

NOV 19 2008

## SENIOR CENTER EXPANSION STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES 10/29/2008

Meeting in the Faulkner Room 0713 to 0757

Present: Paulina Knibbe (Chair) Jean Fleming, Barbara Tallone, Herman Kabakoff, Steve Baran, Peter Ashton, Ann Chang and Doré Hunter.

The Clerk indicated that he will attempt to produce meeting Minutes within a day or two of the meetings and asked that members promptly email any suggested corrections to him so that he can produce a "clean" copy to approval at the next meeting and promptly deliver such to the Town Clerk. Inasmuch as the second set of corrections to the 15 October Minutes were not received until this meeting they will be corrected and the approval will be carried over to the next meeting on 19 November.

Heather Harer has found that her duties as a member of the School Committees and otherwise do not leave her enough time to fully participate in this Committee and accordingly will quite reasonably reduce her activities to acting as a Liaison between the School Committees and this Committee.

Remodel Option: Ann Chang discussed some of the concept work done recently by the Town Engineer and others in regard to how the existing Senior Center might be expanded and revised. There is a possibility that desired additional parking on Audubon Hill may not be feasible, so it may be prudent to have further discussions with the area residents. There is consideration being given to designing a box around some of the existing space, and bring the administration area forward to be left of the entrance, and in turn enlarging the existing administration area to be a large function space. Paulina indicated that it is hoped that an architect to do proof of concept drawings could be hired by next week, at which time the thinking of Ann's group should be presented to the individual hired so that he/she could carry forward the focused effort to produce the desired concept drawing.

Ann expressed some concern about potential costs that may be involved, her estimate is a half million dollars. Seven thousand five hundred square feet are involved but there has as yet been no real cost estimate or survey of the existing structure to determine the feasibility of an expanded redesign. Paulina expressed concern that we avoid duplicating effort. The "remodel" group should produce a simple suggested layout as input to the architect. But we don't need two groups independently working out a detailed layout. Ann expressed some concern about rearrangements that would close off some of the existing windows. Doré said that it would be helpful if come of the Senior Center familiar folks could suggest the appropriate adjacencies, pointing out that such, in the form of a "bubble diagram" will probably be constructed by a design architect and even if done by lay folks might be helpful at this point.

New Construction Option: Peter noted that his group has not been active pending the hiring of the proof of concept architect and said that he should reactivate the group. He pointed out that, although Mike and others have done a simple layout, a professional's expertise in that area will be required. Peter suggested that it is time to begin work on the probable costs of construction and the necessary operating budget and staffing needs in regard to all three options. Peter will work with Jean to determine operating budget impacts for the three options. It was noted that all three of the Finance Subcommittee were present and had heard that advice. In response to a

question it was stated that Jean's Function/Program Subcommittee was thinking in terms of needed 12,000-14,000 square feet of space.

Ann asked that operating budget issues such as furniture, staffing and additional hours be considered. Peter also reminded the group that there maybe rental options. Ann asked where the Town administration intended to place the new social worker which will shortly be hired, the Senior Center and Nursing areas were briefly mentioned. Paulina responded that the Town Manager is considering requesting a space study plan to determine how best to use all of the town owned building space that is available. The question of where to place the social worker will clearly be one question addressed in such a study. Ann also noted that the Arlington Street potential construction site has some wet lands that should be marked out and made known to any architect hired. Paulina will ask Steve L. if town staff can prepare such information for the architect.

Commercial Option: Herman reminded the assembly that the Discovery Way site possibility is now in the hands of the Town Manager inasmuch as there will be legal steps to be taken if that facility is to be used for a new Senior Center. He urged that the Town Manager, if he has not already done so, contact the owner and/or broker to advise them that the Town is still interested in potentially using their property.

Pending Public Presentations: Paulina reminded everyone that there will be proof of concept level presentations to the public in January. On 21 January the presentation will be at the Senior Center during the afternoon and on 22 January at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Faulkner Room. It was urged that as many Senior Center Expansion Committee members as possible should attend. The concept architect will hopefully be selected by Thursday next week by representatives from each of the teams, to wit: Gena, Peter, Mike, Herman, Jean Fleming, Paulina, Dean Charter and Steve Ledoux. Paulina will ASAP get the package together for the concept architect. All teams should send copies of their materials to Paulina.

Economic Conditions and bearing upon the project: There is a recognition that working on the planning for a new or revised structure for the seniors and the community in the current economic conditions might not seem reasonable to some town's people, and the Finance Committee in particular. Herman pointed out that he had already heard questions in this regard at the Finance Committee, but said he would defend the project. Ann suggested that the Steering Committee make its case for proceeding with the planning for an eventual project, noting that the relatively small sum of money that may be expended at this point is only \$25,000 that was appropriated two years ago. Doré pointed out that the cycle of "bad" and "good" years financially speaking has been such that it seems waiting for a "good" year to begin planning can well leave us not yet ready to commence a capital project before a "bad" period overtakes us. There were some suggestions made about public communications to explain why this project planning is moving forward at this time.

Next meeting is 19 November.

Fourth Draft of these Minutes

Respectfully submitted, Doré Hunter

Approved by the Committee at its 19 November 2008 meeting  
