

TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD

PROSSER LIBRARY BUILDING COMMITTEE

There was a meeting of the above referenced committee on Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in Conference Room # 2 in Town Hall, Bloomfield, CT.

Committee members present were: Mark Weisman, Michael Johnson, Vera Smith-Winfrey, Lois Hager, Gail Nolan, and Roberta LaMonaca (Ex-Officio Member)

Also present: Nancy Haynes, Purchasing and Risk Manager.

Guests: Ryszard Szczypek, Diana Lanser and Jeannette O'Connell – Tai Soo Kim Partners, LLC, Don Poland and Dusty McMahan – Goman + York, Henry Withers – CR3, Friends of the Library and Prosser Library Board of Directors

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Vera Smith-Winfrey, seconded by Gail Nolan and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of January 25, 2016 with noted corrections.

It was moved by Lois Hager, seconded by Vera Smith-Winfrey and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of February 1, 2016 with noted corrections.

Discussion with Economic Development Consultant

Dusty McMahan and Don Poland from Goman + York explained Goman + York's role with the Town as the economic development consultant. In preparation for their participation in this project, they reviewed prior plans and the town's Plan of Development. They discussed how the library is a key civic site and will have an impact on the Town Center. They distributed a February 2016 aerial view of the center with 3 potential sites identified – the current site of the Library, Town Hall and Wintonbury Mall. They discussed each location from an economic development point of view.

The mall site was discussed. The property had been in foreclosure and had been purchased at inflated price which means that there will be little money for improvements and it will probably be a while before changes are made there. The existing layout of the mall is not conducive to engaging the center and without major changes in the older outdated space, it will be a challenge.

The Town Hall site previously suggested by Tuthill and Wells had the library placement tucked away, which did not engage the center. They suggested moving the location on the Town Hall site closer to Park Ave. Lois Hager inquired if they went forward with that recommendation and modeled the Blue Back Square type of development would that mean that nothing would happen at Wintonbury Mall for 30 years. Goman + York recommends that the West Hartford isn't and shouldn't be considered the model for development because there are many other successful ways in other places to create economic development and stimulus.

Goman + York's review of expansion of the Library on the current site indicated that the existing site is tight and economic development would be limited if it remains on the current site. The roundabout that is being considered by the state at the intersection of Mountain and Tunxis Avenues won't be helpful from an economic development perspective.

Goman + York was informed that a 4th site, at 330 Park Avenue, was recently suggested for consideration, and will look into the location and do a "what if" analysis.

Discussion with Architect

Mr. Ryszard Szczypek, Principal, Diana Lanser, Project Manager and Jeannette O'Connell, Director of Interior Design Associate from Tai Soo Kim Partners, LLC presented the architect's report of the following areas:

Site Assessment

Ryszard Szczypek distributed a map of major civic structures in the Town so that members could see where the sites were relative to each location. Tai Soo Kim staff and Henry Withers presented and discussed several site options as follows:

Option A: This option is for a new 2 story building on the Town Hall site fronting Park Avenue and not connected to Town Hall. The plan was reviewed by floor from a programmatic basis, with community, café, media, teen and adult programming on the main floor and staff and children's areas on the 2nd floor. Henry Withers had a map of the current site, with an overlay showing Option A including the effects on parking. The current entrance to Town Hall from Park Ave would be replaced by a driveway, and parking would be behind the Library and Town Hall. Currently there is parking for 97 cars, under this scenario, parking would increase to 115 spaces. Goman + York discussed the shared parking concept with businesses surrounding the site. Some of the advantages to this site include being out of a flood zone, entrances to the site from both Bloomfield and Park Avenues, engagement of Park Avenue, and the existing circle in the front of Town Hall would essentially become somewhat of a court yard for both buildings, adding an outdoor feature desired by the Library (and recommended in the previous conceptual design) for programming, in keeping with the trend of libraries becoming community spaces, both interior and exterior. Some of Town Hall would be visually blocked from Park Ave but it would still retain its frontal presence and green space

facing the intersection. The Architect received feedback and will reconfigure the option for a 3 story building instead of 2 stories, which may make this option more desirable by reducing the large footprint shown on the drawings. This would also make it visually harmonious with Town Hall and perhaps add additional parking.

Option B: This option calls for the Library to remain on its current site, with a renovation of existing space and expansion to the west towards Wash Brook, similar to the Tuthill and Wells concept of several years ago. This would place the facility on top of setback or encroachment line which will probably be an issue. Under this option, there would be no occupied spaces on the lower level. There would be an elevated upper floor that would be over parking. The main floor would contain community, adult, media and teen space while the upper level would house children's, staff and community space. In addition to concerns regarding the encroachment line, the height of the parking level could be an issue for larger delivery type vehicles, which would mean they would have to enter and exit from the parking area north of the building on Tunxis Ave. This is a concern since currently there is no entrance from Tunxis.

Option C: This option has the Library remaining on its current site, and expanding north. There would be no occupied spaces in the lower level. Community, teen, adult and media programming would occupy the main level, and the 2nd level would house meeting space, children's and staff. Since this plan would use the current northerly parking area for the addition, parking could be an issue unless the land to the north is acquired by the Town.

Option D: This option is at 330 Park Ave, which is currently the Community Services facility for the Town, housing Leisure Services, Social & Youth Services and Senior Services. This site was suggested for consideration at a Town Council retreat, and the Town recently hired Centerbrook Architects to review space there. That project does not have a building committee. Ryszard, Roberta and Mark toured the building with Dave Melesko (Leisure Services Director) recently, and are scheduled to meet with Centerbrook the week of 2/22/16. The building is large and probably has excess square footage for the current occupant's need, but it in poor shape and it may not be salvageable. It is on a large site, and could offer the advantage of shared space. Although it may be a good spot for maker space, there is concern about supervision in a building that size. There was discussion regarding three capital improvement projects, bonding capacity and incremental improvements for some of the projects in lieu of borrowing. Goman + York expressed reservations about the location as an economic development generator but will go back and look at the site and report back.

Option E: This option envisions the Library remaining on the current site, raising the lower level at least 4 feet to address the flooding issue, and have 3 floors. It would be a total renovation with an addition to the north.

The Architects requested some direction regarding narrowing of sites so they could focus their efforts. The Building Committee proposed that they do no further work on the 330 Park site until after the meeting with Centerbrook. They also advised that the Architects shouldn't spend

much time on the town hall addition (original Tuthill and Wells concept) or the existing site going west (Option B) due to the encroachment issues, although no sites are totally off the table at this time.

Program Update

There was discussion of square footage, which remains at approximately 34,000 sf regardless of site.

Status of Contract

Review by Architects is in progress.

Informational Campaign

Friends of Prosser Library did an email blast and bookmarks were drafted and will be sent to the printer.

Pre- Referendum Schedule

A revised schedule was distributed showing the Town Council meeting of 2/22/16

Future Meeting Dates

Town Council presentation

The Building Committee will be making their presentation on progress to date at the 2/22/16 Council meeting. Tai Soo Kim Architects and Goman + York will also attend that meeting.

Town Council Subcommittees

The Building Committee will attend the 3/7/16 meeting of the Administration and Education Committee and the 3/21/16 Land Use Committee meeting.

Building Committee

State Senator Beth Bye will attend the 2/29/16 meeting to discuss technology. The meeting will be at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers. Council Chambers has been reserved for the Building Committee meetings on the revised schedule of key dates that was distributed.

Adjournment

At 7:40 p.m., it was moved by Michael Johnson, seconded by Lois Hager and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.