

TOWN OF LINCOLN
LINCOLN TOWN OFFICES
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Minutes

Community Center Building Committee

Open Mic Forum

April 4, 2023; 7:00 pm

Hybrid Meeting: Hartwell Multipurpose Room & Zoom

Attendees:

Board Representatives (voting members)

Jonathan Dwyer (Co-Chair), Susan Taylor, Ellen Meyer Shorb, Dilla Tingley

At-large Members (voting members)

Sarah Chester (Chair); Tim Christenfeld, Alison Taunton-Rigby, Krystal Wood

Ex-Officio Members

Abigail Butt, Jessica Downing, Brandon Kelly, Dan Pereira

Liaisons

Indrani Kharbanda, Wendy Kusik, Owen Beenhouwer, Peter Von Mertens, Neil Feinberg

ICON

Mark McKeivitz, Ned Collier, Ana Cheng

Minute Taker

Edwin Tam

Members of the Public

Brooks Mostue, Patricia Mostue, Lynne Smith, Dennis Picker, Sara Mattes, Peter Braun, Dana Robbat, Joe Robbat, David Cuetos, Doug Crosby, Laura Crosby, Thomas Casey, Doug Swain, Rhonda Swain, Patricia O'Hagan, Susan Hall Mygatt, Bob Apsler, Tom de Normandie, Penny de Normandie, Alice de Normandie, Surendra Shah, David O'Neil, Sarah Bishop, Ken Hurd, Jonathan Chaffee, Ed Lang, Laura Koller, John Dumont, Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Wendy Kusik, Pris Kern, Kim Bodnar, Andy Wang, Connie Lewis, Karen Seo, Beth du Toit, Nancy Salvage, Ari Kurtz, Peter Speert, Paula Johnson, Ed Lang, Don Milan, Laura Koller, Pris Kern, Sue Stason, Charles Sizer

The meeting started at 7:03 pm

Welcome & Introductions

Sarah Chester reviewed the agenda and summarized the CCBC work to date.

- The November 2022 Special Town Meeting approved an appropriation of \$325,000 to hire consultants to study 3 design options. Since then, the Committee has gathered additional information and proceeded with an active conversation with various stakeholders.
- 2018 study provided a cost analysis of \$25MM, adjusted for covid and inflation.
- In early March the ICON Architecture was hired to develop 3 designs--after consulting with CCBC,

stakeholders, and the town--of no more than 50%, 75%, and an aspirational third option of up to but not \$25MM. The goal is to have design options by the September 30, 2023, State of the Town, for input that will guide development of the three designs presented at the November 4 Special Town Meeting, where voters will decide on a final design to develop further. At the Special Town Meeting, there will be 2 votes: the first vote to select the preferred 2 designs, and the second vote to select the single design to move forward.

Several information sheets (held up by Sarah) are available at the entry table for this meeting:

- Lincoln Community Center Building Committee - Community Values Survey with QR Code
- Community Center Building Committee: Upcoming Activities
- CCBC Post-Covid Lessons Learned, September 2022
- Lincoln Parks & Recreation: Who We Are
- Lincoln Parks and Recreation Program Statistics, 2021
- Council of Aging & Human Services (COA&HS): Who We Are.
- Spreadsheet of Parks & Recreation and COA&HS Decentralized Programming Matrix

After introducing ICON (Ned, Mark, and Ana), for the Open Mic session, Sarah said the purpose for this session is to get the Town's input. She also asked that, if commenters say no to any ideas, then they also suggest alternatives that help the discussion progress. By April 25, CCBC hopes to summarize the findings and constraints related to wetlands, topography, and existing buildings; also where we have the opportunity to build.

The work is proceeding along three parallel tracks:

1. ICON is meeting with the stakeholders COA&HS, PRD, School Committee, LEAP, and Magic Garden for their input.
2. ICON is conducting preliminary site review, cost estimate, and modeling.
3. CCBC is seeking input from the Town via the Survey and open forums; and we have sent questionnaires to the 40-odd committees and boards in town to learn how a Community Center might impact their functions.

The goal is to share our findings at the April 25, 2023, meeting. Because we have a large group in person and online, Sarah asked speakers to identify themselves and to keep their comments to 2 minutes.

Open Mic Session

Peter Braun

- What is needed, why? What can't be done today and why?
- Provide deferred costs for existing buildings
- Why can't we use school space?
- Pierce House is empty on most weekdays, why we are not using it?

Karen Seo

- Can the community center provide space for food and activity events?
- Bemis Hall has a wonderful piano, since there are always events there, it is difficult to play it.
- Community center needs to be warm and welcoming, a place to go and hang out, also a place for teenagers, and of course, also need staffing to go with it.

Lynne Smith

- Long-time Lincoln volunteer; likes to have the "small town" community.
- COA has outgrown Bemis Hall.
- Town needs to invest in existing buildings.
- Inventory existing spaces, and try to use what the town has.
- How will the building use green energy? Wants low flow plumbing.

- Wants plant room and game room.

Dennis Picker

- First apologized to Jonathan Dwyer for earlier claim; Jonathan accepted the apology and appreciated his honesty.
- Wants vs Needs, difficult to get behind the options on fulfilling basic needs.
- CCBC 2018 results had a range of aspirations and did not separate wants vs. needs.
- How can ICON provide a full program for all projects?
 - Ned Collier clarified that they will meet needs and values, but in different ways.
- Intergenerational experience - values survey may reveal, but is tricky. Will seniors and students really hang out together?
- Public involvement - 352 people for the previous town meeting.
 - Dan said we're trying to build consensus; that is why we need community feedback.

Carol Carmody

- Clearly define program need areas, which programs meet existing buildings, and which ones need new building?
- Economic environment in the next 10-15 years is different from last 10-15 years. Cost to finance will be high

Ned Collier (ICON)

- Needs to separate wants vs needs, surveys, and stakeholders meeting will help us to understand this. Also, please communicate with us about your needs.

Abby & Jessica

- Looking at the opportunity and what we can do on programs off-site, what is currently off-site, and how we can maintain those programs. A copy of the Excel spreadsheet is being handed out tonight. Also, this information will be on the website lincolncommunitycenter.com.

Surendra Shah

- Cost estimate – have we considered modular building?
 - Ned Collier: We do lots of modular building work.

Sara Mattes

- Share space; don't contract and duplicate
- Significant needs for PRD
- COA/HS needs new space
- Values will not provide info/data for the tough decisions
 - Ned Collier: We work on the data side and need you on the value side.

Wendy Kusik

- Long-term resident of Lincoln, watched COA&HS grow tremendously.
- They must juggle the few parking spaces; they are using what they can now to service people.
- Having a central COA&HS is important.

David Cuetos

- Proposal needs thorough benchmarking with communities similar in size, what they have and what are their projections?
- Residents need to see the full picture of the cost; models need the cost of staffing and maintenance cost.

Ken Hurd

- We have not considered the 2010 Adoption of Lincoln Comprehensive Long Range Plan.

- In 2013, introduce the shared space idea; Community Space Needs Presentation to SOTT. Since then Lincoln's demographics have changed.
- Intergeneration argument is narrow.
- Main thrust:
 - Create compact, walkable places near public transit.
 - More housing choices.
 - More opportunities for social interaction.
 - There are vacant spaces in Lincoln Center in three buildings.
 - Lincoln Station is not in good shape
- Would like to have public transit available to get to a community center
- One building for all our needs.
- Needs more concerted effort to look for more space.

Moha Desai

- No place to convene intergenerationally. Provide service for learning opportunities to our children
- Outdoor spaces are not for all months, seniors need indoors.
- Needs a working kitchen, with places for COA&HS and other organizations to convene.
- Could St. Anne's be our community center?

Doug Crosby

- Needs to be affordable
- Past studies were extensive.
- The location is important, and 90% want to be on Hartwell Campus.

Rob Stringer

- Use what we have, but there are new spaces that need to happen.

Kate Wolf

- Love the town but taxes have gone up 24% in the past 4 years. You need money to live here.
- Make sure to address needs vs desires.

Brooks Mostue

- Would support wholeheartedly the community center, supports a place that provides all programs.
- Community Center is a thoughtful component of the town center.
- Integration should be part of the solution like housing choices, retail vacancy, and affordable housing.
- Should be walkable, with parking, and existing infrastructure.
- Defer the project until it can be in a "downtown vision".

David O'Neil

- South Lincoln and the railroad station are an ideal locations, also for affordable housing, which can be multi-generational.
- Likes cottage community, mixed-use urban model vs. suburban model.

Tom Casey

- COA/HS needs help. Believes Community Center is necessary.
- Needs to understand what is a better alternative.

Jonathan Chaffee

- New resident in Lincoln.
- Taxes may price younger families out of town; asks not to make it more expensive to live in Lincoln.
- Does this represent the electorate of the town?

Dave Levington

- Town meeting asked ICON to look at Hartwell with 3 options: all 3 options have to be within budget, not an easy task.
- Currently live in Commons; most people prefer to have a community center since people that live at home want to have a center to go to.

Dennis Picker

- Intergenerational vs multigenerational? How to define, measure desire for it?

Beth du Toit

- Lots of talk on COA&HS, P&R, and School; need to address other organizations like Scouts, Garden Club
- Interested in having other community groups have access to space.

Dana Robbat

- We need a holistic view of the Town; South Lincoln can be a vibrant center, easy for people to go to, and draw residents to live in South Lincoln.
- Hartwell campus - repurpose existing buildings.
- P&R has important needs for the younger generation: youth center for activities, playrooms, and a place for them to gather.

Jessica Downing (Director, PRD)

- Majority of programs are for youth and after-school programs.
- Don't have a dedicated teen room or game room space; this is on the bucket list.

Ruth Ann Hendrickson

- Revitalized South Lincoln is not going to happen soon, and it's too expensive to ask the town to wait for it
- Not enough space currently for COA&HS and PRD
- We should concentrate on CCBC programs and what we need to do in the Community Center.

Alice de Normandie

- Has there been any outreach to young people?
- Kids may have interesting ideas.
 - Sarah asked about the definition of young people.
 - Alison said middle to high school.
 - Someone said all kids should be asked, what is important to them.
 - Alison said we can provide pizza and coke to get feedback.

Susan Hall Mygatt

- Communication is via Lincoln Squirrel and Lincoln Talk; these may not be enough.
- Communication needs to be better to get words out.

Edwin Tam

- You can also hangout flyers at the Town Dump to get word out.

Joe Robatt

- South Lincoln as an option for 40 years.
- Largest cohort of seniors, and largest growing demographics
- Town is disaggregated: We have the Historic Center, 1 ½ miles away; School Center; and Commercial Center is 1 mile away.
- We create silos, Commercial Center is a silo, creating a Community Center in South Lincoln Commercial Center might be the best, chance for us to engage each other, we cannot do this in any other places.
- Money - public money can work harder if it has multiple purposes. Can this become seed money as part of

payment toward development? Please study South Lincoln.

Mo Masterson

- Volunteer and a new mom for 2 ½ years, no place to gather, very isolating for a new mom. Young family comes to Lincoln and has no place to go, and needs to beg for space.
- Bemis Hall may not be a safe place for kids.
- PRD does a great job for kids and after-school programs.
- If kids cannot walk to the program, they cannot go, so need to be able to walk to a community center. Please consider young families' needs and ability to walk to programs
- Café please

Terri Perlmutter

- Conflating issues of Community Center and Lincoln Station: the HCA will drive things at Lincoln Station; maybe in the future, but not right now.
- Seniors, young people, and kids cannot walk to South Lincoln.
- Seniors will not be moving to South Lincoln because of where the Community Center is located.
- Urgency of issues and demands should be addressed now.

Craig Donaldson

- Everyone is aging; the COA&HS is for everyone
- In South Lincoln, people have a hard time getting there, and no train will bring people there.
- Can the Community Center be located so that everyone can get to it?
- Enlarge the COA Link transportation.
- Transit/ride/easy link, make the resources easier.

Brianna Doo

- As someone who has younger kids, would like to have the Community Center located on School Campus.
- Would like to see a building that encapsulates everything altogether. Intergenerational experience, a place all can come.
- Not sure everyone can walk to Bemis Hall.
- Bemis Hall needs a lot of help.
- PRD need upgrade since they are used by many generations.
- Pierce House and School spaces are not easily accessible on a regular basis. For example, School buildings cannot be used for personal events or gatherings.
- Community center should be welcoming and familiar for kids, families, and seniors; easy wayfinding.
- New community center should echo school/campus architecture.

Sara Mattes

- When we see dollars attached to spaces, that is the time to process. Need to see cost vs programs.
- Library/Pierce House – spaces can be checked out.
- Love the auditorium and exercise classes at Bemis, also Bemis Hall has rooms available.
- PRD programming – we need space for children.
- Adult spaces could be something else/somewhere else, like South Lincoln, to hang out.
- COA&HS does need new space for clinical, but programs do not need to be there.

Karen Seo

- Planning/Budget - no way to reach everyone in town.
- 2000 households - need communication channels, and ways to broadcast events.
- Transportation is an underlying problem for the town; need car, and cannot get to your friends. Need Lexpress-like service
- We have good people running programs; can they provide communications leadership?

- To reach younger people, need to do it through devices (social media).

Abigail Butt (Director, COA&HS)

- COA&HS newsletter goes to everyone every month. A quarter page is dedicated to Community Center information and will continue to provide an update for the remainder of the project.
- Lincoln is working on a regional transit collaborative effort with Sudbury.

Terry Perlmutter

- Collaborate among organizations with mailings

Karen Seo

- Use the phone to reach the young population.

Tom de Normandie

- Building design should dovetail with buildings that exist here on campus.

Lynne Smith

- Need to write up our feedback.

Susan Hall Mygatt

- First open mic, great idea; we need more like this.

Sarah Final Comments

- April 25th - Tuesday - Public forum, will let you know the location, please share this meeting information with others.
- April 26th - Wednesday – CCBC Regular Committee Meeting, hybrid, 7:00 pm, Donaldson Room.
- Thanks to all of you attending, via open forums like this and the survey.

Ned Collier (Icon)

- The town has a long history with this project, and we are charged to focus on Harwell, and build on work before us. We need a better understanding of what led to the preference for Hartwell.
- What would make Hartwell thrive. Besides new construction on the Hartwell site, what other programs? Where?

Dilla

- We are charged to have 3 designs for this location.

Sara Mattes

- At the Special Town Meeting, the alternate site will be considered for the degree of programming? What programs on new construction and what programs in the rest of Town?

Karen Seo

- For the survey, get words out to our teenagers, how do we reach them?

Susan Hall Mygatt

- Communication is important.

Dan Pereira

- We will do the best we can to gather feedback and build a strong consensus.

Ned Collier (ICON)

- I am not challenging the Hartwell location; I am asking what would make Hartwell thrive

Jonathan Dwyer

- We highly value the thought process, so we ask you to participate in the survey

Patty Mostue

- How many people participate in the programs?

Adjourn

Chester asked for motion to adjourn. So moved and seconded. All ayes raised their hands; there were no objections or abstentions. **Motion passed.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.