

Chester Library Building Committee
Regular Meeting, April 1, 2015
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1. Call to Order & Seating of Members

The Chester Library Building Committee held its regular meeting on Wednesday, April 1, 2015, at the Chester Town Hall, 203 Middlesex Avenue, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Denny Tovey, Bob Gorman, Terry Schreiber, Ed Meehan, Dick Harrall, Linda Fox, Pat Holloway, Peter Harding, Steven Tiezzi, Chuck Mueller and Doreen Joslow (arrived at 7:30 PM). Drayton Fair from Lerner Ladds Bartels and Mike Cegan and Joe McDonald from Richter Cegan were also present. Chairman Tovey called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion by Mueller, second by Holloway, to approve February 28, 2015 Minutes as written. Unanimously Approved with Tiezzi abstaining.

3. Discussion of building options and site locations

Chairman Tovey turned the meeting over to Drayton Fair and Mike Cegan.

Mike Cegan introduced himself and Joe McDonald. He noted they looked at various sites and the Master Plan and there were various things that influenced them. They were cognizant of the surrounding context of the site (traffic, businesses, etc.) as well as being sensitive to the neighbors.

Mike reviewed how a site is developed and what some of the influences are, such as physical character, wetlands, steep topography, site access, etc. He reviewed such things as wetlands and utilities on the site, the tree grove, single family homes, vegetated area protecting these homes, trolley line, etc. He noted the playscape is very popular, but could be relocated. He also noted many things could be integrated into the site to create a community space, such as T Ball, multi-purpose field, etc. Outdoor restrooms had been discussed, as well as parking (50 spaces, 18 earmarked for the Library itself).

Mike noted they initially looked at 4 concepts which he reviewed in detail (building, height of building, one or two story, location, etc.) He noted the location up against the road has the least impact on wetlands. The Committee pursued 2 of the 4 concepts with the one up on Main Street being selected. There was a strong affinity to being on Main Street for a lot of reasons which had been discussed.

There was much discussion regarding borings and their locations. Test holes had been done previously. Ed Meehan noted those showed a mix of street sand, leaves, stumps. The area was brought up to its current level in the 70's. In 2004, test holes showed remnants of the old high school.

Peter Harding noted he sees this as a very disturbed site. The whole buildable area

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has been tremendously disturbed. He felt topography was a non-issue and the site has no constraints. He has been pushing all along to get the test borings done.

Chuck Mueller noted the red flags are environmental and organic materials.

Mike Cegan reviewed the site contours.

Drayton Fair noted there wasn't much talk about getting a variance. If the building is located a little further back, a variance would not be required. Location of the building as again discussed. It was noted the grade off Main Street isn't as great as the grade off Middlesex Avenue.

Mike Cegan noted the committee at the time felt the presence of the building on Main Street was important.

Steven Tiezzi noted the committee felt there should be an ease of connection from the building to the parking lot and from the parking lot to the other park elements. Services to the building would be difficult if the building were in the middle of the park. Ed Meehan noted that was a good summary. He noted one option that should be looked at is to grade the site to achieve the presence on Main Street making it a one story building and accommodating ADA requirements.

Drayton Fair noted it is a tight site (woods, wetlands, access, etc.) There was much discussion regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the location of the building (drainage, parking, etc.).

Drayton Fair reviewed how the neighbors responded. He indicated all the neighbors he spoke to were very positive about the concept. Steven Tiezzi noted if the building location is pushed back, support from the neighbor may be lost.

The 4 concepts were once again reviewed, including elevations of the site. It was felt once the committee decides on a couple of options, there should be a public informational meeting.

There was further discussion regarding borings and environmental analysis. Drayton noted their proposal includes 8 borings. He suggested doing only 3 borings and using the balance of those funds to do an environmental analysis. Bob Gorman noted there should be a site analysis for location of the building.

Chairman Tovey noted right now the scope doesn't include any environmental work. There was further discussion about whether to do an environmental analysis and whether it should be a Phase 1 or Phase 2.

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Drayton Fair reviewed a number of slides in which they reviewed several options over the last few months including one story, one and half story and 2 story. He indicated there are still a number of options left to be looked at. It was noted if this turns out to be a 2 story, there needs to be discussion on how the Library works and if there is enough staff. He noted the "rule of thumb" is that anything over 30,000 square feet is a 2 story building. Library preference is 1 story for supervision purposes, etc.

Chairman Tovey noted in summary the goal would be over the next month to get Drayton under contract and then have them talk to Jacobson & Associates about getting soil samples and lab testing for results at the next LBC meeting. The results could then be reviewed at the next meeting and the LBC could start looking at options beyond the 4 concepts already presented. It was also suggested that if the results come in within the next 2 to 3 weeks, it could be emailed to the members ahead of the meeting.

4. Formation of subcommittees

Chairman Tovey noted there has been some discussion about forming subcommittees. A couple of examples are perhaps one to design just the library and one to work on the overall Park. It was felt it was too early in the process for this, perhaps at the next meeting.

5. Friends of the Library

Chairman Tovey asked if anyone wished to be a liaison to the Friends of the Library and work with Cary Hull on fund raising, public relations, etc.

6. New Business – none.

7. Audience of Citizens

No one spoke at this time.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Gorman, second by Schreiber, to adjourn at 8:35 PM. Unanimously Approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary