

TOWN OF LINCOLN

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Minutes

Community Center Building Committee

Community Forum

April 25, 2023, 7:00 pm

Hybrid Format: Hartwell Multipurpose Room, Zoom

Attendees:

Board Representatives and At-Large Members (voting members)

Jonathan Dwyer (Co-Chair), Susan Taylor, Ellen Meyer Shorb, Dilla Tingley, Rob Stringer; Sarah Chester (Chair), Tim Christenfeld, Alison Taunton-Rigby, Krystal Wood

Ex-Officio Members

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

Liaisons

Owen Beenhouwer, Laura Crosby, Dave Levington, Peter Von Mertens

Others

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

Members of the public

Buck Creel, Edwin Tam, Anne Crosby, Sara Mattes, Terry Perlmutter, Alice de Normandie, Dennis Picker, Thomas Casey, Ann Calhoun, Rachel Marie Schachter, Susan Hall Mygatt, Rhonda Swain, Laura Crosby, Vicky Mallas

The meeting started at 7:04 p.m.

Welcome & Introductions

Sarah Chester called the meeting to order, reviewed the agenda, and passed the floor to Collier for the Architect's report.

- All documents referred to can be found in the documents section of the CCBC website: lincolncommunitycenter.com/documents

Architect's Report

Ned Collier summarized ICON's work to date.

- ICON continues to progress with no major deviations from the schedule.
 - They are working on two tracks simultaneously: site and building. Site will be shared at the next open meeting.
 - They are working to build a cost model for the project (site, building, Pods + LEAP).
 - ICON has visited all town buildings including Bemis, the Library, and the Pierce House.
 - They are distilling space usage down to the basic needs of PRD and COA&HS to meet their goals.
 - Need community to ID what's missing from ICON's conclusions
- The objective of the meeting is to review the identified basic set of needs and ask what might be

missing that's essential.

Preliminary Results of Values Survey

Jonathan Dwyer summarized the survey, which was conducted townwide April 4–21

- 593 responses to the 9 questions
 - Ages <25, 2 responses
 - Ages 26–40, 67 responses
 - Ages 41–59, 205 responses
 - Ages 60–75, 204 responses
 - Ages 76+, 95 responses
 - Preferred not to say, 20 responses
- The 9 value statements asked for responses along a 5-point scale from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree.” The responses were then aggregated into three levels: strongly agree/agree, neutral, and disagree/strongly disagree.
 - Most support by the largest group of respondents (78% strongly agree/agree): “Provides a cost-effective solution to the town’s facility needs.”
 - Most support by the smallest group of respondents (44% strongly agree/agree): “CC design complements Ballfield Road campus.”
 - The strongly agree/agree responses were in the majority or highest plurality for all of the statements.
- There were 434 comments that generally fell into four themes and represented the full range of each theme.
 - Cost: Taxes are already too high/don’t skimp
 - Amenities: No new redundant spaces/build basic spaces/areas to hang out/build small now and add later.
 - Location: Don’t build -utilize other spaces/build at Hartwell/build at Lincoln Station.
 - Value: No need for a CC/need a CC now/only need a Senior center.
- The responses to the survey provide direction for the architects.

Survey Discussion

- Edwin Tam commented that he felt it was hard to answer the survey without knowing cost.
 - Dwyer responded that the survey assessed opinions on specific attributes to generate feedback on what people are thinking. Costs will be shown when the architects present the options.
 - Tim Christenfeld explained that the design team will need direction/guidance on trade-offs when it is necessary to make choices. The values expressed in the survey responses will help to guide the CCBC and ICON when making decisions for trade-offs.
 - Alison Taunton-Rigby added that the team must balance cost sensitivity with the solution.
- Sara Mattes asked if the Committee could assess the comments and indicate how many were “very concerned.” Dwyer indicated that this will be presented at the April 26 meeting.
- Collier said the design team needs to gain insight into Lincoln community values. The survey is helpful to glean insights.

Program Spaces

McKevitz explained that extensive interviews with COA&HS and PRD enabled ICON to create the Building Program Space Assessment, which identifies shared spaces, administrative spaces, and support spaces for the two departments

- 8750 sq. ft. are allotted for shared program space.
 - This is a significant consolidation from the previous design by 5000 sq. ft.

- Room use scheduling will be reviewed to make sure each space is utilized at least 60% of the time.
- 2700 sq. ft. flexible space is available that can be subdivided into three 900 sq. ft. spaces or can be opened for larger events.
- Arts/Crafts/Fixit space with a sink and easy to clean surfaces, a large classroom, movement/fitness space are accommodated.
- Administration spaces are provided for those who will work there, and some service spaces.
 - PRD will need space that can absorb additional summer staff, and they need space for staging town events.
 - Included are reception and a conference space.
 - The issue is quantifying what PRD has now; the department needs a building that functions well and safely.
 - Rob Stringer: What about storage available for programs? McKevez: they are calculating the need for storage but will get more specific as use of space is more clearly defined.
 - Christenfeld noted that Town organizations have storage needs, too.
 - Collier confirmed that they are aware of the needs for storage. The immediate focus is to identify the space needed to enable the two departments to function well.
 - McKevez: COA space includes offices for the Directors, Transit and Social Worker, and service spaces that require confidentiality, health and wellness, and support spaces.
 - Programs will piggyback so there is a thematic flow; spaces will be grouped as programming becomes more developed.
 - Collier: These spaces need to be identified. It's not a lot of space.
 - Tam: Is the admin space in line with other community centers? McKevez: Many spaces house multiple people, the space is used efficiently, and it is in line with other communities.
 - Mattes: How many people will be served? Collier: the shared space size is tied into occupancy.
 - McKevez: For LEAP, the current planning allows the same space as they currently occupy (5000 sq. ft.)
 - Owen Beenhouwer: How are the architects handling expansion of need?
 - Collier: That's what he hopes the evening's conversation would address. The current document does not reflect accommodation for growth.
- McKevez: Support spaces are for those who work on-site—e.g., conference room, meeting room, break room, piano storage, and staff toilets.
- Collier: The gross program (PRD, COA&HS) need is ~18,000 sq. ft.
 - All programming, support, storage, and shared spaces come to 12,820 sq. ft. + net-to-gross multiplier (walls, HVAC, etc.) of 5,128 sq. ft.
 - The identified total square footage need, including LEAP (5,000 sq. ft.) and Maintenance (2,000 sq. ft.), is ~25,000 gross sq. ft.

Program Discussion

- Mattes asked what the current admin space is for COA&HS.
 - McKevez: they currently have less than the need identified. Currently, when services are provided, the available program space is reduced--i.e., programming can't happen because the space is in use.
 - Susan Mygatt: Need to clarify current amount of space vs needed amount of space
 - Christenfeld: Explained how current programming is hobbled by limited amount of space; programs cannot take place when others are using that space
 - Abigail Butt offered to provide the current admin space and gave examples of the issue.

- On a podiatry day, if there is a current event scheduled in the reception area, the podiatry recipients must wait in an unsafe area down the hall.
 - The Town nurse does not have a room to meet patients.
 - When a counseling session is scheduled, because of privacy needs, other administrators are bumped from their offices.
- Mattes asked about use of the basement since money was spent to renovate downstairs and put in elevators. The space is never mentioned for programming. Butt noted that that space is utilized when people are willing to use it. The basement has terrible air quality, and the handicapped bathrooms are not easily accessible.
- Dennis Picker suggested that the shared space could possibly be smaller. Collier responded that there will be more information available in about two weeks. This was developed based on information from the stakeholders identifying the necessity.
- Picker asked which option (50%, 75%, or 100%) this outline likely targets. Collier replied that it is likely the 75% option. The aspirational option may capture programs that are missed here. It's not clear yet what the 50% option will be.
- Mattes asked when the architects will begin to visit alternative spaces in the town and look at the programs. Collier answered that the architects have visited all the alternative spaces and a list has been provided of activities that will continue to be housed at other locations.
- Mattes asked why Senior Dining could not be housed at St. Anne's and/or First Parish. This has been done in the past.
 - Rhonda Swain outlined how challenging it is for the staff and volunteers to serve lunch at First Parish. First Parish is only a make-shift option.
 - Terri Perlmutter explained process further and reminded that the space is privately owned.
 - Butt invited Mattes to come and help with Senior Dining at First Parish, and Mattes accepted the invitation.
 - Butt explained that the meals at First Parish are an enormous amount of work and reiterated that nutrition is a vital mission of the COA&HS. St Anne's was beautiful but could accommodate Senior Dining only once a month and was not available during the summer. The move to First Parish makes it possible to do Senior Dining once a week.
 - Mygatt: acknowledged that it is a huge amount of work and asked if there is a different way to accommodate Senior Dining without building a kitchen.
 - Picker asked if the food would be prepared in the kitchen or if the meals would only need to be reheated.
 - Butt answered that COA&HS would continue use a caterer Trio with Minuteman Senior Services (MMSS).
 - There is no prep work and MMSS will provide warming ovens and refrigeration. COA&HS needs a steam tray is needed, a dishwasher with sanitizer, and sinks are required.
- Tam asked whether the conference room would be shared with community groups, or whether there were smaller meeting rooms to accommodate community needs.
 - McKevez explained that the large space could be broken into three 900 sq. ft. rooms that would each accommodate ~12 people. Communities recognize that they need larger spaces for people to gather post-pandemic.
 - Tam: what about smaller meeting spaces?
 - Collier reiterated that this outline accommodates basic needs.
 - Jessica Downing explained that the 300 sq. ft. of PRD conference space is extensively used.
- Mattes asked about programs and the number of people currently participating in those programs and the size of the space allotted for them.
 - Collier: These spaces are current perceived needs. Details about these spaces will be presented

- o in a couple of weeks.
 - o Mattes expressed concern that seniors living at The Commons are included in Lincoln's Senior count and that their count should be backed out. It exaggerates the growth of the senior population in Lincoln.
 - Butt will be providing the numbers for people in current programming.
 - Butt said that there are a lot of people from The Commons that attend COA programming. COA&HS serves this population, and it needs to be included.
- Crosby commented that 1200 sq. ft. for arts and crafts is too big. The large space needs to be dividable to accommodate multiple spaces at the same time. Chester replied that she leads art classes, and the space is necessary because of equipment and larger groups, and especially post COVID since people need to be spread out a bit more. The space could be made dividable for smaller arts groups.
- Perlmutter said the kitchen will serve more purposes than just Senior Dining.
 - o PRD will also use the kitchen. It has functionality for the whole community.
 - o The goal of this effort is to put programming in one space. It's not efficient to have meals at First Parish. Goal is to streamline the services. It's inconvenient for staff and the seniors attending.
- Tom Casey asked if there was any overwhelming sentiment apparent in the survey results.
 - o Collier responded that the top two concerns is that it will be cost-efficient and sustainable.
 - o Christenfeld: The question about building design complement with the School campus just did not resonate.
 - o Taunton-Rigby: surveys usually show extremes
- L. Crosby commented that she was surprised when she read an earlier Community Center report that there were at least 42 organizations using Bemis or the Pods. A Community Center encompasses much more than what is being discussed.
- Vicky Mallas, a relatively new resident, visited the website trying to extract what the assumptions are for the Community Center, particularly the functionality. They are not clear.
 - o Collier suggested that time be set aside again for Butt to present what her charge is for the COA&HS.
 - o Mattes said she had read what the enabling requirements are for the COA&HS and asked for documentation of the four-pillar charge.
 - Butt responded that it is dictated by the funding, which complicates things and makes it hard to look up.
 - The state Executive Office of Elder Affairs sets the charge and provides COA funding. A dollar value is assigned for every senior in the community based on the 10-year census. They ask that COA provide four areas of service (nutrition, transportation, social services, programming/activities) to those inside and outside the community. There is reciprocity between communities.
- Tim Higgins added several points.
 - o The mandates from the Commonwealth are not a driving consideration for this project.
 - o Lincoln has standards they would like to meet for this facility.
 - o When the purposes and scope for COA&HS and PRD were presented at Town Meeting, residents were astounded at the extent of the programming. This information is provided on the CCBC website.
- Dan Pereira: CCBC has reached out to the 50 town organizations with a questionnaire requesting their thoughts about and needs for the community center
 - o Mygatt asked about the 42 organizations, whether they would be using the Community Center, and suggested the plans should take these groups into consideration.
 - Pereira responded that a survey was sent to 50 organizations, and CCBC is waiting for their

- feedback to see if they might need to be included as part of the program, may be part of the aspirational building option.
- Taunton-Rigby mentioned that the Girl Scouts asked if there was a space where they could meet. Collier said the outline presented tonight is focused on documented uses of spaces by PRD and COA&HS. ICON is currently looking at programming for the multipurpose spaces. This contributes to the 5000 sq. ft. reduction from the previous plan.
 - A. Crosby: Importance of flexible spaces.
- Susan Taylor made two comments.
 - People have the impression that the COA&HS team serves old folks. They serve many families.
 - She expressed concern over traffic on Ballfield Road, esp., the large trucks and black-out times, deliveries and the drop-off and pick-up of children from school. Is there a good way to deal with trucks and traffic?
 - Dave Levington said “don’t underestimate” those of us at The Commons. The COA&HS events are an important part of life at The Commons.
 - Casey said he felt strongly that Lincoln needs a Community Center, but it should not be driven mainly by COA&HS. The Community Center should not be benefitting just one constituency, and we should be thinking of this as a wholistic community effort. Collier agreed and said that residents will feel better about the economics if they realize the Community Center is for everyone.
 - Tam questioned what the square footage would be for the 50% option. Collier said the smaller the square footage, the cost/sq. ft. goes up. This creates challenges. The upper range depends on what we are learning about additional needs and strong wants.
 - Stringer questioned how outdoor space will be integrated.
 - Collier reiterated that they are working on the site analysis in parallel. They will address site at the community meeting in May. Accommodating the departments and organizations that use Hartwell are very complex.
 - From a cost perspective, outdoor space is in addition to the indoor. ICON is separating site cost from building cost. Site cost is fairly expensive, touching a large percentage. Collier hopes that there will be site direction by June.
 - Stringer added that post-pandemic teachers were employing more outdoor learning. This was not considered when the School building was designed. So outdoor learning and activity spaces need consideration when planning the Community Center.
 - Buck Creel added to the comments on using space and noted that use of the pods involved juggling organizations into different time slots. Wide range of organizations that have used B and A Pods into evenings.
 - Picker asked if ICON could focus on the basics and make the facility expandable. Collier said that falls into site planning, that sufficient space should be allocated for outdoor activities and future expansion.
 - Mattes asked if ICON/CCBC had explored use of the beautiful facilities at The Commons. Also, what about traffic circulation and foot circulation. Referred to Susan Taylor’s mention of difficulty with traffic and asked about programming. There will be certain times of day when traffic interferes with programming.
 - Christenfeld explained that a prior Community Center Committee had intensely explored Community Center compatibility with the Hartwell site. Answer was that CC programming is fully compatible, and programming time can be adjusted to accommodate traffic.
 - Stringer noted that the blackout times for deliveries applied to large trucks, which had blocked traffic at peak School drop-off times.
 - Creel said the blackout sign was erected at the beginning of the school project to keep large truck traffic out of the school space during drop off and pick up time. There will need to be

scheduling around school traffic.

- Perlmutter asked if the Committee had considered renting out the Community Center space.
- Ann Calhoun said that the Community Center will bring the community together. She asked those in the conversation to think outside the box and consider what can be done with the outside space that brings the youth together with seniors while utilizing the beautiful campus.
- Alice de Normandie added that there has been an emphasis on the older population. She was disappointed by how few people of younger ages responded to the survey. She asked what can be done to engage that population to help with the Community Center planning. Perhaps neighborhood meetings should be organized. Having a food area is very important. The focus should engage the entire community.
- Taunton-Rigby said the CCBC had visited many local Community Centers. If Lincoln wants the younger generations to use the Center, it will need a room with electronics.
- Perlmutter asked if the PTO supported the survey. Stringer said the PTO link did reach out to parents. Taylor said they can continue with outreach, including to staff, Boston, Hanscom families
- Collette Sizer noted that the building would likely be here for 100 years and would serve those of generations to come. Shoring up existing buildings isn't adequate planning for the future.
- Rachel Marie Schachter asked what young people want and need. People in their twenties don't want to hang out at Bemis or the Pierce House. They need a space to get together.

Conclusions

Collier concluded that they would continue refining the programs and the room usage.

- They will reflect a lot on the community aspects, which by design were not included in the initial phase. The focus was on stakeholder needs.
- There will be CCBC meetings every two weeks.
- The next community forum is May 23. The last town forum is June 13 before the summer hiatus.
- Prior to May 23 they will prepare responses to this conversation, prepare site strategy, and look at outdoor spaces. On June 13 ICON will connect the dots with cost.

Adjourn

Chester asked for a motion to adjourn. Shorb moved and Dwyer seconded. By voice, all members voted Aye.

Meeting concluded at 9:00 p.m.