

**ECKERSLEY HALL BUILDING COMMITTEE
MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2012
POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY ROOM
6:00 PM**

Members Present: Ron Klattenberg, Phil Pessina, Trevor Davis, Augie DeFrance, Ed Dypa, Ryan Kennedy, Annabelle Malone, Ed Monarca, Bill Wasch

Members Absent: Larry Riley

Others Present: Ron Organek, Ray Santostefano, Mike Rogalsky, Stephan Allison, George Zepko, Beth Lapin, John Marion, Off. Bill Warner, Claude Hendrickson (AARP), Rosemarie Vecchitto, Chris Vecchitto, Althea Whalin, Shawn Beals (Hartford Courant)

Guests: John Ireland and Chris Nardi, Silver/Petrucci

1.0 OPEN MEETING

Chair Klattenberg opened the Eckersley Hall Building Committee meeting at 6:03 PM at the Police Department Community Room.

Ron reported he met with the mayor about the staffing levels in the building. The government efficiency committee was still studying the matter, and this committee needed to decide if it could continue its work without a final decision or if the information was too critical and the committee had to halt. Ryan asked about a timetable for the committee; Ron said that they expected to be finished by the end of February or middle of March. Phil confirmed there would be something on the March council meeting. Ray made a report for his department but he wasn't asked for a recommendation as to space location. Annabelle asked about the connection between the government efficiency committee and Eckersley Hall. John Ireland indicated the current needs of the senior center fill the space, so one of the function rooms would have to change in order to house Rec into that space. Ed Dypa suggested, since it could be resolved right now, that the group assume some of the upstairs rooms be used as offices. Trevor asked how the architect can assign rooms without knowing if each program needed all that space concurrently or if there could be some overlap.

Beth indicated a need to change previously approved meeting dates in January 2013 to January 14 and 29 (Tuesday). Because the entire committee was not present, this was tabled.

2.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Klattenberg indicated that the minutes from the January 9, 2012 meeting required approval. Augie DeFrance made the motion to accept them, seconded by Phil Pessina. The vote to approve was unanimous.

3.0 FINANCIAL REPORT

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

There is no financial statement at this time.

BUDGET ITEMS

The committee has received an invoice from Silver Petrucelli & Associates for \$13,525, fifty percent of the schematic design phase of the contract, for review and approval. Since it wasn't clear if payment of half of a step is allowed, Ron suggested making this payment depending on approval from the city's finance office. Ed Dypa made the motion, Ryan Kennedy seconded it and it passed unanimously.

4.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS

George Zepko asked if the minutes were posted on a web site. Beth will contact Bill Oliver to set this up.

Rosemarie Vecchitto asked about AARP using the new senior center as meeting space; currently, about 125 members attend meetings. John indicated 75 could fit in dining room with tables; this could increase if there were enough chairs and space to store tables. They may also need to have an adjacent room for expansion.

Ron Organek voiced concern about site option 3, due to the bus canopy's impact on the Veteran's Museum's parking.

5.0 OLD BUSINESS

STATUS OF BUILDING

Chair Klattenberg reported there is nothing new to report. The warning light had not gone on, which indicated that the heat level in the building was appropriate.

APPLE REHAB LETTER OF INTENT

Phil reported that he has not heard yet from Apple Rehab. He hadn't wanted to pressure them but will have a report for the next meeting.

SILVER PETRUCELLI (SP+A) RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

Ron requested SP+A develop a fourth option, using only currently available funds (approximately \$1M, when the bond, general fund, and HUD are added together) to see what it could cover. Chris reported those funds would bring the building to current code and accessibility requirements, by adding an elevator (25% of the budget), making toilets accessible, changing door hardware, and providing minimal paint and flooring changes. This funding would not cover AC for the second floor, kitchen, soffits, or additional insulation. The committee agreed that they didn't want to develop a second-class facility but would ask for additional bond funds to modify the building to meet senior center needs.

Focusing on outstanding questions, John Ireland began discussion about the entry. Topics included the need for a friendly reception area (more open lobby area, socializing area, for coffee, while waiting for bus), location of police substation (could be a side entrance), and access and drop-off. Ron asked for feedback related to other senior centers from parking to door, which was fairly typical. Trevor pointed out one-way of streets were potentially changeable and section of Lake Street could be 'lost' to connect with northern green space. He requested that the eastern entrance drop-off use existing lots to prevent loss of curb space for street parking. Sense of the

committee was to favor central entry with canopy (would have to go to design review because of historical nature of the building). Questions about the level of the entrance (currently mid-way or at one of either floor levels) will be reassessed in future options. It was noted that the back ramp could be used for entrance and egress during large assemblies (in addition to garbage and deliveries).

In a discussion related to the attic, Trevor suggested that using the attic as storage has limitations, as the passenger elevator won't be suitable for cargo. Chris indicated that additional loads to the attic would require structural supports and it was preferable to store mechanical units there (and not use more accessible space on the main floors of the building). Consensus: include a standard stairway to the attic level, which would be used for light-duty storage.

Responding to a question about elevator size, John Ireland indicated it would allow for a stretcher or one wheelchair and companion. Currently some people use scooters and a few wheelchairs. John said the cost to increase the size of the elevator size is small; Ron suggested that we increase the size of the elevator. SP+A will come back with options.

Related to the dining area, comments revolved around the need to fill that floor and then open up or raise the ceiling (currently 10-10.5 feet). One suggestion was to fill in half way and address the remaining drop with a ramp. There also was a need to make the dining area expandable, perhaps by exchanging the current exercise and rest rooms.

Additional suggestions: more couches, tables, TV and place to hang out between programs (=socialization); computer room doesn't need to be dedicated; move exercise upstairs; health screening might be smaller and upstairs; need space for physical programs (beyond exercise room dedicated to machines); evening meeting room with sink; game room (room for pool table, wii-bowling, pinball); bingo can be in multi-purpose; mural on canvas should be indicated on plans and investigated as to mobility; code may require a family shower option. Ron suggested that the next iteration of drawings included what programs could be in various spaces.

Stephan Allison said current exercise requirement is 30 x 35. He also indicated that arts and crafts space could be shared with oil painting. Kilns (10 x 10) and dust room (8 x 8) would require outside venting.

Chris indicated clarification of space was helpful, although it would result in the loss of flexible space, if additional offices were required. Based on this input, SP+A indicated they would be prepared to provide new options (that would include details such as sinks and pool table) at the February 29th meeting.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

STRATFORD SENIOR CENTER MEEETING

Chairman Klattenberg broached the idea of meeting with Diane Puterski, Director of the Stratford Senior Center. It was suggested that she might speak to the committee at the February 13 meeting. Ron will see if she is available.

ORDINANCE

Ron provided a copy of the proposed ordinance to clarify the Senior Center Fund, as discussed in previous EH meetings. He indicated that it would be brought to the Common Council meeting on February 6th.

SOLAR OPTIONS

Ron indicated that Eckersley Hall is still a potential candidate for solar panels and existing credits may be convertible to a new initiative to install solar lighting. John indicated that the panels wouldn't orient well on the building, but the lighting wells could be integrated into the design (depending on the attic use and mechanics). Stephan Allison indicated this type of even light was ideal for arts and crafts. Phil Pessina encouraged the use of this unique and appealing initiative. Innovative use of solar cells at Wesleyan's Freeman Athletic Center was also discussed. John indicated it might be costly to build; others indicated their interest in attending the Wesleyan dedication on February 3.

7.0 OTHER BUSINESS

Annabelle and others encouraged people to come to the current Senior Center to see what programs and space are now available. Wednesday and Thursday afternoons are busiest.

8.0 ADJURNMENT

As there was no further business, Chair Klattenberg asked for a motion to adjourn. Made by Ed Monarca and seconded by Annabelle Malone, the vote was unanimous and the meeting adjourned at 8:07pm.