

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

TOWN HALL RENOVATION PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

October 1, 2012

TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM L100

- I. Call to Order –the meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chairperson McBride.
- II. Roll Call – Members present: Scott McBride, Chairperson; Myra Cohen; Jay Bottalico, and Pam Raynock. Others present: Members of the public; Stephen Woods, Mayor; John Salomone, Town Manager; Dr. William Collins, Superintendent of Schools; Lou Jachimowicz, Chief Finance and Operations Officer; Robert Korpak, Director of Facilities Management; and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.
- III. Public Participation – Madeline Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive: the Human Services Department is an area of Town Hall where more privacy is needed. Robert Seiler, 83 Flagler Street: He volunteers at Human Services. Deliveries of food are difficult. For a lot of elderly citizens it is difficult to access the Food Bank. Food has to go up or down stairs. Many of the people serviced are mobility challenged. This needs to be considered by the Committee.
- IV. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Mrs. Cohen made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2012 meeting as presented. Second by Mr. Bottalico. The motion passed unanimously.
- V. Olsen Design Group Proposal – Mr. Korpak distributed a proposal for project management services, dated October 1, 2012 from Lee Olsen of Olsen Design Group Architects, Inc. He also distributed a potential project timeline. In the proposal the tasks are numbered, with an estimate for each task or group of tasks. The Committee would need to determine if it was comfortable with Mr. Olsen’s involvement on each item. This is a more refined estimate than what was discussed at the previous meeting, and is based on the revised project timeline. The proposal would allow the Town to retain Olsen Design Group for the duration of the project, through groundbreaking in May 2014, for a flat fee or *a la carte*. Mr. Olsen has indicated that there are no issues with the Project Building Committee going *a la carte*. \$73,700 would be the total if all tasks were selected.

Mr. Salomone noted that another consideration was how the schedule would fit into the referendum date in November 2013. How much information does this process give to the public? Does this schedule dovetail with the referendum schedule? It is anticipated that there would be one referendum for the whole package, rather than separate questions for the Town Hall and the Community Center. The Town would want the referendum to pass before it went out to bid. The Committee would need solid numbers by the end of the summer. It would actually want better numbers by August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The architect/engineer's estimates won't come until later. The referendum date may need to be changed, as the Committee would need good design numbers.

The schedule for the proposal from Olsen Design Group is based on a schedule that Mr. Korpak provided a few weeks ago. Some dates on that schedule have already been missed for the November referendum timeline. The Project Building Committee will now be meeting twice a month and may make up some time. The referendum for this project could be bundled with a number of items. Mrs. Raynock stated her preference to stay on a timeline that will keep the referendum as part of a November election.

Mr. Bottalico asked Dr. Collins what major school projects could be coming up. The Board of Education's priorities are 1.) Anna Reynolds, renovate as new; 2.) Ruth Chaffee, early childhood program; and 3.) Newington High School, artificial turf field. Mrs. Raynock asked how the referendum would work, whether there would be one large bond or if the referendum would be subdivided instead. The Town Council would decide that.

Mr. Salomone noted that if the Committee wanted to use Mr. Olsen as part of the process leading up to referendum, a Town Council action item was needed. The Committee would need a bid waiver for Olsen Design Group from the Town Council. In keeping with the referendum schedule, this would need to happen on either October 9<sup>th</sup> or October 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Building Committee could make a decision at their next meeting on October 15<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Raynock can not be present on that date. Members who are not physically present can participate in a meeting by phone but can not vote. The Committee can meet more frequently if needed. Mrs. Cohen asked what the Committee member's response would be if they were asked how the Olsen Design Group was selected. It would be that the Project Building Committee was satisfied with Mr. Olsen's initial project and the work that he did on the Town Hall/Community Center study.

- VI. Community Center site review and selection process – The architectural firm of Kaestle Boos Associates had presented several potential site proposals to the Committee several months ago. These only looked at the

physical footprint, in terms of space that was needed, on Town owned land, adjacent to or on property across the street from the Town Hall. Town staff decided to take these proposed sites and look at them in terms of the location of utilities and the wetlands impact a new building site would have. The resulting Analysis of Proposed Recreation Headquarters Locations was distributed by Mr. Korpak. The section labeled Existing Conditions shows where wetlands are located and where utility lines currently are. The pros and cons of each proposed site location are also included. The Committee does not have to pick solely from the proposed sites in the packet that was distributed. Staff also looked at other Town owned properties, but none was considered favorable. Other properties in Town could be purchased, but staff didn't look at those. Each scheme can be changed and indeed will be revised when the architect that is selected designs a building. Where a building will be located is what the Committee will be deciding. The Committee needs to review and to discuss the nuances of each location. A final decision is not expected to be reached at the Committee's next meeting. The Committee will discuss what it likes or dislikes about each site at the next meeting.

Mr. Till said he would share all of this information with the Board of Parks and Recreation. It was recommended that the site list be disseminated to the public when it was shortened. The Committee will move its future meeting to Room L101, where it can use the technology that is available there to better present information to the public.

There are no utilities on the soccer fields that are located on Willard Avenue. The Town could also build a pool there to allow the elimination of the present pool at Mill Pond Park. Committee members were asked by the Chair to take the options home and rank them informally. Mr. Korpak pointed out that any site selected can be made to work. It is a matter of how much the Committee is willing to spend to make it happen. Dr. Collins observed that if the Transportation Garage is not relocated on a scheme or proposed location it will stay where it is. The proposed location labeled New Scheme is one that Kaestle Boos Associates did not look at.

Mr. Till asked the Committee to keep in mind the total infrastructure of Parks and Recreation and the other facilities in Town. The new facility should tie in with other facilities. The department shouldn't outgrow it before it moves into the new building. He requested the Committee keep future needs in mind. Mrs. Cohen felt that the Committee needed to keep the budget in mind. Mr. McBride stated that the Committee needed to have a project that is appropriate for the future uses of the building, that it should put forward what it thinks is right, not just what will pass; and to recommend the best project it can for the best cost that it can.

Mr. Bottalico felt the Committee needed to go through the Olsen Design Group study and the various aspects of it when considering sites. Scheme D is still a possibility. That scheme adds on to the library, leaves the Town Hall alone, and expands the parking lot. It was included to show that parking could be added and still leave room for a library addition.

- VII. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee – Mr. Baron distributed the Project Building Committee ordinance. Mr. Till distributed the Kaestle Boos Associates Space Needs Analysis, a space needs questionnaire and interview guide, with the Parks and Recreation Department’s responses.
- VIII. Public Participation – Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: she was not at the other meetings. She could not find the minutes on the Town website. It appears as though the Committee has already reached a decision on a separate Community Center. Where can she get information on this? There are no agendas for the public and none of the back up information is available. Is the Committee voting on the renovations for the Town Hall or the Town Hall and the Community Center? This should be on the website. Will there be public hearings on these issues? Robert Seiler, 83 Flagler Street: There is a former Northeast Utilities substation site on the corner of Willard and Garfield. It left a contamination problem. The groundwater is being tested and will continue to be monitored. How will this affect the decision on the location of the Community Center? Should the Town be concerned about leaching and did the Committee know about this? Madeline Kenny, 53 Crestview Drive: the Committee should make all the proposed sites available to the public and identify where to get this information. Parks and Recreation appreciates Senior Citizens. When she used the Town pools in the past she could not take children to the pool until after 3 PM because it was too crowded. She feels there should be two public pools. The public needs information on the proposed sites and their pros and cons. Curt Roney (SP?), no address stated: This is a major expense. His income doesn’t go up. Please consider empty buildings in Town. Also consider taxes.
- IX. Committee response to public participation – Chairperson McBride: The Committee will meet in the room next door in the future to have discussions where there is more room and where it can show all the proposed locations on the overhead screen, so the public can view them. Mrs. Raynock: The Committee wants to see what a separate building would cost. Mr. Bottalico: why a decision to have a separate Community Center was reached was that if Town Hall was renovated with Parks and Recreation still part of the building, the gym would be closed for a year and a half, with no viable replacement locations. Bonding for this would not affect taxes. The Town is spending \$6.3 million a year on Capital Improvements anyway. Mrs. Cohen: The Committee had to decide on a separate building to move forward. Keeping Parks and Recreation in the

Town Hall is not off the table. She wants to hear from the public. Mr. Bottalico: on two public pools, more people have private swimming pools in Town. Mr. Till: If you take the pool at Churchill Park, you can do other things to meet the aquatic needs of the Town rather than just having a large pool. You can change the scope, reduce scale, and still meet the needs of the community. Mrs. Raynock: Cost factors to renovate the building were considered. The Committee needs to post meetings better, this has to happen. Mr. Bottalico: He is looking for a new way for individuals to find their way around Town Hall. Mayor Woods: the substation tracking is to see if contamination is moving in the groundwater. Then there will be plans to remediate it. Ms. Lyons: how long will it take to get approval for a traffic light? Response: as the Committee defines sites, traffic flow will be considered.

X. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jeff Baron*

Jeff Baron  
Director of Administrative Services