of space per staff member. Mr. Burger responded that while there is not a set formula, many architects will use 6-7%. The number of full and part time employees are also a factor. Ms. Goodgion expressed the need for natural light, to connect to the outdoors. Ms. Burger stated that there was a need for seating for staff members also. Mr. Burger encouraged the Committee to think about the employee's functions two years out and beyond. Ms. Manke had observed on her visit to the library in Napa, California that they had movable desks with two drawers for each employee. Mr. Stamm requested that the report address staff and storage areas, and what the recommendations for those were based on. Ms. Goodgion stated there was a need to include confidential office space for the Director and supervisors. Mr. Burger asked what the constraints were that should guide Library Development Solutions' thinking. Ms. Lyons felt that the architect should be extremely clever and incorporate an addition into the project.

The Committee inquired if the collection size was in the right ballpark, and what the construction cost for Connecticut was. Ms. Burger replied that she would anticipate \$350 per square foot for construction for libraries. Everything needs to be touched. You can't just put on an addition. Mr. Stamm anticipates that, based on what is in the report, the Committee will need to prioritize. The community won't be able to afford the dream library. Ms. Lyons expressed a desire for a 20-30-40 year useful life. Mr. Langdon observed that this will be the third addition for this building. It is unique how the building has been added on to. The HVAC (heating, ventilating and air conditioning) and utilities could be upgraded from the last addition. The equipment from the original part of the building will need to be

replaced, but most likely this will be done outside the building project. Ms. Manke informed Library Development Solutions that it was important to keep the facade and the original building from 1939. Mr. Burger was told that the rest of the building was fair game. Ms. Manke asked if problems with the systems were in the original building or in the addition. Mr. Langdon replied that they were in both, and that there were constraints on both.

Mr. Stamm spoke about how the Town would like a campus setting. He asked if there were elements of a campus library that would differentiate it from a stand-alone library, such as walkways. Would all the main entrances have to face each other? What options are there? Mr. Burger asked if there was an overall vision. Is the campus a gathering spot? Ms. Manke stated that security in campus buildings is a consideration. Mr. Burger stated that multi-use on the campus site would present problems for surface parking. Ms. Burger observed that while the amount of program space is inadequate, the amount of parking is also.

Ms. Burger stated that Newington has the potential to double the number of visits to the building, based on her experience and observations elsewhere. It depends on what you have to offer; not just programs but wi-fi access, the number of tables, etc. They will apply changing assumptions to a worksheet. Mr. Stamm asked that the report address information technology improvements, both for fixed and flexible technology. It should address the collection size, with a digital versus hard copy ratio, as well as fiction versus non-fiction. It should address exterior access and the idea of the library being the center of the community. He asked that the report address the growing elderly population needs. It should address how much quiet space and how much collaborative space is needed.

Ms. Masten asked about space for self-employed individuals. The Library has programs for small businesses, they primarily want on-line content. Mr. Burger surmised they may need meeting space. The report will identify groups that will be served. Ms. Goodgion commented on the concept that meeting rooms could be used by both the Library and Town Hall. Her experience is that overlap proves to be difficult. Mr. Langdon noted that the Town Hall Renovations Committee will be meeting with this committee shortly, and that they are expected to ask this committee about shared parking spaces. There have been significant issues in earlier discussions about a parking garage. A garage is not felt to be cost effective. Mr. Burger stated that parking is beyond Library Development Solutions' scope and expertise. The Town may need a parking/traffic consultant.

Mr. Stamm summarized the discussion by stating the needs and aspects that the report is expected to address:

- Storage space
- Study rooms
- Staff area
- Size and cost of the addition

- Campus approach considerations
- IT and technology in general (future proofing the building)
- Collection ratios, including digital versus hard copy
- Access for the community
- Demographics, and how they relate to the elderly population and their needs
- Spaces, including square footage
- Small business use of the library
- Visuals/pictures that would be helpful for future presentations

Mr. Stamm noted that Library Development Solutions has knowledge outside of the Committee's collective experience. Ms. Goodgion asked for suggestions on other libraries for the Committee to visit.

- VIII. Preparation for Meeting with Town Hall Renovations Project Building Committee – Mr. Stamm told the Committee that they should expect to be asked about parking. The library has land adjacent to the building, but currently has only six parking spots it can call its own. It has been using Town Hall parking spots for many years. Continued sharing will be necessary. Ms. Manke felt that the Committee should to speak carefully about the library land and parking.
- IX. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee – None.
- X. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 4:51 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Baron

Jeff Baron
Director of Administrative Services