

**TOWN OF TRUMBULL
CONNECTICUT**

Town Hall
5866 Main Street
Trumbull, Connecticut 06611



**Senior/Community Center and Library Study Building Committee
Thursday, January 7, 2016
6:00 pm
Nichols Room, Trumbull Town Hall**

Present: Co-Chairmen Joseph Pifko and Daniel Marconi; Committee Members Rachel Yahwak, Lori Hayes-O'Brien, Richard Seaman, Jeannine Stauder, Joseph Costa and Dawn Cantafio

Also Present: Lynn Arnow, Chief of Staff

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chairman Pifko at 6:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

None.

Past Minutes

Motion was made by Mrs. Yahwak, seconded by Mrs. Stauder, to approve the minutes of December 3, 2015 as written. Approved unanimously.

Mr. Pifko thanked the committee for meeting at 6:00 pm. New members of the committee were introduced. Dawn Cantafio is on the Town Council and is the second Town Council representative on the committee. She represents District 1. Joseph Costa is an architect and was the lead architect on the Frenchtown School project. Mr. Pifko thanked them both for being on the committee.

The last meeting in December was cancelled but the committee was in discussion regarding the survey and if it needed to be extended or ended. Mrs. Yahwak noted that when First Selectman Herbst had his inaugural address he made the comment that he is giving the committee sixty days to get our act together which is a very good idea. In her opinion, there has been enough done with the survey and we should start moving forward. Several committee members agreed. Mrs. Hayes-O'Brien agreed that after the delay in December the committee needs to move things along. However, she still has a

concern about the fact that if the intent was to find out what the community of Trumbull wanted; she does not feel we have covered that purpose. She felt there might be an obvious message in the survey responses that the committee does not know yet but she noted she does not feel the committee has gotten a real sampling of what the town wants. Mr. Seaman mentioned the possibility of a low response to another survey and the cost of continuing. Mr. Marconi stated maybe there is an overreaction to the Newtown situation because it was so public and it caught everyone's attention. He felt the committee has done everything in their best judgment to get input with visits to the sites. Mrs. Hayes-O'Brien wanted to make sure that somebody doesn't come back later and say this isn't what we want to spend our tax dollars on. She noted the committee had discussed ideas to move forward on this without a cost but with the delay and the holidays, we were thrown off that avenue. She feels it may be a concern moving on.

Mr. Pifko noted the survey results are available. Once the committee looks at them, they become public knowledge and it negates any further use of a survey. The committee can review the results but first there needs to be a decision as to whether it is the end of the survey or not. Mrs. Arnow noted there were 701 responses to one survey and high 400's on the other. She also noted there are 2,575 likes on Facebook, 1,527 on Twitter and 2,436 e-newsletter subscribers. She asked, by extending the survey, are we focusing on amenities for the center, whether or not there should be a senior center and a community center or what the committee would like to achieve by extending the survey. Mrs. Hayes-O'Brien was not concerned about the amenities for the center but she wants to make sure the committee makes an educated choice as to deciding what the real purpose of the building is no matter where it is.

Further discussion of the survey and dissemination of the newsletter and community input was held.

Mr. Marconi felt we may be still thinking senior center/community center and he has always said common use building. The committee needs to put forward to the Town of Trumbull that the committee feels a need for an improved facility and that facility should have certain components based on site visits that would facilitate multiple types/varieties of programs. Then it becomes an operational decision about the use of the building. The committee is aware there is a need for a kitchen and a coffee shop. Once again it should be looked at as a multiple use facility, not an either/or. He noted the committee has input from the town, site visits, etc. and using our best judgement, we are at the point to say this is our recommendation for the building. He did note a recommendation was expected to be given by March.

Question about the survey demographics was discussed including population targeted, number of surveys and data collection.

Motion was made by Mrs. Yahwak, seconded by Mr. Seaman to end the survey. Approved unanimously. The survey results will be reviewed by the committee and the topic will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Mrs. Stauder noted she has a preliminary report from the Leslie Burger Report and

distributed this to the committee. These are the recommendations for the Library and a strategic plan for the Library. This will be put on the agenda for next month.

Site selection deadline is in line with what Mr. Herbst has requested. Mrs. Hayes-O'Brien questioned if the deadline from Mr. Herbst was for a new senior center. It comes back to the confusion and what the committee's purpose is. Is it a recommendation to stick to a certain time or was it mentioned to move the project forward? Mrs. Yahwak noted the comment was part of his inaugural address and he specifically said he wanted within sixty days a recommendation from the committee and to break ground in 2016. Mrs. Hayes-O'Brien questioned whether on February 7, if we need to say we have picked a site and it is for a new senior center. She is trying to clarify if it is for a senior center or another type of facility. Mrs. Arnow noted the town would like to make a determination sooner than later for the purpose of the capital budget. This is going through the review and approval process through the next several weeks and they would like an idea if the town is purchasing land, using a current building or utilizing vacant land.

Mrs. Stauder stated the committee agreed to start with a senior center and have an area that could be expanded for a community center. The seniors have been looking for a new place for years so it was felt to start with the senior center and move forward.

Mr. Costa noted the committee should decide what is to be built and then look for a site to accommodate; not pick a site and then decide on the building. What will be building be? How many square feet? Until that decision is made, it is hard to decide what site. There are options for renovations, additions and renovations, rebuilding from scratch and these are all factors including parking, traffic flow, two-story or one story, etc. Mrs. Hayes-O'Brien noted that if we are truly going to decide a site within sixty days, there needs to be a decision made.

Mr. Pifko noted that the Library will not be a part of the project. With that in mind, are we building a senior center or community center? With the cost today of building and the needs of the growing town, it would be irresponsible to build and invest millions of dollars that would only be used by one segment of the population. We want a beautiful, state-of-the-art building that the people of Trumbull can use and the seniors will have an isolated area for them. It will be designed with multiple use rooms which will be controlled use. Square footage needs to be addressed. The committee all liked the Shelton center which could be designed to suit town needs. They are willing to share blue prints with the committee. Building is 18,000sf.

Site locations were discussed including the Nature Center property, Board of Education property and Island Brook Park. Centrality was a recommendation which would leave the Board of Education and Island Brook Park for consideration. Property on Middlebrooks Road would be difficult to build on. Discussion was held regarding the other properties including cost and other conditions of the properties which would be factors.

Mr. Marconi asked if the committee could agree on the size of the building with these amenities in it and at that point develop a budget for a building and leave the site selection out of the equation. Mr. Costa noted there were several options at that point. The committee could then say to the town the total cost is contingent on the site selection and the Town could decide.

Mr. Costa recommended the committee make a list of spaces using all the components available for information. The committee needs to make decisions as to what goes on the list and what goes on the list as options. At that time, a budget can be developed based on square footage. Mrs. Arnow noted there has been a lot of data collected over the last several months and asked how requests can be integrated to be flexible/multipurpose and adaptable. It is the job of the committee to develop a building with a lot of flexibility and options.

Mrs. Hayes O'Brien noted the committee needs to evaluate the consequences of using the Board of Education site because we have not spoken with Parks and Recreation to see what their needs are and what the loss of property would mean for everyone. Mr. Costa noted there are goals of the project but the budget drives the project and decisions will need to be made. Mrs. Hayes-O'Brien asked if the committee could start to create the more formalized priority list to drive the project. Mr. Pifko commented that we cannot be all things to all people and that there are different demographics in the town that would like things. We do not need to duplicate what we already have in town. There is not a request for a huge community center. It will be a state-of-the art senior center that will have rooms for the seniors and general public to use. Shelton will be the prototype. Mr. Costa recommended the committee start with Shelton plans, write down the space names and sizes and add or subtract what other spaces are needed or not needed.

Current space at the high school was discussed. Mrs. Stauder also noted the Library has placed in their plans additional meeting rooms. Usage of the center by the seniors was discussed.

Budget was briefly discussed. It was noted the project, if over \$15 million, would need to go to a referendum.

Mr. Marconi asked the committee to take the survey results home, review the minutes and notes from the site visits. Considering Mr. Herbst's deadline, the committee will meet next Thursday to tighten up ideas and start to put together a plan. Mrs. Arnow will request the plans from Shelton.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr. Seaman, seconded by Mrs. Yahwak to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk

These minutes are considered a draft until approved at the next meeting of the Senior/Community Center Library Study Building Committee.