

# TOWN OF LINCOLN

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## Minutes

### Community Center Building Committee

### Special Community Meeting

June 13, 2023, 7:00 pm

Hybrid Format: Hartwell Multipurpose Room, Zoom

#### Board Representatives and At-Large Members (voting members)

Jonathan Dwyer (Co-Chair), Susan Taylor, Rob Stringer, Dilla Tingley; Sarah Chester (Chair), Alison Taunton-Rigby

#### Ex-Officio Members

Tim Higgins, Abigail Butt, Jessica Downing, Brandon Kelly, Dan Pereira

#### Liaisons

Kim Bodnar, Dave Levington, Andrew Glass, Wendy Kusik, Peter Von Mertens, Lynn DeLisi, Roy Harvey

#### ICON (Architects)

Ned Collier, Ana Cheng

#### Minutes Taker

Deborah Page

#### Members of the public (in person and online)

Buck Creel, Peter Buchthal, David Cuetos, Lynne Smith, Denise Bienfang, Ed Lang, Lori Leo, Heather Sanchez, Anne McLaughlin, David Cuetos, Dennis Picker, Diana Smith, Sofia Kampoures, Kevin Guarnotta, Jim Higgins, Lynne LaSpina, Sally Kindleberger, Isabel Rose, Sara Mattes, Jane O'Rourke, Jim Jeong

**The meeting started at 7:10 pm.**

#### I. Welcome & Introductions

Sarah Chester introduced ICON representatives and reviewed why the town is pursuing the Community Center.

- To find an efficient way to support the needs of Parks and Recreation, COA&HS on the Hartwell campus
- Hartwell Pods are in poor condition and will need considerable work soon.
- Bemis Hall is too small and not suitable for COA&HS needs, lack of accessibility, ADA noncompliance, , and dangerous traffic.

She stated the goals for tonight are to review the updated cost models.

#### II. Architect's Report

Ned C from ICON presented new cost models as a slide show on screen and as handouts. He stated his goal is to work out how best to meet the town's needs. The handout is posted on the CCBC website here:

<https://lincolncommunitycenter.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/2023-06-12-Site-Strategies-Presentation.pdf>

### III. Presentation of Cost Models for Program and Site

Per the slide show (and handout), Ned reviewed the cost estimating terminology:

- TPC - Total Project Costs
- EEC - Estimated Construction Cost, which includes
  - Trade Costs: buildings and site work
  - Mark-ups: Costs associated with general contractor, insurance, bonds, overhead and profit, estimating contingency, escalation
- Soft Costs - All expenses not associated with physical construction/building processes, such as design fees, OPM fee, testing, owner's contingency, FF&E (furniture, fixtures, & equipment) [20% of EEC].
- TPC = EEC + Soft Costs

He observed that costs continue to climb and had asked the cost estimator's opinion of what the 2018 plan would now cost in 2025 dollars. The answer was that it now "would be upwards of \$30 million" because of material and labor cost increases the last two years; what had previously been estimated at 5% are now about 8%. Thus, ICON needs to shift the expectations and options downward. What we had been working on as the 75% option must now be considered as being closer to the 100% option, and so on for the new, lower 75% and 50% options.

Reiterating that they are all designed to achieve net zero, Ned presented five options (see slides at link above) on three site strategies that address the escalated costs, each with parking configurations (including PV canopy at approx. 12K sf) at the back and exploring variations on building sizes, Pod uses, amounts and locations of green spaces, and locations of LEAP and the Maintenance Dept. Pathways to additional parking areas would enable the total number of available spaces to increase to well over 100.

Option 1 at the new  $\leq 100\%$ , ECC + Soft costs = \$22.6M

Option 1A at  $\leq 75\%$ , EEC + Soft costs = \$18M

Option 1B at  $\leq 75\%$ , EEC+ Soft costs = \$17M

Option 2 at  $\leq 75\%$ , EEC + Soft costs = \$16.7M

Option 2A at  $\leq 50\%$ , EEC + Soft costs = \$11.3M

Ned reminded that these are design *strategies* NOT designs, that the cost of renovating a Pod would be \$3.5M, and building a new Maintenance Shed would be \$1M. The site costs for all the plans average about \$3.5M.

### IV. Open Public Comments

Sarah C asked speakers to raise their hands and, when called upon, to limit their questions or comments to two minutes. Once everyone has had a chance to speak, then they can ask follow-up or additional questions.

- Susan T: [Only the first design shows a Maintenance building]: Maintenance building is a MUST, so what is the best way to ensure that we have one? It doesn't have to be a separate building, but we need to have it.
- Ned: It is not shown on the rest of the options to encourage thinking about space options.
- Brandon B: The campus needs a maintenance building.
- Rob S: Want to make sure there is enough parking for day-long employees as well as seniors or others who would be using the CC for a couple of hours at a time. Maintenance truck needs to be able to get in.
- Ned: We have ensured that there would be over 100 spaces immediately adjacent.
- David C: Two questions: 1. Solar canopy: What is utility cost? 2. LEAP space needs a better solution – move into school or move to a renovated pod?
- Heather S: What is the Maintenance building?
- Brandon: It's where the maintenance shop and equipment are kept for the schools here and at Hanscom. It's in B Pod.
- Ned: LEAP is in a renovated pod in two of the schemes, goes into one of 2 pods: Opt 1 pod B, Opts 1A-2A pod C.

- Anne M: Speaking as a member of the LEAP board, LEAP cannot go into the school building. There is storage, organization, cleanup and setup every day.
- Buck C: I'm disappointed that the Maintenance facility fell off these schemes. There is no other space in town for maintenance. Parking spaces are a concern. Solar canopy developers need to look at where trees could shade the panels.
- Peter VM: What is the difference between the two solar setups?
- David: What is the indirect cost of solar?
- Buck: We pay less for electric because of the solar panels for the schools. A third party manages and maintains the panels.
- Lynne S: Option 2A observes renovating Pods A and B but not Pod C, concerned about LEAP. Parking accommodations look plenty.
- Andrew G: For parking, there's an advantage to not disrupting the parking that is there. Solar canopy would get more sun if parking lot is let where it currently is. The building could be oriented toward the green space in back and finding cost savings by not moving the parking.
- Peter VM: Concern of present parking lot being so close to stream, would prefer to move the pavement line away from the stream.
- Alison T-R: Where is the maintenance building now? [Ned: It's at the end of Pod B.] Would it really cost \$1M if it's left where it is? Could the location shown on Scheme 1 apply to all of the other schemes?
- Ned: It will need vehicular access to it, so we're trying to maintain access to it while maintaining safe transit for the children.
- Rob: That Pod B space reflects space for programs.
- Ned: All options are below target costs. Each of these schemes has room for the \$1M maintenance shed.
- Brandon: In all of these schemes, how can we ensure that a second access remains for safety vehicles?
- Ned: We could daylight that second culvert and build a bridge for safety vehicles
- Roy H: Regarding the solar canopies over the parking or on the rooftop, is that in the pricing? Electric vehicle chargers?
- Ned: The building will be solar ready, and the site will be solar ready.
- Sara M: Here's a 50,000-foot comment: Keeping PRD, MG, LEAP, and maintenance. How might we relieve some of that heavy use by moving some programs to other town buildings. Has there been a study done of the actual use of all these spaces? I informally did one at Bemis during high activity and was surprised how much parking was available.
- Abigail B: What high use activity are you referring to? [health fair, senior dining] We heard from many persons that there wasn't any more parking.
- Sara M: We need actual data, not anecdotal feedback.
- Kim B: Trying to understand long-term value for the building. If #1 meets the basic program of the COA, then what is plan for 2, 2A if we are reducing so many square feet? Adding services and increased use of programs to a shrinking building? How does spending less make sense? What are Abby and team expected to do? Urge committee and community to recognize value.
- Ned: We are limited to the costs at each level.
- Sally K: Our aging population won't fit into the 50% option; it doesn't even serve a purpose. We need to think about why we're building the community center.
- Dennis P: ICON committed to space for all programs. Thinks it's still possible to deliver the needed programs at less than 13K square feet. Also, can Option 2A add a renovation for LEAP?
- Ned: Yes, but that would push the scheme into the 75% category.
- Susan: Asking architects (Ned) to help us understand what we are giving up at each price point.
- Ned: I agree that we need to spell that out. I am optimistic that we can fit programs into each of the scenarios. Changes in the market are really constraining us.
- Dan P: Looking for a cost-effective solution to siting the Maintenance space but we don't have the answer yet.

- Abby: The pickup and dropoff are important for seniors. Does each design have a safe entry and exit for seniors?
- Ned: Yes, the sketches don't show it, but we have budgeted for a port cochere in each scheme.
- Heather: LEAP might need to expand, so please be aware of any expansion needs.
- Wendy K: This new building will increase the needs for parking. This is not anecdotal. Seniors just turn around and go home when they can't find a safe parking space. We do need extra parking, need the accessibility.
- Alison: What energy efficiencies and greenness can we gain by renovating the Pods? Also, how long would a renovated Pod last? 50 years?
- Ned: That would be our intent, yes. We can insulate the roof and replace the windows, but the Achilles heel of renovation is thermal bridging—heat transfer through the slab foundation.
- Sarah C: What are the rebuild vs renovation costs?
- Ned: The money we're saving for renovation is the structure and the foundation. Any new building would be those additional costs.
- Lynne S: Need to have LEAP renovated. If we can get 10K sq ft on this campus, then as a taxpayer I would be happy to spend additional money to fix up Pierce House and Bemis. What would it take to locate some services in other locations? Parking would be adequate with the access to Brooks parking lot.
- Sarah C: Is there a statement about current condition of Pod C? Why can some of these schematics leave it as is?
- Brandon: Inadequate. It's been renovated from the ceiling up, getting a new roof, lighting, ceiling. Bathroom fixtures, electrical, are all the old problems.
- Peter VM: Look into value of building? If we need the building to last 40-50 years, then we need to look into what renovations would enable the building to be efficient.
- Lori L: Need enough room for all functions, programs, seniors, etc. We need to be careful that we're not downsizing too much so the buildings can indeed last for many years and so we don't lose essential programming. Ultimately, the community center needs to meet the needs of all the people, organizations, and services that will expect to use it.
- Jane O: We need to make sure that we enable intergenerational programming and interactions, and to reflect the uniqueness of Lincoln. Bemis just isn't able to accommodate the COA&HS.
- David: Mock ups are based on maximum attendance, so doesn't think 13K is too small; the rooms are way too big.
- Kevin G: What's the cost/sq ft for a rebuild? It's about \$800/sq ft for renovation.
- Ned: \$1,100 per square foot.
- Sara M: Disappointed LEAP was not included. Wants green retrofitting for all Pods. Parking - don't know who is being dropped off and picked up; asking for hard data.
- Ned: Reusing a building is the greenest thing you can do. We would have to do other things to offset the thermal bridging.
- Andrew: Renovation can be net zero. Tearing down a building would create a lot of additional carbon release.
- Susan: Is parking lot in back with the solar array? If having a parking lot would give us more options, I'd like to see that. Also, need curbside pick up/drop off in plans.
- Ned: Larger plans show the pickup and drop off. For parking in front, no decrease in site development costs.
- Buck: Net zero does not equate to better energy use. A new building will have better air quality, etc., but not necessarily use less energy.
- Peter VM: Could the maintenance building location be near the tennis courts?
- Andrew: Thinks a solar canopy can be beautiful as objects and function. Sensitive designs on historical buildings, urge thinking re solar panels, which could be a positive.
- Alison: Cautioned that the CCBC didn't fully approve the programming, just the use of it for cost

estimating. Some spaces can be tightened up.

- Sofia K: Children at MG and LEAP; both programs need lots of green space.
- Ned: Each of these schemes has approx. 60,000 square feet of green space. We will be re-activating the space south of Hartwell main, Strat's Place.
- Dennis: Per Alison, 13,000 sq ft program not been vetted yet, which will help us understand what each cost option will enable.
- Ned: Difficult to determine precise programs for each option.
- Heather: Concerned re parking and children, siblings visiting each other between MG and LEAP. Green spaces need to be contiguous, not intersected by roads.
- Lori: Consider also the interchange and collaborations with MG, older children, LEAP, and COA.
- Brandon: The parking design needs to consider snow and ice plowing and shoveling, as well as on-site storage of snow.
- Ned: Yes, our plans will consider that.
- Roy: Is there MSBA funding? Does it matter if school functions are in a dedicated vs shared building?
- Jonathan D: No, MSBA will not fund that. Also, a State Senate and Representatives have tried to write a bill to help fund COA and Human Services buildings, but that effort has not moved forward.
- Jim J: What is the schedule for the committee through the summer and fall?
- Sarah C: We will be meeting tomorrow night, June 14, for our regular CCBC meeting and then likely again June 28. [See schedule in next agenda section, below.]
- Sofia: When can we see ICON's developed plans from the summer?
- Ned: Clarifying schematics, we will have site options along the three levels.
- Lynn L: If we build a bigger place, then we will have many more people come to the building.
- Peter B: Has anyone asked the abutter next to the school if we could purchase land for extra parking?  
[Ned: No]
- Buck: Are three months enough time to come up with robust designs/schematics with reliable cost estimates?
- Ned: We are not doing 3 schematics; we are advancing concepts and their related cost estimates for September. Once we are down to one design, in December, then that time from December to March will be adequate.
- Jim J: Line of sight is important between buildings and play areas for children, so that's an important safety consideration. Also, having the children in close proximity to the public and in a new building will need certification from the state to be accredited for an afterschool program.

## V. Review of Schedule

Sarah C reviewed the schedule, as follows:

- June 14 at 7 pm: CCBC regular meeting, hybrid: Donaldson Room, Zoom
- June 28 at 7 pm: CCBC tentative regular meeting, hybrid: Donaldson Room, Zoom
- July, August CCBC meetings TBA
- September-March CCBC twice-monthly meetings TBA
- September-March forums TBA
- State of the Town meeting, September 30, to review options developed over the summer
- Special Town Meeting, December 2, to select one design to be fully developed
- Town Meeting, March 2024, to vote yes-no on final design, cost

## VI. Adjourn

Sarah C asked for a motion to adjourn. Dilla moved and Rob seconded. Sarah asked for a show of hands; unanimous approval. **Motion passed.**

**The meeting concluded at 9:08 pm.**