

1. Call to Order

The Chester Library Building Committee held a Special Meeting on Thursday, May 1, 2014, at the Chester Public Library, 21 West Main Street, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Denny Tovey, Terry Schreiber, Dick Harrall, Lois Nadel, Chuck Mueller and Linda Fox. The meeting was called to order at 7:33 PM.

2. Opening Remarks/Introductions

Each of the members introduced themselves and gave a brief history of their background and experience.

Denny Tovey noted it was determined there wasn't a lot of support for expanding the library at the existing site, but there was for building a new building at North Quarter Park. The idea of this Committee is to move forward with that thought tying it into the Main Street Project and the Master Plan for North Quarter Park. He also noted the State is currently offering large construction grants to upgrade and building libraries. The Grant deadline is August 29th. This committee needs to hire an architect and develop a schematic plan for a library to accompany this Grant.

3. Select a Chairman

Motion by Schreiber, second by Nadel, to nominate Denny Tovey as Chairman. UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

4. Review of Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Chairman Tovey noted an architect needs to be hired for this new project at North Quarter Park. He indicated he wrote up a Request for Qualifications only because at this time he really doesn't know what the scope of work is. Chuck Mueller noted it may not necessarily be an architect that is hired. He indicated the North Quarter Park Master Plan Committee is interviewing Landscape Architects next week. One of the first things to be done is to do a feasibility and planning study to find out what potentially could happen on that site (recreational, parking, building or buildings, etc.) They will need an understanding of the potential size or range of sizes for a future Chester Library which may or may not be in combination with other town functions. There may need to be a Library Program with space needs for the future. Linda Fox noted this would include what are the spaces and what are the functions that need to be carried out.

Chairman Tovey noted the problem is the Grant application deadline is August 29th and it needs some sort of design. Chuck Muller noted, in his opinion, it is a wasted effort to try and get a Grant for a building that will take a year to design.

Linda Fox noted a new Space Planning Document will be available June 1st. In the meantime the prior document should be used to the best of our ability in order to have something to give to someone the first of July to start. Linda noted the following pieces have to be put together - technology plan, building plan, space planning document.

Chuck Mueller noted the site plan and feasibility study has to be finished by the NQP Committee to form any kind of building design.

Dick Harrall noted he has people say this should be a Library/Community Center and that requires a space needs study for the Town of Chester. He also noted some portions of the Park will probably be eliminated due to wetlands and topography. The person selected should have space needs experience beyond space needs of a Library.

There was discussion regarding the Grant and whether there are future rounds of funding. Linda Fox noted history in recent years has been there are construction funds available for distressed communities. Chester is a non-distressed community. She indicated there was no commitment of funding beyond this year. Terry Schreiber indicated everyone who applied last year cut funded. There were no hold overs from last year.

There was discussion regarding the Grant amount. It was noted if approved, the Town would know in November. Linda Fox briefly reviewed the process that follows after the Grant is approved.

Linda Fox noted Tom Newman (person in charge of Grants) indicated he has not heard a lot about Category One Construction Grants which would be for a new building. Linda will email members a copy of the Grant application. She briefly reviewed Grant criteria.

Terry Schreiber noted she assumed NQP would be designed around a Library and not a Community Center. Lois Nadel stated it was First Selectman Meehan's desire to keep all the options open. Lois asked if this was just being done to get it finished for the Grant deadline when it is not known even what land is available at NQP. Chuck Mueller agreed this was the cart before the horse. There are so many unanswered questions. There needs to be a balance between what is concrete and what is not so the project can move along.

Linda Fox noted it was her understanding there is some flexibility to adjust the Grant after it goes in.

It was noted the NQPMPC (North Quarter Park Master Plan Committee) will hire a landscape architect and the LBC (Library Building Committee) will hire someone else.

Much discussion ensued regarding the timing and deadline for the Grant as well as the work and timing for the NQPMPC. Chairman Tovey noted if the NQP site was found to be unsuitable, the plan would be to come back to the existing site.

Chairman Tovey reminded everyone this Committee (LBC) should be focused on the Library only, not the Community Center, that is for the NQPMPC. Chuck Mueller noted it is the intent of the NQPMPC to have a consultant on board by the middle of this month. They would then have a report as to areas and functions in two months. Dick Harrall noted the main areas of NQP are subsurface, wetlands and topography.

Chairman Tovey noted this Committee should hire an architect and get that person on contract as soon as possible. Chuck Mueller advised against that. Lois Nadel agreed with Mueller in that this was putting the cart before the horse. Mueller indicated one thing to do to keep the ball rolling is to develop thoughts on a building program. After studying that, there could be a decision as to whether or not to hire an architect or consultant.

There was discussion regarding square footage and space needs. Linda Fox noted the current space is 2000 s.f. and that was doubled in the initial plans for the existing building. Things were very tight. Lois Nadel noted a lot of thought and research went into the priorities that are needed.

Dick Harrall suggested putting the RFQ out by June 15th with proposals due back by July 10th. Chairman Tovey noted it was his thought to do the RFQ next week and receive qualifications back by the end of May, interview in mid-June and have the person on board by July 1st.

Chuck Mueller noted the best effort would be to start Library programming to get a sense of the size of this project and that can happen without a consultant. Tovey noted the size would be somewhere between 6000 and 8000 s.f.

Dick Harrall noted the submission of this application is a decision point. He also noted the waters have to be tested. Terry Schreiber noted the Selectmen and some Board of Finance members have stated it would appear expanding on the existing site would get turned down. A new building at NQP would stand a better chance.

There was further discussion regarding space needs on the existing site.

Linda Fox noted the building program should be written by the first of July in order to hand over to the person creating the concept.

Much discussion followed regarding timing and applying for the Grant. As much time as possible should be given to the consultant to design something. Chuck Mueller disagreed noting there isn't enough time. Chairman Tovey disagreed noting it could be done with the right consultant. Tovey reviewed the RFQ and the interviewing process. He felt it was plausible to get a consultant in place between now and July 1st. It was noted legally this has to go out to bid. Dick Harrall noted some firms won't bid if they know a prior consultant is also bidding.

Chairman Tovey again asked if the Committee want to issue the RFQ now asking just for qualifications. The RFQ was reviewed. Dick Harrall suggested adding the language "...experience with new Library construction and Library space needs analysis...".

Chuck Mueller noted he has seen people rush into submitting grant applications, being ill prepared and then having to do it all over.

Chairman Tovey reiterated the Selectmen were not in favor of expanding the existing site and the Library Board feels something has to be done for the Town and the Library. The Selectmen have showed an interest in the NQP site.

Lois Nadel indicated the Committee needs to be well prepared when going before the public. There was discussion as to public concerns relative to expansion on the existing site. A lot of people did not want to touch the old building.

Chairman Tovey noted the question is does the Committee want to send out the RFQ at this time. Lois Nadel stated she still had a problem with putting something together in such a short time to meet the deadline. Tovey felt an attempt should be made to get the Grant. Nadel noted she had serious concerns about a Town vote approving this. She felt timing is important and the Committee should bet public feedback after building interest and enthusiasm.

There was further discussion as to what, if anything, should be added to the RFQ. It was suggested the new building should be approximately between 5000 to 7000 s.f.

There was discussion as to what the goals should be for the consultant.

Motion by Schreiber, second by Harrall, to send out RFQ. Voting in favor - Harrall, Schreiber, Fox. Opposed - Nadel, Mueller. Motion Carried.

There was further discussion regarding Grant language. Everyone was instructed to review the RFQ and email Chairman Tovey any suggestions by Sunday or Monday.

5. Assist in Grant Writing

Chairman Tovey noted there are a lot of space programming questions in the Grant application. Someone should work with Linda Fox in the next couple of months to do that. Linda noted she would ask Peggy Carter Ward to help out with technology and Pat Holloway to help with space planning. Sandy Senior Dauer has also offered her assistance in writing the Grant. Linda noted she has a couple of sample space planning programs from other towns that could be referred to.

6. Future Meeting Dates

There was discussion regarding future meeting dates. It was decided not to set "regular" meeting dates just yet. Meetings were scheduled for Tuesday, May 6th and Thursday, May 15th.

Both Chairman Tovey and Terry Schreiber noted if the Committee does not have a professional looking document by August 15th, it should not be handed in. Linda Fox again noted that Tom Newman had stated the document can be altered after submittal if necessary. She also noted the chances are so greatly improved if the Committee makes sure to cross all its "t's" and dot all its "i's". Chuck Mueller noted he had heard the same thing. Dick Harrall noted the Committee should be comfortable in defending whatever is put in the document. Chairman Tovey noted it should be our best effort no matter what.

7. Other Business

Linda Fox noted the Library Board of Trustees is working on the Notice of Intent.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Nadel, second by Schreiber, to adjourn. UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Respectfully submitted,

Chester Library Building Committee
Special Meeting, May 1, 2014
Page 6 of 6

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith R. Brown". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary