

TOWN HALL BUILDING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

May 1, 2020

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

Members Absent: Bill Olson, Jeff Hubbard

Others Present: Owner Project Manager (OPM) - Lee Sollenberger and John Sayre-Scibona of Design Technique (DTI); and Designer/Architect - Lerner, Ladds, Bartels (LLB), Drayton Fair and Mark Ritz

Mike Twomey opened the Zoom audio/video teleconference at 10:02 AM.

Meeting Minutes Approval

Jay made a motion to approve the 2/26/20 meeting minutes after first reviewing some minor comments by Lee. The minutes were approved by a polled vote of 5-0. Jay then made a motion to approve some minor typo changes from Jack to the previously approved 2/5/20 minutes. The polled vote was 6-0 to approve. (Patrick had just joined the meeting.)

HHDC Option B Cost Estimate

Mike asked Mark to comment on the status of the cost estimate for HHDC Option B and he replied that it would be available next Friday, May 8th. Mark noted that the preliminary costs are \$300k more than Option A (as expected according to Drayton) and that HHDC Option B construction costs were \$471 per square foot vs. the Option A construction costs of \$512 per square foot. The HHDC Option B construction costs were based on a gross area of 13,501 square feet and were estimated at \$6,376,000. Mike felt these costs were in line where we had hoped. A brief discussion ensued over the accuracy of the numbers amongst John, Mike and Mark while Drayton noted that the estimate has yet to be vetted. Someone asked if we were going to have FCS reconcile the estimate as was done for the DD Option A estimate but both Mike and Drayton said no as the past estimate by PM&C was done quite well and we would save between \$6k and \$7k. John felt this was a good call.

A discussion then ensued regarding potential increased costs due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Most seemed to agree that it is tough to speculate what may happen. Mike, John, Lee, and Drayton offered some anecdotal information of what might happen with new costing procedures concerned with tracking all employees on site, health checks, PPE equipment, supply chain issues, etc. Lee has heard that material costs are flat. Drayton speculated on the potential for contractors to either be very hungry for business when we need them or far behind on a backlog of other pre-approved projects. However, Drayton noted that a construction project in bucolic Hamilton might appear much more attractive than an inner-city project. Mark observed that there was not much we could do about the pandemic. When asked by Mike, Mark said he could

distribute the cost estimate for committee review next Friday, May 8th. Mike said we could allow a week for committee review and then plan our next meeting for Friday May 15th as a 10:00 AM teleconference. When asked by Mike and Drayton, John said that DTI would be prepared to provide their cost updated project budget at the same time. John said that they would not include any estimated costs necessary to address the pandemic. Jay agreed with not putting such costs in the current estimate but asked if John could get together virtually with Lee and guesstimate some additional costs in case we are asked to speculate at the Spring Town Meeting, whenever that might happen. Drayton asked about the status of the Spring Town Meeting and Mike indicated that it was tentatively scheduled for sometime in June but was still under discussion.

Review of Design Development Plan

Mike asked for comments on the Design Development Plan and Jay mentioned he had several comments and questions.

1. Was an employee survey taken to determine whether we should have rugs vs. wood floors in offices? The DD plan has all wood floors.
 - a. Tim and Patrick reported that a survey was taken of the 20 employees at Town Hall and the results were 9 votes for wood and 3 for carpet. Patrick noted that the Town Nurse was adamantly opposed to rugs as they can carry bacteria. Patrick mentioned that there was some concern over potential noise issues with wood floors and Drayton agreed, but that individual office issues might be addressed. John suggested rubber floor mats under chairs to protect wood floors.
2. Many of the drawings do not show a table and 4 chairs in either the Town Manager or the Finance Director offices, nor 2 visitor chairs for the Assistant to the Town Manager, yet this type of detail is shown for all other offices. Am I missing something?
 - a. Drayton mentioned that design drawings typically do not include furniture details but will check on the comment. We will assume the furniture identified will be there.
3. Is there an opening in the wall at the rear of the stage allowing a view of the hallway?
 - a. At Lee's suggestion, Mark put the drawing for the second-floor meeting room up for all to see and Drayton indicated that there was indeed an opening. He then asked if we wanted a wooden double door. Mike suggested a pocket door but Jack suggested that would necessitate reconstructing the wall and double doors would be simpler, hung so they could fold back against the walls on either side when open. After a brief discussion, it was informally agreed to insert a double wood door.
4. What do the audio and video connections/setup for the second-floor meeting room look like, including location of the overhead projector and screen? Will there be a floor junction box for microphone connections?
 - a. Mark showed the junction boxes located in the floor under the main table but noted that details of an overhead projector and screen were not yet determined. A brief discussion ensued and it was more or less decided that the screen could be located behind the proscenium arch and that a short throw projector could be located high up and behind the proscenium as well.

5. What do the ceiling supports, i.e., collar ties, on the second floor look like in terms of appearance, location, number, and size?
 - a. Mike and Jack noted that the collar or tension ties were shown as 1 ½” thick, supported vertically by steel rods from the ceiling. Two of the three ties were above the meeting room and the third was above the balustrade over the offices. Mark mentioned that these design details were not part of the drawings. A discussion ensued about the aesthetics of the current design that included a potential alternate approach involving reinforcement inside the walls. Jack asked what had happened with the suggested substitute of smaller diameter rod or cable ties such as are used for supporting a mast on a sailboat. He noted it was an aesthetic question whether these should be a feature or minimized. Jack favored the latter. This area will need more discussion and design definition
6. What are the plans for acoustic noise reduction on the second floor? Did we learn anything from Essex Town Hall personnel that had an issue with their town hall meeting room design? Do we need to hire an acoustic consultant or will we just go with the SonaKrete ceiling acoustical treatment?
 - a. Mike reported that he had contacted someone at Essex Town Hall and found that they had installed a white noise machine that offered some help to alleviating their issue. He will follow up to get more info.
 - b. Drayton mentioned that he was recommending SonaKrete. There was a brief discussion as to whether the product is sprayed on or troweled. Mark said it was sprayed, then troweled. (Secretary’s Note: SonaKrete is a premium acoustical finish manufactured by ICC of Houston, Texas which can be applied to reduce acoustical noise in thicknesses from ¼ inch to ¾ inch. The product is sprayed on in thin coats and then troweled to form a smooth finish. The product is fire rated per Class 1, Class A, of ASTM E-84, Standard Test Method for Surface Burning Characteristics on Building Materials.)
 - c. John indicated that he had had success with such a product and during the meeting emailed a document to the committee documenting the characteristics of the material. (Secretary’s Note: The material John was recommending was StarSilent Acoustic Plaster, manufactured by Pyrok of Mamaroneck, New York. The system installation which can only be done by a licensed installer, consists of a sound absorbing board made from recycled glass which is first attached to the ceiling by attachment to a rigid framing system and then coated with StarSilent smooth acoustic fibre-free plaster.)
 - d. Drayton addressed the question as to whether or not we should hire an acoustical consultant by noting that the room has been used for many years apparently without issue. He noted that acoustical panels could be placed over the office ceilings to reduce the acoustic signals that would be bounced around. Mike suggested we table the issue for the moment and John suggested using the cost for SonaKrete in the cost estimate.
 - e. Mike asked about the fire protection system and Drayton indicated that the fixtures will be imbedded in the ceiling. Mike asked if they were effective at that height and Drayton assured him that they were.

7. The lower level layout shows solid walls between storage areas? Will we switch to open fencing?
 - a. Jay noted that Tim had previously suggested fencing vs. solid walls for better air flow while Mike had questions about the need for security for some storage. Drayton said that he would consult with the HVAC designers and ask them about any better efficiency using screens vs. solid walls. Mike noted that while there was a cost of demolition for removal of existing walls, it could be offset by HVAC savings. Tim will check on the security concerns.
8. Jack asked if Drayton could go over the details of the planned demolition. Jack asked what the process would be to get the fabricated components for the new cellar vault into position. Being fore-resistant, he assumed they would be heavy. He wondered, could they be manhandled? And where would the entry point be and what demolition would be required. Drayton said that he could address the issue but was not prepared to discuss that level of detail at this meeting.
9. Jack also asked about the planned roof insulation. When moist warm air rises to the roof sheathing, if it encounters a surface below freezing, it will condense to liquid water and fall on the ceiling below ultimately creating a mark and possibly rotted lath. The answer is to keep the roof sheathing above freezing which would be accomplished by keeping in the heat which can be done with insulation on the outside (cold) surface. LLB specified 5 1/2" of polyiso insulation in single batts. Jack cautioned the butt joints between batts could allow cold air to infiltrate to the roof sheathing. Mike said it was better to make up the insulation thickness with three 2" batts, each oriented at 90 degrees to that below, joints staggered and the top one taped. Drayton agreed and we will now use three 2 inch layers for a total insulation of 6 inches vs. the 5 and 1/2 inches shown on the drawings.

Open Items from 2/26/20 Meeting

Jay reviewed some open items from the 2/26/20 meeting.

1. Has the DPW performed the water pressure test for the fire protection system?
 - a. According to Tim, not yet.
2. What are the plans for setting up a working meeting between LLB and the HHDC?
 - a. No plan as yet, according to Drayton as the current pandemic has impeded progress.
3. Will the committee vote to ask DTI to hire Building Enclosure Associates (BEA) for \$4500 for an IR scan of the building or can the fire department adequately perform it?
 - a. Mike reported that he had contacted the fire department and found that they had four IR cameras with two of them equipped to be attached to a computer for downloading info. He said that they would be glad to make the measurement and Mike would work with them. Jay wondered whether they could do a detailed enough measurement so as to be able to compare a current and after construction measurement. Jack said we definitely need a current measurement. Tim noted that we were on the verge of leaving the heating season which would make the measurement difficult. Mike offered to work with the fire department in the next week or so and make the measurements. We will evaluate afterwards.
 - b. Lee thought the proffered price from BEA was for only one set of current measurements but he would check.

4. What is the status of DTI hiring Northeast Survey Consultants and Bulls Eye Underground Utility Locating for \$3500 - \$4100 to detail all underground utilities on the property?
 - a. Lee reported that the work has been done and a report submitted to Tim. (Drayton and Mark to forward to their civil engineer, DZI.) He was uncertain as to the final cost.
5. Did we identify the location of the storm drains and look at drainage concerns with the adjacent Steve Astulfi's property?
 - a. Tim said that the documentation of the underground utilities would detail where the storm drain is located. He did look at the Astulfi property but noted that it was a relatively small depression and that according to both he and Patrick that the curbing should prevent any flooding problems.
 - b. Later in the meeting when Jack noted that we need to track all of the drainage on the property, Tim indicated that he had identified the path for some of the water runoff near a swail at the rear end of the property line. He said he would show it to anyone interested.
6. Has someone been identified by the Town to review and approve the design of the expanded septic system?
 - a. Patrick said yes, Erin Kirchner from Rockport who normally subs for our Board of Health representative.

Pilgrim Hall Lease

Patrick reported that things were at a standstill until we are able to commit to the dates of necessary occupancy. He further noted that Gordon Conwell wants very much to work with us but that they, like many colleges are concerned over the current pandemic and are dealing with related issues.

Waiver Requests from the MA Architectural Access Board (AAB) and MA Historical Commission

Mark reported that he needed the AAB variance application notarized and signed. He also indicated that he needed a portion of the application filled out by a person or committee representing those with disabilities or the Town representative for those with disabilities. Patrick noted that Hamilton does not have such a committee and that the responsibility typically falls on the Town Manager or Building Inspector. Drayton suggested the Building Inspector.

Mark also noted that he needs a letter from the HHDC that needs to be sent to the state historical office, endorsing the demolition of the current ADA access ramp and the construction of the new rear entry. Drayton asked who was the chair of the HHDC who would author this letter. Patrick identified Ed Howard. Drayton suggested the letter also recommend keeping the current front and side entrances and identifying the rear entrance as the main one. Jay noted that it was his understanding that the entrance for those with disabilities must be the main entrance. Tim mentioned that Wenham recognized their rear entrance as the main entrance when they renovated their Town Hall but admitted they did not have any parking in front of the building. He wondered if we needed to block parking from the 4 spaces around the circle in front of the building. Drayton said no. Mike suggested officially calling the new rear entrance the main

entrance. As an aside, Mike also asked if the stairs leading to the stage were being preserved and Drayton assured him they were.

Near the end of the meeting, Mark and Drayton showed a slide of an artist's conception of what the new rear entry would look like. Jay observed that there was no portico over the entrance that would protect someone in a wheelchair who might need to wait outside for a ride in inclement weather. Jack mentioned that he was the person to raise that issue at a past meeting. Drayton noted that after a detailed review by the HHDC, that this was the final design.

Project Schedule

Patrick reported that a site plan review will be conducted as part of the Planning Board meeting on May 19th. Drayton asked if the design team needed to be present and Patrick suggested not everyone but he would like support from the civil engineer. Drayton said he would support the meeting.

Jack wondered about the town elections and the fact that Jeff Hubbard will step down and an essentially new Board of Selectmen will take over with perhaps a differing viewpoint on the project, and thus make decisions that may affect the schedule.

Drayton brought up the fact that LLB's contract was about to expire and asked if the committee needed to review and vote on it. His concern was that work will stop without an extension. Patrick first noted that the committee could not vote on such an important issue since it was not on the meeting agenda and thus would be in violation of the MA Open Meeting Law. Jay agreed and pointed out that the decision to extend the contract belonged to Tim and Joe D. and that perhaps the committee could just take a straw vote on their opinion. **Jay conducted a polling of the committee as to their feelings on the extension of LLB's contract. The committee supported the contract extension unanimously 6-0.**

Mark presented the current project schedule which indicated that we were on schedule and still aiming to be ready with all necessary info for the Fall Town Meeting. Drayton asked when the Fall 2020 Town Meeting will be held and Mike indicated that it had not yet been scheduled and further suggested that the Town Hall Renovation Project might possibly be the only item on the agenda. After some discussion, it was suggested that the Fall 2020 Town Meeting could be held on November 7th to meet the committee needs. Jay pointed out the fact that it was very important to have a Fall Town Meeting since if the Town Hall vote on construction costs was deferred until the Spring 2021 Town Meeting that the money approved would not be available until after July 1, 2021. John bemoaned the escalation costs if that happened.

During the discussion on the schedule, Drayton mentioned that he was planning a Construction Document (CD) cost estimate at the 75% point so Mike suggested eliminating it to save money. Drayton indicated that this cost estimate was always planned and it was standard practice. He did offer that the bid process would be conducted with 100% of costs

Mike asked about the status of the cell tower in the property. Patrick reported that the MA Historical Preservation Office has sided with the HHDC concerning the location of the cell tower and now the cell tower owner is appealing to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Mike then noted that the presence of the tower has been incorporated in to the site plan and that its removal would just make life easier for the DPW.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held via Zoom audio/video teleconferencing on Friday, May 15, 2020 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

Mike asked for a motion to adjourn that was made, seconded, and voted unanimously by polling at 11:44 AM

A True Record
Jay Butler, Secretary

