

Fairbanks Task Force

Wednesday, September 2, 2015

Present:

Jack Ryan

Jim Kelly

Bryan Semple

Christine Hogan

Joe Szabowski

Len Simon

Rick Johnson

Dick Williamson

Jack Ryan provided a brief update on his presentations before the board of selectmen.

DISCUSSION WITH BH&A

Next up, Joel Bargmann from BH&A answered questions from the committee about the study. The discussion started with a question on why the cost recovery model was the same for all three building options. The answer is that in terms of the hierarchy of cost recovery, the most profitable parts of a community center are the pool, gym and multi purpose rooms. Profitable means the cost recovery is positive, but not necessarily that, when debt service is factored in, these parts of a community center make money.

Looking at each of these areas in detail. Building more pools, more water slides, outdoor pools etc. increase revenue. It would cost more from a capital cost standpoint, but cost recovery would increase. The original BH&A study had a flat recovery model since the original pool stayed the same. Adding a giant family aquatics center would help. Therapy pools, while beneficial for some, don't generate more revenue, and are expensive to operate. Of course bigger buildings are expensive to maintain and operate.

Outdoor pools are revenue neutral. Towns tend to not want to charge much money to get as many people as possible into the pool. Any larger aquatics center would have to draw from surrounding towns to make it profitable.

The existing Atkinson pool is in great shape for its age. With proper maintenance it should last another 20 – 30 years.

What would an ideal aquatic facility look like? Probably twice as big. Employees from the town's park and rec department aquatics area walked through how with a larger pool, they could book more events, teams, and programming.

Splash Parks – Len Simon commented on one in Arlington, VA, splash parks are great. Attract people. DCR has built some in Stoughton. Cost is modest.

Town of Wellesley currently doing an analysis for an aquatics center spending \$25K for market analysis.

Deb Galloway – Senior center – space in 60,000 sq.-ft concept is too small for senior center. Senior population continues to increase, we opened a new senior center. Projections for Sudbury- The senior population projected for 2020 was actually achieved in 2014, six years ahead of time. Incremental 1000 to 1500 sq ft. in a revised model is requested. Is this enough? How do we determine this? The 1,000 sq ft request addition is for the 60,000 sq ft option.

Question raised about 2 story? Why not? It is an option, but tends to be more expensive than extended horizontally.

YMCA has the most successful models for community centers. Pools, program space, gym and pre-schools and after schools.

Next up, the conversation moved to a discussion of the second area to increase cost recovery which is the gym. Most gyms are double court. Second thing to do, work with recreation department to double up gyms? Enable more space to be used for fees to drive up revenue. Just went through in Concord NH. More gym means more town leagues, more fee programs,

Park and rec employees once again emphasized more pools and more gym space. We are currently turning away teams, lessons, and people who want to use the gym and pool.

Finally, the discussion moved to the concept of more programing space. Do we have enough program rooms, at the right size? Should the senior room get larger to serve more people? Do we need more multi-purpose space? How do we need to share space to maximize utilization? Shared rooms vs. senior owned rooms – this is key.

Rooms – some need to be fluid day to day, others need to be fluid over the years.

What about location?

What if the new facility required more space than couldn't fit on the current space? Would we move across the street to Haskell? Shut down the community center for a year or two. Falmouth built on an existing field and displaced until facility was built.

Three options – move across the street, move Fairbanks road. Jim Kelly stated that moving the road is problematic due to set backs.

Next steps: revise the proposed plan, ask for some more help with program sizing and usage requirements from aquatics, senior center, and park and rec. Come up with a final proposed conceptual design with some a la carte items, then come up with approximate cost estimates, and approximate cost recovery items.

This will get this to an optimal building size.

The discussion moved to a minimum viable replacement structure to current community center services. What would it take? Questions were raised by community members about the structural safety of the current community center. Jim Kelly assured everyone the current center was safe.

NEXT MEETING

Discussion around proposed agenda items for next meeting:

- Voting – make sure we are aware of vacancies etc.
- Facebook Page - better transmission of information
- Discuss Minimum Viable Option – do we need to charge BHA to come up with a new one
- Request for BH&A to narrow in on single design, do some additional study work, and deliver estimated capital cost and