

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

TOWN HALL RENOVATION PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

April 1, 2013

LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM L101, TOWN HALL

- I. Call to Order –the meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM by Chairperson McBride.
- II. Roll Call – Members present: Scott McBride, Chairperson; Myra Cohen; Sharon Braverman; Bill DeBlasio, and Jennifer Win-Johnson. Others present: Members of the public; John Salomone, Town Manager; Lee Olsen, Olsen Design Group; William Collins, PhD, Superintendent of Schools; Ed Moriarty and Mike MacDonald, Downes Construction; Bob Korpak, Director of Facilities Management; Bruce Till, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation; Lou Jachimowicz, Chief Finance and Operations Officer; and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.
- III. Public Participation – None.
- IV. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Mrs. Cohen made a motion that the minutes of the March 4, 2013 meeting be approved as presented. A second to the motion was provided by Mrs. Braverman. The motion passed by a vote of 5 YES to 0 NO.
- V. Program Development – Space Needs – A summary of the Town Hall Space Needs was presented by Mr. Olsen. This included a handout showing the analysis performed by Kaestle Boos Associates in 2009 and the recent changes by department to that. The increased space needs of the departments located in Town Hall are very close to the vacated space of departments and divisions that will no longer be in the building. The handout also showed the Net to Gross square footage ratios and the efficiency percentages under different building scenarios.

Mr. Olsen also presented the request for space in the new Community Center, following his earlier discussion with Mr. Till, of approximately 32,000 square feet. This included two full high school sized gyms/ basketball courts, with a walking track and no bleacher space, at 16,000 square feet (s.f.). This area would have a climbing wall and mat storage. There would be locker rooms, at 3,000 s.f., with individual dressing areas. There would be a 1,500 s.f. dance/aerobic room, that should have mirrored walls, appropriate bars/beams for dance, and an ergonomically appropriate floor. There would be a 1,000 s.f.

pre-school area. This would also need outdoor playscapes. There is no growth in the pre-school program anticipated by this size space. Dr. Collins noted that the Board of Education has a pre-school program for the Special Education population and their typical peers, which is a small program, but the Board of Education will be looking to put more emphasis on this in the future. The Community Center request included 1,300 s.f. for offices for the Parks and Recreation staff that would be located near the 300 s.f. lobby and reception counter. It would have 1,000 s.f. for a Teen Center, which holds four dances a year serving approximately 200 adolescents. The Teen Center would be looking to go to 7 days per week operation with this space, which should also include televisions, computer terminals, and other popular teenage furnishings. The Community Center request called for a 1,000 s.f. Arts and Crafts room for adults that would be membership driven. It would also include a 500 s.f. kitchen area that would be a finishing kitchen rather than one where meals were made from scratch. There was a request for 2,000 s.f. for a fitness center that would include treadmills, elliptical machines, etc., for adults and supervised children. This size is similar to the work out areas in other community centers. There would also be a little more than 5,000 s.f. for walls, hallways, mechanical rooms, custodial closets, and the like, to bring the total to approximately 32, 000 s.f. The Parks and Recreation Department will promote additional programs if space is available. These are the basic components of any community center.

Mr. Moriarty and Mr. MacDonald from Downes Construction were re-introduced to the Committee. They can begin to convert the preliminary square footage requests into preliminary construction dollar estimates. They will speak further with Mr. Olsen and come back to the Committee in a few weeks with some preliminary numbers, as well as assist with the Architect Request for Qualifications. Mrs. Cohen asked if there would be a separate bathroom for smaller children in the Community Center. There would be individual showers in the locker rooms and appropriate sized facilities in the pre-school area. There was further discussion about various Parks and Recreation programming opportunities that would be available in this sized space. The Chair asked that Parks and Recreation be given the space to run their programs, and asked the Committee to focus on square footage and the direction of the department.

- VI. Architectural Services Request for Qualifications/Proposals - Mr. Olsen presented a rough first draft of the Request for Qualifications from architectural firms to participate in the design competition. The target for the Town wide referendum is February 15th. The referendum question must be finalized and advertised by December 15th. The rough first draft included ten things the respondents would tell the Town. Respondents could be multi-discipline firms or joint ventures. The competition will call for conceptual design level of quality drawings and renderings. The architects will need information spelling out the site, the program and the budget. The total cost

will be 16.1 million, including design fees, construction management fees, and the referendum costs (election process and mailing). The Town will also be providing the centerline location of the relocated Garfield Street. The Request for Qualifications/Proposals should be issued around mid April, with responses due back in two weeks. Staff will pre-qualify firms in order to present a medium sized list of firms to the Committee to select from. The in-studio process of design should begin by mid June, with submittals due to the Town by mid September. The jury would review these designs in late September and reach a decision by October 1st. From October 1 to December 1 the architect and Downes Construction would fine tune the budget and design elements in order for Downes Construction to develop the Guaranteed Maximum Price. Construction documentation would not take place until after a referendum is passed. Mrs. Braverman asked that the schedule be forwarded to the deans of the five schools that are being contacted about serving on the jury.

- VII. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee – Mr. Salomone will contact Chairperson McBride regarding any need to meet later in the month, bearing in mind that Monday, April 15th falls during the week of school vacation.
- VIII. Public Participation – Madey Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive: Members of the public in attendance would have appreciated copies of the handout discussed during the meeting. This is the first time she has heard of a fee for using the Community Center, on top of the program fees. The Town’s demographics are changing and many cannot afford to spend money on that. Such fees might impact the volume of use. Will the fitness center be monitored at all times? Does the 16 million dollars include the purchase of equipment?

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She would like handouts available to the public at the meeting and on the website. Of the 16.1 million dollars for the Town Hall renovations and the Community Center, how much will be spent on the Community Center? Is there any percentage breakdown? Taxes are going up and some question the need for a stand alone Community Center. Which of the schemes discussed in previous meetings was presented tonight? Questions are out there and the more the public is informed the easier it will be to get a referendum passed.

Don Woods, 82 Ivy Lane, and Chairman of the Board of Parks and Recreation: He respectfully requests that the Committee give consideration to the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation’s figures for square footage needs in the Community Center to meet the needs for today and for the future. These square foot figures are comparable to other Towns of a similar size. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

- IX. Committee response to public participation – Mr. Salomone stated that he had been hesitant about getting into any program discussions. The Town is far

from establishing any fee structure. Even the use of the Town pools has small fees. There may be some membership fees but it is early in the process. The \$16.1 million includes both buildings. The space of the buildings needs to be based in reality. There will be more copies of handouts available for future meetings. Some of the documents presented this evening were just drafted today. The Town wants to communicate the project to the public. Mr. Till stated that, regarding the fitness center, Parks and Recreation provides certified instructors where there are needs. Supervision will be present. Mr. McBride stated that the information was just presented, and is not fully understood by all. Discussions on programs are premature. Some misconceptions and misunderstandings have resulted in the past. More help is now present in the form of Downes Construction, the construction manager. The project is in motion. People are available to answer the public's questions. The committee recognizes that the public needs information that will provide answers to the public's questions. The Committee is willing to provide information and answers to the public. Mrs. Braverman stated that the Committee is building a community center for the next fifty years. Mr. Till stated that he is trying to bring out the best for the community and have a community center that fits the town's profile. Mr. Olsen stated that his involvement is coming up on one year. These projects take years to become a reality. He has observed the dynamics of the Town of Newington. Quality of life is high on the list of everyone's concerns. The Committee has made good progress in that it has a Construction Manager and is zeroing in on the components of the project. Projects are not as simple as they were a few years ago.

X. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 7:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Baron

Jeff Baron
Director of Administrative Services