

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

TOWN HALL RENOVATION PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

There was no quorum for the scheduled meeting of the Town Hall Renovations Project Building Committee on May 21, 2012. Those present had an extended conversation with the consultant, Lee Olsen, of the Olsen Design Group. Those who were unable to attend are encouraged to meet with Mr. Olsen before he leaves Newington on Wednesday evening or Thursday morning (contact Bob Korpak's office number, 860-665-8579 to determine the best time) and to listen to the tape of the discussion, which is on file in the Town Clerk's Office. A summary of the discussion that took place follows.

Mr. Olsen is meeting with this Committee, Parks and Recreation, and others in order to allow people to educate him on the needs of the building and the Town, so he can in turn help to point the Committee in the right direction. There have been discussions about the use of a construction manager. The building is aging. It has a lot of corridor space. One of the questions is how to build, space, and phase things so that it keeps the various offices in business.

The possibility of a design competition has been discussed. Mr. Olsen discussed how such a competition could work. It would show designs, models and graphic presentations. The construction manager would work with the design team once they are selected. The Town could opt for a guaranteed maximum price.

Mr. Olsen will come back to the Committee with options. Should the Town take the gym off the building? If the gym is no longer part of the building, what do you do with the rest of the building? How do you creatively capture space? The Town can use the existing spaces in new ways: the corridors, front lobby, etc. What avenues can be pursued to rectify problems? There are many facets to the project. There are so many different ways to do things. This hinders the ability of the Committee to get down to what has to be done and refine those items. Mr. Olsen has the two building studies from 2004 and 2008, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the Town's comprehensive plan of development.

With the Library, the Community Center, the Senior Center, and the Bus Garage, there are many parts to the campus. The relationship to the Board of Education is critical. The building does not feel user friendly. There are a series of options to consider. A swimming pool or pools has been talked about. The power distribution system is old. It is not easy to get around the building. The building is constantly used. It can be difficult to visualize changes that have been talked about. If you enclose the courtyard, what will it look like? If you change the front entrance and move it to Garfield Street, what would that look like?

Will the project meet certain criteria? Concerns were expressed about cost, and also about communication with both businesses and the public. Mr. Olsen supports community engagement. The Town is currently using 42,000 square feet of the 97,000

square foot building. The building is showing its age. There is water damage, new roofs are needed, etc. The Town may need to tear down what it doesn't need.

Mr. Olsen wants to compile as voluminous a list of inputs as he can. He will present options to help bring the Town into compliance and make the best use of the space that the Town has. The finished product should be something that is in place that has room to grow and that can adapt to both change and technology. The cost to repair could be identified as well as the cost to provide something new. The Board of Education is needed to assist in selling and supporting the project. The more feedback received, the better the project will turn out.

Mr. Olsen will need time to synthesize all the information he will receive on his visit to Newington, and to prepare various options. The June meeting will be cancelled and the Committee will meet again on the regularly scheduled date in July, July 17th at 5:30 PM. The discussion ended about 6:50 PM.