

TOWN HALL BUILDING COMMITTEE

NOTES FROM MEETING

November 13, 2019

Members Present: Jay Butler, Mike Twomey, Patrick Reffett, Tim Olson, Jack Lawrence, Jean-Pierre Minois, Jeff Hubbard

Members Absent: Bill Olson

Others Present: Owner Project Manager (OPM), Design Technique (DTI) – John Sayre-Scibona; Lerner, Ladds, Bartels (LLB) Architects – Mallory Demty and Drayton Fair; Board of Selectmen (BOS) members – Darcy Dale and Rosemary Kennedy (and Jeff Hubbard); Hamilton Historic District Commission (HHDC) member – Ed Howard; Hamilton Development Corp. and Planning Board member - Rick Mitchell; Patton Homestead Board member - Carin Kale; Finance Committee (FINCOM) member – David Wanger; and one other.

Mike Twomey opened the Town Hall Building Committee (THBC) meeting at 5:00 PM in the Memorial Room at Town Hall.

Meeting Minutes

Mike asked Jay Butler to get the past meeting minutes approved. Jay asked for a motion to approve the October 30, 2019 meeting minutes which was made, seconded, and voted unanimously.

LLB Comments on HHDC Suggested Modifications to Option B

Drayton and Mallory made a presentation comparing Option B approved by the voters at Town Meeting to an HHDC Option B which allowed for the second floor stage to be preserved. Patrick noted that Scott Clements could be available by telephone if necessary but it was noted that HDC Chair Ed Howard was present and further that the presentation could not be viewed by Scott.

Drayton explained that the HHDC Option B kept the stage height, the stairs between the second floor meeting room and stage, and required the elevator to stop at the stage level. The stairs will need a waiver. A chairlift would provide wheelchair access from the meeting room to stage. The second floor meeting room would be rotated ninety degrees and would have 18 less seats for a total of 85. The second floor would have a copy room and kitchenette along with a pair of rest rooms. The HR office is moved down to the first floor and the first floor 14 person conference room is lowered to six persons and the larger conference room is moved to the basement. The flex office is removed from the basement but it could be added back by taking some storage space. Drayton and Mallory suggested that this Option is less expensive than the current Option B.

Drayton next showed the options for the addition design, both the three original ones as well as three more shown at Town Meeting and then verbally suggested a multitude of additional options, particularly those more sympathetic to the original building design.

Drayton noted further that with this HHDC Option B, there was no need for extensive structure work on the second floor. When asked by Jack, Mallory said that there was no need for an expansion joint between the building and addition since the addition would be made from wood. She did note that it will be necessary to check the roof loading for the addition.

Looking in more detail at the second floor design, Mallory noted that there would be a space in the front portion of the stage approximately 32 inches wide that may need a railing in front. The structure under the second floor meeting room will need some sistering to meet code for the anticipated population of a large meeting room. Mike questioned the structural issues and wanted to understand if they were really needed as he wanted to reduce costs. Mallory insisted that they were necessary but both she and Drayton promised to have their structural engineers review their recommendations. Mallory and Drayton further noted that as the renovations exceeded 30% of the assessed value of the building that we need to meet current building codes for assemblies that were non-existent 100 years ago. Mike questioned the cost for the structures work and so LLB will check them.

John questioned if the reduced seating for the second floor meeting room was an issue. Jeff, Mike, and Jean-Pierre did not think so as the number was within where we wanted to be.

Mike asked if LLB had looked at allowing the elevator to stop at the meeting room floor vs. the stage but Mallory said it did not work when it was addressed.

Rick asked if the new layouts were reviewed with Town Hall employees, specifically the HR office move to the first floor, the movement of conference rooms, and loss of the flex office. He also asked what the plans were for an audio/video setup for the second floor conference room as he felt the layout was not conducive to good audio performance. Mallory said the screen would drop from the ceiling and Drayton noted that they had not yet addressed the acoustic detail and that some acoustic mitigation could be considered if additional funds be made available. Rick further commented that the space above the enclosed offices on the second floor will not be visually appealing. Jeff offered that a railing will be installed to make it look like a balcony.

Mike asked if the design allowed for future expansion possibilities and Mallory assured him it did.

Darcy Dale asked if we couldn't reduce the renovation costs below 30% of the assessed building value so we did not have abide by all current building codes. Drayton and Mallory explained that the upgrades for electrical, plumbing, fire protection, and ADA compliance easily exceeded 30% of the assessed value without consideration of any interior design.

Jay asked if this design allowed for the view of the top of the windows for the second floor offices and Mallory assured him they did.

LLB Comments on Option C (Doug Tree's Proposal)

Mallory reviewed Option C by first noting that it requires a flat roof connection to the addition, and removes the first floor rest rooms. Drayton mentioned that the effort to address Option C raised more questions than answers. He mentioned the questions as to whether or not we wanted to use the basement and did we want a new vault. Option C showed no new vault and did not use the basement. Mike noted that we wanted LLB to provide a rough cost for Option C. Mallory said that to investigate Option C and provide two options would require \$20,195 in costs and one and a half months in schedule, and that the effort would provide a Detailed Cost Estimate.

LLB Comments on Option D (the Wenham Option)

Mallory presented a conceptual layout along the lines of Wenham Town Hall, specifically the addition out the back of the building. She noted that the HHDC would not likely approve this option as we would cover up the façade on the rear of the building. She also pointed out that lack of natural light in the corridors would be an issue. Mike offered that this Option doesn't solve issues but creates issues. Although no formal vote was taken, it was clear there was no interest in this Option.

LLB Options on Design of the Addition for Stairs and Elevator

Drayton and Mallory presented the three original addition designs for Option B as well as the three most recent designs shown briefly at Town Meeting. Mike noted that the HHDC did not like any of them. He did admit that he did not know what the HHDC wanted. Drayton mentioned that he could offer some different designs but that he needed their input. Mallory noted that the elevator designs offered dual entry. Tim asked if the entry to the elevator could be moved to the opposite side of the addition but Mallory said no. John asked if the entry could be in the connector and Mallory said yes.

Motion on Option C

Jay made a motion to drop all further discussion on Option C which was seconded and voted unanimously.

Further Comments on HHDC Option B

Jay noted that the HHDC Option B centered around the need to preserve the stage. Jay did not think that the stage would ever be used once the building was complete and thus it was necessary to lower the stage to create a fluid, efficient building design. He commented further that the idea that historic preservation necessitated required being able to return the renovation to the original design was not appropriate for a renovation that was repurposing the building. Rick Mitchell agreed with Jay that we needed to make the building design more functional. Mike noted that taking out the stage requires additional, costly, structural work. Mallory offered another option that would place the offices on the second floor along the front and back walls of the building with the meeting room centered on the second floor. John noted that this idea blocked the windows to the meeting room.

Mike tried some informal calculations on the costs associated with lowering the stage and suggested that it might approach \$0.5M. He suggested that he would prefer to use the money for an additional stop for the elevator. Mallory noted that the approved, consolidated Detailed Design cost estimate showed \$75K. Mike wondered if that value were too low. Drayton offered that we would save money if we kept the stage. Mike asked if keeping the stage would affect the addition and he was told no. Jean-Pierre briefly reviewed the changes with HHDC Option B, i.e., no flex office, keeps stage, conference room moves, etc. Mallory commented that she felt that Town Manager Joe D. would be cost conscious with regard to approving any design. Mike commented on the switch between conference rooms and asked Jeff's opinion. Jeff had no issue a conference room in the basement. Mike also asked if the new vault could be moved to the addition to save money. Drayton answered that while costs will be incurred by keeping it in the basement, additional costs would be incurred with moving it to the addition. Mallory said it would not be cheaper. Jack noted that placing things in the basement requires the elevator and he would like not to use the basement. Jack asked if we needed a new vault and both Jay and Drayton said yes.

Mike wondered about the need for waterproofing the basement as he wondered if we could remove that cost. Mike said that according to a consultant from Haley and Aldrich that the basement as designed was adequate. Mike felt we should keep the waterproofing but that the French drains were adequate. Drayton asked if we could get that opinion in writing.

Jay made a motion that was seconded to endorse the original Option B. Drayton and Mallory said that the HHDC Option B was less expensive. Jack wanted to revisit several Option B design details and was not ready to decide. John said that the committee needed to decide between the original Option B and the HHDC Option B. Mike insisted the need to be cost conscious and that we should not be forced into a decision. Rick Mitchell said that the committee needed to decide amongst the design options. John said that the HHDC Option saves money and make the HHDC happy and therefore the decision is between saving some money and a more functional layout. Drayton noted the need to explore some issues but if the decision was to make the second floor meeting room larger, it would cost more money for the addition. Jean-Pierre noted that the committee had earlier already looked at different size additions and noted that they were expensive. Jack was concerned over the structure work that might cost a lot of money and did not want to go before Town Meeting with unanswered questions. Jeff said the committee should go with the HHDC Option B.

David Wanger praised the committee for their work but exhorted them to deal with the gut of the problem and deal with the weeds later. He said that the committee needs to make a decision.

Mallory asked if this vote would give LLB direction to move toward Detailed Design. Mike responded by saying that the design was in the conceptual design and that only the exterior addition designs needed to be addressed by the HHDC. Drayton stressed the need for direction from the committee. Mallory countered that we need a brainstorming session with the HHDC over the design of the addition. Jean-Pierre supported the need to work with the HHDC. John

noted that the proposed vote is for the HHDC Option B proposal and not for the addition design that still needs to be reviewed.

Jay's motion to support the original Option B was voted yea – 1 and nea - 4, and was thus defeated.

Jack proposed a new motion that was seconded that the committee get financial cost numbers regarding the structural issues for the second floor, i.e., the sistering requirement. He wanted to know if relocating the offices away from the second floor meeting room would avoid sistering and save money. He wondered what would happen if the HHDC did not like the interior design. Drayton reminded the committee that every new idea was another cost estimate. John pointed out that the second floor meeting room size drives the structural loading concerns. Carin Kale suggested not moving the offices as it would create a large space with no purpose. Jay pointed out that the committee had previously considered a design option that preserved the entire meeting space but that the idea was rejected because the space would not be large enough for Town Meeting. Rick suggested not keeping the large space. Carin felt that the HHDC Option B posed a problem with access to second floor offices in that people would need to walk through the meeting space. Drayton countered by showing the available entrance and exit option paths through the building that would allow office access without passing through the meeting space. **Mike suggested that we treat Jack's concern over the structural sistering as a side issue. Jack agreed and withdrew his motion.**

Jack went on to mention the potential problems with a gabled roof on the addition and suggested using a flat roof connector and suitably designed hip roof. Drayton again mentioned that new options equal new designs. Jeff noted that a bigger addition means more money.

Mike noted at this point that LLB is released to complete the design of the HHDC Option B layout.

John asked when the committee would be ready to show the design options for the addition to the HHDC for comment and ultimate approval. Mallory and Drayton said they were ready now. When asked, Ed Howard said the next HHDC meeting is scheduled for December 10, 2019. Jeff asked if they could meet earlier, but Ed demurred. Mike suggested sending out the design options for the addition to the HHDC. Jean-Pierre agreed and said we should send the HHDC a formal letter and ask for a meeting ASAP. Mike said we should send the package to the HHDC and note that given our consideration of all of the interior design features requested by the HHDC that we expect similar consideration of the exterior design. Drayton suggested placing the layouts and addition design options in the DropBox and scheduling a working session with the HHDC. Jay suggested inviting the HHDC to the next THBC meeting. Ed agreed but noted that Scott Clements will need to participate by telephone as he will be out of town for the next few weeks. Jay also asked Ed if the HHDC could send out a digital copy of the letter they distributed at the last meeting. John offered to scan the letter and place in the DropBox.

Jean-Pierre asked one last question of LLB. He asked if they could summarize and confirm all of the structural info that has been mentioned. Drayton said he will consult with their structural engineer and send out a letter, probably tomorrow.

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:14 PM. Next meeting was planned for November 20, 2019 at a time and place TBD for the primary purpose of allowing the HHDC to review design options for the building addition to house the elevator and stairs. Scott Clements who is away on business will be asked to participate by telephone.

Secretary

Jay Butler

Attested 11/14/19