

TOWN OF LINCOLN

LINCOLN TOWN OFFICES
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Minutes

Community Center Building Committee

March 8, 2023, 7 pm

Hybrid Meeting: Donaldson Room, Town Hall; Zoom

Attendees:

Board Representatives (voting members)

Jonathan Dwyer (Co-Chair); Susan Taylor, Margit Griffith. Absent: Ellen Meyer Shorb, Dilla Tingley

At-large Members (voting members)

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

Ex-Officio Members

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

Liaisons

Dave Levington, Indrani Kharbanda, Andrew Glass, Wendy Kusik, Owen Beenhouwer, Peter Von Mertens

Others

Ned Collier and Mark McKevez (ICON Architects), Collette Sizer (Minutes)

Members of the public: Ed Lang, Lynn Smith, Rich Rosenbaum, Dennis Picker, Sara Mattes, and eight other community members virtually attending

The meeting started at 7:02

- I. **Welcome & Introductions:** Sarah Chester called the meeting to order, welcomed the Committee, ICON Architects Ned Collier (principal) and Mark McKevez (program manager), and guests. She reviewed the meeting agenda and asked Ned Collier and Mark McKevez to introduce their firm and procedures.
- II. **ICON Introduction**

ICON is a 50-person business with three practice areas: Institutional, other housing, and building renewal. They have many protocols in place for reviewing existing buildings, and they have experience with other communities developing community center plans.

 - A. Collier outlined ICON objectives.
 1. The goal is to understand information that was previously gathered, absorb it, and build on that foundation of prior work.
 2. They will review what can be achieved from a cost and scope perspective for all three budget objectives, 100%, 75% and 50%. They will focus on the data and programming that allows the community to make the best decisions.
 - B. There will be two tracks: site & building and programming.
 1. It's important to separate the cost of site and cost of the building. These costs can vary widely. This separation helps formulate a basis for decision making.
 2. In parallel they will critique the program. ICON brings their experience and will offer their view. There will be community outreach.

3. A base cost will be built and presented for each project. The best way to present the 50%, 75%, and 100% options is to present the cost and what the community will get for that cost. The objective is to meet the goals rather than to fall in love with a vision.
- C.** McKevitz will work on the programming track.
1. He will work with the stakeholders in person and will strive to get everyone's input. The objective is to take advantage of what exists and to help the community determine an affordable design that is affordable to operate.
 2. He will help stakeholders differentiate between what they need and what they want. There is a programmatic baseline, defensible basic requirements, that the plan cannot fall below. He will work with the stakeholders to rigorously separate what the community must have from what people want and like. The question will be whether Lincoln can meet their needs with the 50% budget.
 3. The three versions will be three different projects, and not three versions of the same plan. They will have a lot in common, but each will be a different project.
- D.** Committee questions/comments
1. The site is a massive jigsaw puzzle. Despite that complexity, Lincoln hopes to celebrate the location. ICON recognizes the jigsaw puzzle, invites sharing, and enjoys working with communities that take ownership.
 2. Lincoln is committed to sustainability.
 - a. ICON is one of the original architecture firms to embrace passive standards. They design buildings to be very high-performing passive.
 - b. Air-tightness is key and is a greater driver than the building insulation. They prefer to eliminate use of fossil fuels and to go all-electric. The last step after everything has been done to drive down energy intensity is to consider energy renewables. However, they have already eliminated the need for renewables on this project.
 - c. The cost for a passive building is baked into the project baseline cost.
 3. The Hartwell campus has complicated occupancy with much vehicle, truck, and foot traffic that will require a fair amount of orchestration. ICON will look at the site holistically.

III. Project Schedule

Jonathan Dwyer presented a realistic view of the schedule and noted that the Special Town Meeting in November must generate a positive response from the people to move forward. If a positive response is delayed, the greater the impact of building cost. The approved spend will not increase but the cost will go up.

- A.** The Committee must hit the ground running with community engagement through the spring and fall. By June the group must determine what the parameters are for discussion in September, when ICON will present preliminary programming for public discussion. ICON was chosen because the Committee believed they could dive-in quickly.
- B.** The Lincoln plan fits well with ICON's approach to the project. By June the projects should be identified, and these can be expanded upon over the summer.
1. The two parallel tracks will engage the following:
 - a. McKevitz will start working on programming as soon as conversations are scheduled.
 - b. The other track, site development, will engage the stakeholders that are directly involved--i.e., School, Water Commission, Board of Health for Septic System, Safety, Conservation.
 - c. The goal is to establish a baseline cost.
 - d. When will this begin? After ICON has gone through the critique and defined mission and success.

IV. Research

Abigail Butt and Jessica Downing reviewed briefly the initial work done for the prospective three levels of programming.

- A. In terms of three levels, 50/75/100%, Abby and Jessica are not trying to cut programming but rather make current programming more flexible.
- B. When a new center is completed, statistics from other communities suggest that attendance will increase. The smaller budget just covers current programming.
- C. Essential, ideal, and enhanced programming review is in progress.
 1. Programming has changed. More programming is on Zoom.
 2. Programs held outside in summer have their benefits but are not ideal because changeable weather can make it difficult.
 3. COA&HS arranges many programs off-site and takes the programming to the people using it.
 4. To continue with a senior dining program, the center must have a kitchen.
 5. PRD does a lot of programming off-site. They frequently use the school. Many programs are coming back [after COVID], some are hybrid, and many would be able to remain in current off-site places.
 6. Brandon Kelly is evaluating what school spaces are available to house activities. School spaces are utilized daily including the gym and larger auditorium.
 7. The pods have been maintained for a long time. Are they are worth further investment?

V. Committee Comments

- A. ICON Experience with community centers?
 1. Mark McKevez assured the Committee of ICON's experience with Community Center planning. He referred to a successful outcome in Sudbury. ICON's extensive interaction with stakeholders and Town leaders and the public outreach meetings generated the input necessary to provide satisfactory detail.
 2. Ned Collier noted that town responses vary enormously, and some processes take much longer.
 3. What will be the demands on the time of Lincoln volunteer government?
ICON will follow a three-step process to be completed in three meetings.
 - a. They will lay the ground rules, so staff and CCBE know what to expect.
 - b. ICON will mirror back to the stakeholders what they have heard and will ask for corrections.
 - c. Then they will report back to all stakeholders to find areas where there is overlap.
- B. How does ICON find balance between respect for historical building architecture and modern architectural design? ICON's starting point is always focused on preserving attributes of the building. The nationwide trend is to work with old buildings. Fifty percent of all new work today is rework of old buildings.
- C. How will ICON work with the Conservation Commission to alleviate concern with water? ICON welcomes working closely with the Conservation Commission.
- D. Communication process with ICON? Sarah Chester will work with the Committee to determine what the best process is.

VI. Community Comments

- A. It is very important to vet what is necessary and what is aspirational.
- B. Per the amendment, Architects must tour other sites and be well informed to understand what new space is necessary.
- C. Investments have been made in satellite sites to accommodate community needs. Honor those investments.

- D. If using satellite spaces in other facilities, how will the cost of that use be calculated in? Where do we get the manpower?
 - 1. Tim Higgins: Looking at satellite sites will be baked into the process. Some of the foundational work is to start by mapping out what is being used and how often. ICON has discussed the satellite sites.
 - 2. The first major engagement, envisioned for April, will be about programming.
- E. Sustainability is of key importance. Please do not throw out sustainability in the 50% budget option.
 - 1. ICON is tasked with presenting three equally viable options. Sustainability will be baked into the base cost of all buildings. Some versions may offer more than others.
- F. Please make the programming data, the public document referred to, available. If Lincoln is to have a public forum by June, access to this information is necessary.
 - 1. Response: The spreadsheet is a work in progress and not complete. When it is complete, it will be published.
- G. How can three alternatives be fairly presented without pictures? The site is complicated, and people may need some visual aide to help understanding, particularly since the Town will want to see how these building fit the vocabulary of the existing architecture.
 - 1. ICON feels the main point is to make choices clear, and they are trying to avoid seductive imagery. The Town is best served by presenting things in a rational and orderly fashion.
 - 2. They will offer the baseline cost and to differentiate will have plot diagrams. ICON is taking a position that will help them maintain some distance. They will have to take into consideration what can be accomplished with the structure.

VII. CCBC Administration

- A. Next Meetings: Mar 22; Apr 12, 26; May 17, 31; June 14 (and maybe 28)
Unless otherwise posted, the meetings will be at 7 pm in a hybrid format, held in the Donaldson Room at Town Hall and via Zoom (link to be posted on the published agenda)

VIII. Adjourn

Motion: Sarah called for a motion **to adjourn**.

Taunton-Rigby moved; Taylor seconded. Motion passed with unanimous approval.

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.