

Fairbank Community Center Task Force Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 3, 2016

6:00 PM – Police Training Room

In attendance: Patricia Brown – Selectman, Task Force Chair, Jim Kelly – Facilities Director, Jack Ryan - COA, John Beeler – COA, Sam Merra – At Large, Debra Galloway-Senior Center Director, Michael Ensley - Park and Recreation Commission, Jim Marotta- Park and Recreation Commission, Richard Tinsley- School Committee, Kayla McNamara – Park and Recreation Director, Christopher Morely – At Large (arrived ~ 6:15 pm), Bryan Semple-Finance Committee (arrived 7:25 pm).

Absent:, Lisa Kouchakdjian-School Committee, Jose Garcia-Meitin- Finance Committee

Richard Tinsley volunteered to record the minutes of this meeting.

Discussion of “Option 0” (Jim Kelly)

The option of not building a new Community Center but rather fixing the existing space to correct problems like the leaking roof is called the “status quo option”. The BH+A Feasibility Study lists a total project cost for this plan of \$12 million (page 3), with some further detail on pages 110 and 111, outlining the 1960’s wing in the current building. The Task Force had asked Jim Kelly to get more details on what the \$12 million estimated cost would purchase. Jim distributed a document consisting of ten pages extracted from the BH+A study which address the “status quo”.

The “status quo” plan demolishes the 1960s wing and rebuilds it. The cost of demolishing and reconstructing the 1960’s wing is less than that of trying to renovate the structure, given the significant costs of bringing the existing building up to current building code (fire, electrical, plumbing, and so on). This is a significant building project which provides no additional program space other than repurposing space currently used by Sudbury Public Schools Administration for Senior and/or Park & Recreation programs—that is, it provides 33,732 square feet of usable space, the same as we have currently. It’s not clear whether this includes the cost of relocation during construction nor whether the estimate includes phasing of construction to keep the facility open during the building project. It does not include the cost of providing alternate SPS Admin space. The expected cost is \$9 in construction costs and \$12 million in total costs, including some renovations—but not reconstruction--of the Atkinson Pool.

The “status quo” plan is distinct from the “maintain the existing building” plan, which simply continues to use and maintain the existing space. Maintaining the existing space requires major planned maintenance currently in the long-term capital plan (fire alarm systems, windows, roof repairs, locker room repairs and so on) which is expected to cost several million dollars and may be spread over several years. A cost breakdown to maintain the existing space is on page 174 of the BH+A study, showing \$1-\$3 million for planned capital maintenance over the next ten years.

However, Jim Kelly believes that planned capital maintenance will cost more than \$3 million, and suggested adding up the Fairbank items on the capital plan.

The Task Force needs to determine exactly what capital maintenance tasks the “maintain the existing building” plan includes and the total cost. The BH+A document seems to say (page 170) that the 1960’s wing could be replaced for \$3 million—is this accurate? What is the difference between a \$12 million and a \$30 million project?

List of ranked Park & Recreation priorities (Kayla McNamara)

Kayla had distributed a list of prioritized requirements for the Park & Recreation Department, and specifically for Aquatics, including both items that she currently had available and items she felt were necessary or desirable for the future. One of the problems currently is lack of storage within the rooms—it’s hard to use space as “multi-purpose” if it’s full of machines, pool tables or couches that cannot be cleared away for other uses. Ideally there would be large closets within the rooms for convenient storage space to facilitate allowing the room for another purpose. In addition to the existing facility, they could really use **in addition** 1) storage 2) a full size gym (two small courts side by side) and 3) a large multi-purpose room with a stage (that is, the stage is not in the gym). If there was another gym, then the existing gym with the stage could become this multi-purpose room. They could also use a large multi-purpose room (roughly 1,000 square feet) with the proper storage in the room, and bathrooms attached to the pre-school rooms. One of the main uses of the gym is for summer programs.

She also listed needs for the aquatics programs. In addition to existing spaces, there is a strong need for accessible family/kids locker rooms and viewing space for meets. Discussion of the wisdom of the

Status from the November 1 Selectmen’s meeting (Pat Brown)

Pat had reported to the Selectmen 1) the disconnect within the Task Force between the Council on Aging, which had determined its needs and wanted to proceed, and Park & Recreation which was still working on its needs and 2) the directive from the Selectmen that the Task Force accommodated SPS Administration within the new building. Summarizing, the Selectmen will go back to the SPS School Committee to see whether the reasons for housing the SPS Administration in the Fairbank are sufficient to accommodate the delay in advancing this project, or whether SPS needs space sooner than that. The Selectmen will attempt to provide the Talk Force with limits for the acceptable capital and ongoing operating expenditures for a new Fairbank Center. Finally, Pat would like the Task Force to meet with the Board of Selectmen to discuss their expectations and guidance.

Richard Tinsley mentioned that the SPS school committee is considering requesting an operating override this year, and that Selectman Woodard is considering requesting an override for capital expenditures “within the levy”—that is, Sudbury has \$150 million in capital assets and only allocates \$400,000 annually for their maintenance, which is insufficient. Any request for an additional major capital project outlay for the Fairbank Center needs to be considered in this context. The SPS School Committee needs to know from the Board of Selectmen whether the

Fairbank roof will be fixed in the next couple years while we flesh out what a new Fairbank Center will look like, or whether SPS should just find other accommodations for the SPS Administration.

John Beeler voiced a pervasive sense of frustration that we seem to spend a lot of time rehashing things that we've already discussed. His question: Given the RFP request, what of the things to be determined by that RFP, do we already know? Michael Ensley described the concern from Park & Recreation that they are very concerned about the proposed revenue numbers. Jack Ryan suggested that requesting an operating analysis from Ballard King, based upon a size in square feet, the needs analysis already completed, and not including a requirement for "revenue neutral", but rather to determine the operations costs using the data already available to them with limitations placed upon the proposed facility (no fitness center, for example, but more storage space), could allow us to move forward with the existing plans.

Jim Kelly pointed out that a couple months ago he had been going to go back to Ballard King (BK) (for a price \$4,000-\$5,000) for operational revenue for the old "option 3". Pat responded that the Task Force needs to get to "one plan"—and to state clearly what is in that plan—before we request operations numbers from BK. Both the Senior Center and Park & Rec run lean budgets composed primarily of personnel, with most programs being run through enterprise or revolving accounts. Any operational overage will have a major effect on these budgets. Jim Marotta mentioned his concern that the current plan is architecturally rather than operationally based. The numbers presented in in the spreadsheets and analysis generally are not attributed, and we do not know their basis. (Jim Kelly had to leave for another meeting around 7:05 pm.) Jack Ryan disagreed, stating that the Senior Center numbers are solid, but Jim Marotta argued that the Senior Center accounts for a small (perhaps 10%?) part of the total budget. Kayla said that she was asked for number soon after she started in Sudbury, and that for historical reasons she had to develop these numbers, which made it hard to respond quickly to questions about operating costs. (Kayla McNamara had to leave around 7:10 pm.) Pat mentioned that those who did not serve on Fairbank 1.0 had never heard a presentation of the numbers; would hearing the presentation and asking questions help? Jim Marotta responded that the entire process was design-driven—that the market analysis was done after the design in support of the design. Jack asked whether, if we're just rebuilding the existing facility, we need a market analysis, but Jim believes that we need to identify what the market will support. Rich said that the question is, not what Park & Rec needs now, but what it will need in ten years.

Jack again proposed that Ballard King come in and describe where they got the numbers in their spreadsheet, and answer questions about those numbers.

Update on RFP requested by Park & Recreation Commission (Jim Marotta)

Jim distributed a seven page first draft of an RFP for a financial feasibility study of the Fairbank Center. He believes that in order to gain community acceptance we need to purchase these services to move forward.

Jack Ryan believes that 75% to 90% of this has already been done, but it's not in a form that Park & Rec needs. He would rather have BK and/or BH+A pull the information out of the

exiting documents since they are already under contract with us, and not spend time or money on an RFP. (Bryan Semple came in about 7:25 pm) The Task Force consistently disagrees on whether the information to be generated by this proposal is already available.

John Beeler again proposed that we have BK come in and present their numbers. If that presentation doesn't satisfy the concerns of Park & Rec, then we should move forward with the Park & Rec proposal for an RFP. (Teleconference rather than having Ken Ballard fly in from Colorado was proposed, with Jim Kelly the point person to set it up.)

Proposed questionnaire (Sam Merra)

Sam had submitted a single question that he found central to the Task Force's understanding of community sentiment concerning the Fairbank Center. (Appendix to minutes.) The \$300 annual cost assumes a 20 year bonding, and does not include operating costs. Bryan Semple discussed his concerns about building a too-large facility that would either require letting it sit empty or require running programs at an operational deficit.

Current annual Park & Rec revenues were estimated as \$1.2 million, with annual expenses at \$1.6 million. Certain expenses—benefits for pool workers—are covered by the Town and not from the Pool Enterprise Fund. This also does not cover the director and the assistant director salaries or any anticipated capital expenses. If we built a new facility, then what would the – increase—in operating costs run to, and how are we going to meet that. If we cut back on the facility what can we expect for revenue? For the Senior Center, the extra space will require an extra \$80,000 in operating costs annually.

Returning to Sam's questionnaire, the capital costs (\$25 million to \$30 million) as he represents them appear to be reasonable.

Pat was concerned with the lack of demographic information—seniors, families with children. This can be inferred from the people who respond. The survey would, necessarily, not be statistically valid. A statistically valid survey would be part of the RFP process Jim Marotta proposed. All acknowledged that a statistically valid survey would require a professional to do that.

After a lengthy discussion, the Task Force tabled the proposed survey as a potential starting point for discussions about a statistically valid survey from the RFP.

What do we need to make a recommendation?

Jack Ryan believes 1) we need to get BK back in to explain their operating cost spreadsheet and 2) we have an idea (option 3) of the space needs of the Senior Center, but we need an idea of the space needs of Park & Rec. Jim Marotta believes we need a third party report which identifies the space needs of Park & Rec based upon the operational costs and revenues as created through the RFP process he proposed.

Rich Tinsley moved that the Task Force approve the issuance of an RFP out to do a full feasibility study of the Fairbank Community Center, Park & Rec. Chris Morely seconded.

Jim Marotta will move forward with working with Melissa and Jim Kelly to come up with a final version of the RFP to issue. The existing document is directionally correct, but may need legal tweaks. The wording is based upon the RFP that Jim Kelly used to for the previous architectural study.

The Task Force approved the motion eight in favor and one abstaining.

Bryan Semple moved to have Ballard King re-present their previous work and to address any other questions the Task Force has. Sam Merra seconded.

The Task Force approved the motion unanimously.

Michael Ensley moved to approve the minutes of October 20, 2016. Sam Merra seconded.

The Task Force approved the motion unanimously.

Pat announced that the next meeting of the Fairbank Task Force will probably be on Thursday, December 1, 2016.

Michael Ensley moved to adjourn at 8:30 pm. There were numerous seconds, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Brown

January 2, 2017

Appendix—Sam Merra’s survey question:

The Fairbank Community Center Questionnaire:

The Sudbury Park, Recreation and Aquatics Department provides programming for _ adults and _ children every year. Demand is especially high for preschool and Summer Camp programming, with both program selling out within minutes and with waiting lists.

The Senior population in Sudbury has grown from 1,625 to 3,778 in 2016, a 132% increase (more than double) since the Senior Center portion of the building was added in 1990. This trend is expected to continue for the next 25 years. The Senior Center currently serves 1,600 different individuals every year.

The Fairbanks Community Center building at present requires correcting existing building deficiencies and upgrading to the building codes. The cost has been estimated at 10-12 million dollars over ten years. The resulting facility would not meet the future projected needs of the

Park and Recreation department or the Senior Center. Further, during construction, activities of both groups would be disrupted.

The Fairbanks Community Task Force is extending work accomplished by the original group to recommend to the Selectmen a new multigenerational facility that meets the future needs of the Town that could be built on the premises of the existing center. The construction could be carried out with less disruption of activities than the upgrade.

Please help the Fairbanks Community Task Force by answering the following question:

Would you support a new multigenerational facility for an estimated cost of 25-30 million dollars with an estimated impact on each household of approximately \$300?