

TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD

PROSSER LIBRARY BUILDING COMMITTEE

There was a meeting of the above referenced committee on Monday, February 29, 2016 at 5:30pm in Council Chambers at Town Hall, Bloomfield, CT.

Committee members present were: Mark Weisman, Michael Johnson, Gail Nolan, Roberta LaMonaca (Ex-Officio Member), and Sharron Howe (representing Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Ex-Officio Member).

Absent: Vera Smith-Winfree and Lois Hager.

Also present: Nancy Haynes, Purchasing & Risk Manager, and Don Poland, of Goman + York.

Guests: Senator Beth Bye, Ryszard Szczypek, and Jeannette O'Connell – Tai Soo Kim Partners, LLC, Friends of the Library and Prosser Library Board of Directors.

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes of February 16, 2016

It was moved by G. Nolan, seconded by M. Johnson and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of February 16, 2016 with noted corrections.

Discussion with Sen. Beth Bye re: Technology Access

Sen. Beth Bye has a passion for technology. Her goal is to increase competition and reduce the price, and improve service for broadband in Connecticut. She attended a conference in New Hampshire where a demographer discussed the need for New England to attract the younger population because we are the fastest aging segment of the country. Sen. Bye offered to invite either Elliot Ginsberg or Mark Raymond, head of the CT Education Network (a supplier of fiber backbone to schools, libraries, fire, and police agencies) to attend a meeting. R. LaMonaca asked Sen. Bye about the availability of a State Library grant.

R. Szczypek asked if there are any grants available for video equipment in the new library; having video equipment in the maker space, for example, would help attract young people.

Discussion with the Architect

Status of Contract

R. Szczypek requested changes be made to the hold harmless clause.

Program Update

There was a discussion regarding the net-to-gross area of the program spaces.

R. Szczypek said the real test will be the actual layout which will determine what the real grossing factor will be and he mentioned that all circulation spaces need to be counted; an accurately drawn plan is the best gauge. R. Szczypek will continue this discussion with Diana.

State guidelines for the square foot per capita = 1.35 as the recommended minimums in order to qualify for the grant, you cannot build “under” the guidelines and still hope to be eligible for grants.

R. LaMonaca mentioned our population is closer to the 20,000 range which means 1.57 makes more sense as a minimum sq ft per capita rate.

R. LaMonaca had discussed the idea of a building with three stories and what would be assigned to each of the floors: 1) combine the circulation desk with the reference desk, because that is the current method whereby staff can assist each other - if we have a whole section of a collection on the second floor she felt there needed to be supervision on that floor which then potentially means a need for a desk at the reference desk but at the same time she is not comfortable with the idea of a reference librarian being alone on that floor. There was discussion about putting some administration offices on that floor for example the tech librarian, the technology coordinator and Roberta with glass so that they could see out but that would only work until 5pm. From 5pm to 8pm that staff person would be alone, and she is not comfortable with that option either. There was also talk about putting the Friends up on that level so there would be more activity but again the staff person would be alone and that’s not the preferred scenario. Perhaps adding another 5-8pm staff person is an idea; two people on each floor may be required to adequately staff those areas because we cannot have unsupervised sections. Changing staff shifts may not be feasible. R. Szczypek will brainstorm with R. LaMonaca on all of this.

M. Weisman would like to show on paper that we are making every attempt to utilize other spaces in town so we can potentially reduce the space needs. He said he will make a trip to the Police Station on Wednesday at 9:30am to determine if the training room, which can hold 50 people, will satisfy the need for classroom space for the Library’s use so that a new one does not need to be built into the plans. R. LaMonaca and L. Hager met on Friday morning with Dr. Lopez; L. Hager offered up the idea of providing non-degreed courses to attract non-traditional library users, adding appeal and relevance as a selling point for a new library so as to be mutually beneficial for many different kinds of library users.

R. Szczypek offered the suggestion that we can certainly *plan* for a classroom and identify the costs associated with it. The maker space could be used as a “classroom” space without having to have a true dedicated classroom. D. Poland asked whether the space is currently conceptualized within the envelope of the building; are we trying to save square footage by relocating it elsewhere. No, M. Weisman said, we do not currently have a classroom in the library; this is a new program need. It is certainly possible to have the maker space with alcoves, to be used as flexible space, according to R. Szczypek. D. Poland asked if the discussions

regarding the town hall site have determined the possibility of access to meeting/community rooms co-functioning with the town hall – has that been conceptualized with the envelope?

Site Assessments

R. Szczypek mentioned that rational facts would need to be presented to Council in order to gain their buy-in for the project. The Options Score Sheet was then discussed: the six possible options (A. free standing 2-story building near Town Hall, F. 3-story building near Town Hall, B. current Prosser site with expansion to the west, C. current Prosser site with expansion to the north, D. 330 Park Ave, E. current Prosser site with 4 foot elevation and 3 stories) for the new construction were ranked from 1 to 5. After all the tallies were made with 15 criteria in mind, the top 3 options were F, A, and E, in that order. More discussions will be had regarding the top options. R. Szczypek asked the Committee to review the criteria to determine which were the most critical to the Town. M. Johnson agreed that we need to narrow down the criteria and the options and said that would help as we move forward with options A or F. R. Szczypek will include “supports the promotion of the Town Center Plan and Economic Development” to the Options Score Sheet as criteria to the future location of the library. D. Poland of Goman + York favored the Town Hall site, as we would have willing neighbors. He mentioned that the 330 Park Ave location would negatively remove the library from the center of town; proximity to the town center is crucial for town promotion and for economic development. D. Poland asked if there was a possibility to expand the 1st and 2nd floor footprint and reduce the 3rd floor.

M. Weisman discussed the meeting on Wednesday, which took place between Mr. Dave Melesko, Director of Leisure Services, R. LaMonaca, Diana from Tai Soo Kim Partners, LLC, and Centerbrook Architects. Centerbrook Architects has not found one attribute in that building that does not require significant improvements other than the foundation. From a structural standpoint, we will not have a clean space with which to work; it’s not an ideal location.

R. Szczypek would like to move forward with plans for a three-story stand-alone building near the Town Hall site because he needs to provide a more accurate grossing factor figure.

A motion was made by M. Weisman, moved by M. Johnson, seconded by G. Nolan and voted unanimously to address R. Szczypek’s request to move forward with the Town Hall site plans.

Informational Campaign

R. LaMonaca noted that there would be an option for a self-checkout station in the new plans; adult patrons do desire this. A laptop dispensing vending is desired to loan out laptops for student and adult use. Also desired might be a business center as a media-scape hub – with a table and screen at one end, and white board directly over the table so that group collaboration could take place among business folks as well as students. Computer lab maker space was desired – but currently, the program includes a mobile laptop station where computers are stored and charged at all times and this method now precludes the need to have a dedicated computer lab space. Having a monitor on the exterior of the building would be an option to increase patron traffic but there could be issues with zoning and security; we could high mount on the interior space and mitigate both.

Community room A/V equipment: the library has a need to improve this part of the library sooner rather than later as the set-up is time-consuming.
iPads are desired for children's use with security and parental controls already installed.

D. Poland noted that Wi-Fi is critical to providing connectivity and adding to a community space so as to expand service offerings and growing the development of the town center as a focal point.

R. Szczypek asked if any vendors, for example Google, have approached the library to offer equipment for the young people; video-capability will greatly enhance the technology and appeal of the library.

Pre-Referendum Schedule and Future Meeting Dates

- An update will be given to the Admin/Education Cmte on Monday, March 7, 2016 at 6:30pm in Conference Room #5.
- **Regular Library Building Cmte Meetings: March 14, March 21, April 11 in CR #2 going forward, at 5:30 p.m.**
- March 21: Land Use and Economic Development (Dusty from Goman + York will attend, D. Poland to be out of town)
- March 28 and April 25: Town Council Meeting (Goman + York to be present), Council to take action on the plans in May/June/July to meet a potential September 1 deadline to get it on the Referendum (June 30 is the deadline to submit the Intent to File for the State grant, which requires Council approval)
- April 12: Public Focus Group in the Prosser Library Community Room (Tai Soo Kim Partners, LLC to give presentation)
- April 18: Finance Subcmte meeting at 5:45 p.m. in CR #2

It was also recommended that the Town Council be educated on the grant process so they are included and on board with the plans. May/June will be the timeframe for when Council should lock down their decision to move forward with a referendum.

Discussion with Economic Development Consultant

D. Poland mentioned that there might be complex issues with trying to build at the Wintonbury Mall. The folks there may not be in a financial position to meet our needs. He would prefer the Town not pay for a lease to a landlord just to maintain a low status quo position. He will get something formal in writing about this and submit to the Building Committee to maintain a paper trail of documentation on his recommendations and suggestions.

Library Board of Directors, Friends of the Library, and Public Comments

R. LaMonaca would like to post information about the construction project on the Library web page for updates from the Library Building Committee – are they allowed to do that and how much information is okay to share? Objectives and the charge of the committee would be allowed; any opinions posted by the Friends of the Library need to be separate from the website.

At 7:30 p.m., it was moved by M. Johnson seconded by G. Nolan and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.