

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

TOWN HALL RENOVATION PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

September 10, 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: 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 – None.
- IV. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Mrs. Cohen made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2012 meeting as presented. Second by Mr. Bottalico. The motion passed unanimously.
- V. Acceptance of Feasibility Study Recommendations – Recommendation on professional assistance - At the previous meeting the Committee discussed the possibility of keeping Mr. Olsen on board to assist with the process, particularly regarding community engagement and the design competition. Mr. Olsen put together a proposal and forwarded it to Mr. Korpak. It was based on a number of assumptions and anticipated approximately 60 hours a month. An RFP waiver would be needed if the Committee prefers to continue to use Mr. Olsen. The Committee felt it needed to get a refined proposal that addresses the specific tasks that are needed, with specific milestones and a not-to-exceed figure. If the revised proposal is received in time, it will be discussed at the next meeting.

Recommendation on architectural competition concept – staff stated that an architectural competition would allow for creativity in the individual proposals. It would give the competitors more of an open end as to how they would solve some of our issues. It would be judged by a panel of professionals. The competitors would have monetary parameters. It is a way to get creativity into the project. The Chair raised a concern about a potential conflict between the panel and who they are judging. The American Institute of Architects has a process in place for these types of

competitions. Their goal is to give the Town the best architectural project that meets our needs. It is a process that will take a little bit longer than the traditional Request for Proposals. It will also allow for more dialog with the public. The Town would develop competition guidelines.

Mrs. Cohen was not comfortable with moving forward with an architectural competition until certain concerns that she had were addressed. She noted that the Committee needs to tell the public why it wanted a separate building for Parks and Recreation and justify the cost. She felt the study was a study of Parks and Recreation, and that it was all about Parks and Recreation. It should be explained why Parks and Recreation has to move, what is involved, and shown that it is impossible to keep them at Town Hall. Mr. Bottalico observed that the renovation of two pools is in the Capital Improvement Plan, that the Committee could attach a new pool to a new Community Center and then close both the old pools. Also, if you kept Parks and Recreation in their current location, the gym would have to be closed for renovation. Where would the programs held in the gym go for that period of time until the gym could be re-opened?

Mr. Salomone responded to Mrs. Cohen's concerns. The Parks and Recreation Department and Board of Parks and Recreation input was important. They are a large component of the project. Originally Mr. Salomone was skeptical about a separate building (both the cost and the functionality), but the study convinced him that separating the Parks and Recreation Department from the Town Hall was a good direction to go in. The gymnasium no longer meets the Town's needs. The Teen Center is inadequate. These won't be adequate even with renovation. You also have, as Mr. Bottalico noted, the issue of the useful life of the two swimming pools. Mr. Salomone felt he needed to hear these things from the Parks and Recreation people. Parks and Recreation will have to help carry any referendum. The two site approach would also have to be confirmed by the design competition. You can't stage the renovation if the department were to stay at Town Hall. You would lose the Mortensen Community Center for eighteen months. The programs Parks and Recreation put on are not just for the youth of the town. Other programs and groups could be accommodated by a new facility. There isn't room to provide classrooms or add more space if the Mortensen Community Center stays in the Town Hall. What the Committee decides to do with the current gym will determine the design for the rest of the building. Mrs. Raynock observed that young people are moving into town, which creates a strong demand for Parks and Recreation programs.

Mrs. Cohen was assured that the design competition would be a combined competition for both projects (Town Hall and Mortensen Community Center). She was also concerned about the timeframe for a referendum on Election Day 2013. She asked how this would tie in with a potential \$18 million dollar referendum that there had been some discussion about earlier in the year. The Board of Education has other

project needs. Does the Town Hall project tie in with other projects? Mr. Salomone responded that the \$18 million anticipated referendum was primarily for the Town Hall. Roof replacement for the schools is a potential for bonding. Other projects could be folded in if needed.

Mrs. Cohen asked how the location for a new community center would be selected. Kaestle Boos Associates gave the Committee several locations for a new site. The Committee agreed to discuss the site review and selection process at their next meeting. It was affirmed that the Project Building Committee would pick the site and identify it for the design competitors.

Mr. Bottalico made a motion that the Committee proceed with an architectural competition for the Town Hall and Mortensen Community Center design. A second to the motion was made by Mrs. Cohen. The motion passed by a vote of 4 YES to 0 NO.

- VI. Anticipated schedule/sequence of events leading to referendum – the schedule for this will be developed and presented at a later meeting. No action taken.
- VII. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee – The Committee agreed by consensus to amend their meeting schedule, moving from the third Tuesday of the month to the 1st and 3rd Mondays. These would be Special Meetings. The Chair expressed his desire to discuss items at the meeting in which they are presented and to vote on those items at the subsequent meeting. Mr. Jachimowicz informed the Committee that he had filed for a grant for the Transition Academy roof replacement. Previously, such a request would proceed quickly. At this time, he is being asked to demonstrate that this wing of the building is only used by the Board of Education. The Committee should not anticipate that the State would approve a grant to replace the roof on the rest of the building, since general government offices are located under the Board of Education's offices. There is no grant commitment yet for the Transition Academy roof.
- VIII. Public Participation – None.
- IX. Committee response to public participation – None.
- X. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 6:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Baron

Jeff Baron
Director of Administrative Services