



Minutes

Community Center Building Committee

June 14, 2023, 7:00 pm

Hybrid Format: Donaldson Room, Town Hall; Zoom

Attendees

Board Representatives (voting members)

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

At-large Members (voting members)

Sarah Chester (Chair), Krystal Wood, Alison Taunton-Rigby-Rigby.

Ex-Officio Members

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

Liaisons

Dave Levington, Steve Gladstone, Indrani Kharbanda, Owen Beenhouwer, Peter Von Mertens, Craig Nicholson, Roy Harvey, Katherine Hawkins.

Others

Dennis Picker, Lynne Smith, Priscilla Kern, David Cuetos, Connie Lewis, Lori Leo, Kevin Guarotta, Sara Mattes, Ross Tucker, Connie Lewis, Kathy, Amy Rettig, Peter Buchthal.

ICON Architects

Ned Collier, Ana Cheng

Minutes Taker

Collette Sizer

The meeting started at 7:05 pm.

I. Welcome & Introductions

Sarah Chester opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

- Dilla T raised concern over past meetings that were generous with allowing public comments but have not provided the Committee adequate time for discussion. She asked that the Committee engage in more discussion and jointly draw some conclusions. Jonathan D agreed and suggested that discussion should begin now on decisions the Committee needs to make in a week. Peter V commented that the specific elements needed back and forth Committee discussion. Dan P proposed the Committee review the comments from the night before and discuss.
- Peter announced that a committee had been formed to raise funds. Friends of the COA has offered a \$1MM challenge grant. He will post information about the challenge grant in LincolnTalk. Sarah C clarified that the fundraising committee is completely separate from the CCBC. There should be no confusion, even though some individuals are on both committees.

II. Architect's Report / Review of Project Schedule

Ned C expressed appreciation for an informative meeting on the June 13.

- He reiterated that they are not yet presenting final solutions. They are currently translating from dollars to design, the reverse of the normal process. ICON has framed the design concepts to collect responses. A number of the responses from the 13th will change their direction.
- Ned's takeaway is that the Committee and the community understand the various facets of the project and the costs associated. There is a clear understanding of the pieces, e.g., the cost of renovation vs tear-down.
- The community center is only one cost. The meeting [on the 13th] was concentrated on the other costs. ICON has enough information to go on. They can move beyond the focus on dollars and into recommendations and commentary.
- The aim is to come back in September and repeat the process at a new level.
- Susan T asked Ned to clarify. Initially, Ned said, he understood that the community was in a state of shock over the 2018 proposal. After reading the proposal he understood. The study focused on the Community Center, but the cost encompassed everything. The project is complex. It's more than building and site. It includes a break-out on renovation, new construction, stakeholders, and their programming.
- The options aren't generating much variation in cost. The 50% option, however, will generate other concerns. The pods exist and there is only so much that can be done with them. Then there is the cost of demolishing the pods in a space where we would prefer play and parking to be.

III. Review of Cost Models Proposed at June 13 Forum

The meeting progressed to a discussion of the cost models, which can be found at the Community Center website: lincolncommunitycenter.com .

- Dilla asked if a plan for an exit on the north side of the current parking lot has gone away.
 - Ned said that nothing is designed yet; therefore nothing has been eliminated. Some access points are more desirable than others because of utility location. Both north and south entrances could be included, one as a primary entrance and another as an emergency only access, for example. For reasons of simplicity, Ned had worked with one entrance plan.
 - Ellen S commented that the green area in the plan was nice. Susan was not fond of it because the green space is not usable space. Dilla said she hoped the green space behind pod A would be protected.
 - Peter asked if it was possible to build a 2nd floor on the pods. Ned answered no.
- Ned returned to the discussion of green space. He noted that Andrew Glass had presented an interesting idea to reverse the site. Instead of facing the building toward the school, it could face toward the landscape. The front of the building would face the trees behind, and the back of the building would face the ball field.
 - The 2018 plan had the building orientation facing Ballfield Road. ICON didn't question the orientation. The idea is interesting, although there will be some constraint because of the wetlands.
 - Dilla preferred that all options retain the green space behind Pod A.
- Peter commented on the parking allotment. As it is drawn now, there are about 45 spaces. The parking lots would need to be larger.
 - Ned referred to the full site plan and explained that ICON included parking spaces in nearby locations (along Ballfield Road, Brooks lot) to accommodate the need for more spaces.
 - A series of ideas were suggested for increasing the parking including closing a driveway, looking at walkways, and using the space where pod B is located. Sarah C proposed that the Committee walk the area to understand the constraints surrounding added parking spaces.
 - Ned asked if the Committee wanted to redirect their efforts to *not* include other parking spaces.
 - Abigail B reflected that parking near the building might be protected for those who needed easy access to the building.
 - Susan expressed concern for drop-off and pick-up of toddlers and suggested diagonal parking. Abigail countered that diagonal parking has its issues as well.

- It would be helpful if ICON compiled ideas. This will help clarify the criteria.
- The conversation shifted to control of snow and the shape of the solar collectors. Peter asked why the solar collectors in the Brooks lot aren't built tight together in butterfly fashion to collect the snow so it didn't collect in the parking lot. He will contact a solar company to determine if it makes sense. Ned said that solar panels will be part of their focus.
- Rob S asked if there is a type of permeable asphalt that could be used to expand parking. Peter informed the Committee that eight spots toward the stream use permeable asphalt. Installation requires penetrating the ground quite deeply to provide proper drainage. Ned said ICON will be getting more information.
- Jonathan returned the conversation to discussion of the campus access roads. Why is utility location important? Ned explained that if electrical, gas, sewage pumps, etc., that cross the drive from Hartwell to the main campus are eliminated, then they must be redeveloped elsewhere. Location of access and parking can avoid some issues.
- Jonathan asked for clarification regarding shared spaces and requirements for non-staff to be queried. Susan and others involved with Magic Garden and LEAP explained that requirements are different for secondary, elementary, and pre-school settings.
 - Dilla suggested that LEAP and maintenance might be in a building together. That would eliminate requirements to CORI people coming into a shared space.
 - Ned advised not to let the requirements steer the Committee away from shared buildings. Shared space is done all the time. The advantage is economy.
- Alison T-R questioned the location of the maintenance shed in Option 1. It breaks up the space of Magic Garden, and the needs for the shed space should be understood. Can the size of the shed be reduced? It is very disruptive where it is now.
 - Abigail said it was important to locate people of a department and their amenities together for convenience, synergy, and relationship building.
 - Brandon K clarified that for maintenance and oversight purposes, his office and the shed should be located on Hartwell campus. There is no ideal place to locate the shed.
 - Ned suggested that they continue to explore options. They have not found another solution.
- Alison expressed concern over the access to Magic Garden. Krystal W explained that it is easily accessed from the parking lot, but access from Lincoln Road would be difficult.
- Peter noted that in the plan the maintenance building is in the hollow. This is not acceptable if we want to see the green space.
- Discussion expanded to use of Strat's place. It is a flat green space. Lori Leo expressed interest in access to Strat's place, which is unused.
- Krystal asked about shade for play areas. Abigail confirmed that the play areas get hot and have no shade. Ned said there is some shade planned.
- Sarah C expressed concern that the schematics do not represent the green spaces that are used currently. Ned said they hadn't all been incorporated yet. ICON needs to be more rigorous about what we consider green spaces.
 - Susan added that the plan is complicated and exciting and noted that it needs to consider where green space needs to be flat, where shaded, where is it left in its natural state, etc.
 - Ned added that the idea of Hartwell green [converting the current parking lot to a lawn area and moving the parking to the rear] resonates with older residents. If there are kids actively playing sports in that space, then where will seniors find their quiet green space? This was lost as the discussions focused on dollars, but ICON will get back to that detail.
 - Sarah C said that the puzzle would come together.
- Ned clarified a few points.
 - The location of the maintenance building needs to be examined.
 - He asked for confirmation that everybody is OK with the distributed parking approach. None disagreed.

- There needs to be more emphasis on the buildings and their green spaces—i.e., play space, kid space, quiet space, discrete spaces, etc.
- ICON will be developing parking that addresses flow management.
- Ned turned the conversation to the 50% strategy.
 - He questioned potential interest in new construction. Sarah C advised that people have not said no, but need to understand how much space it involves.
 - A huge chunk would need to be cordoned off for LEAP. Abigail felt that this was part of what makes it appealing. A lot of sharing can happen.
 - Jessica D confirmed that PRD uses the LEAP space [C Pod] in summer.
 - Dan commented that it's a partnership with LEAP and that the planning needed to work closely with them. The Committee needs to be frank about our funding limitations.
 - Ned noted that it would be a small building and combining use delivers more bang for the buck.
 - Peter questioned the need to control for LEAP in shared spaces. Susan answered that LEAP is not licensed under EEC and has different requirements.
 - Susan asked that the schools be included in any discussions. LEAP is critical to the schools. Without LEAP they would have to develop their own program.
 - Brandon asked if the option of one larger building was on the table. Ned clarified that ICON could crunch the numbers.
 - Ned noted that getting to 50% requires serious creativity. It needs to be an equally viable solution. At 50%, 3000 sq ft must be eliminated.
 - Abigail observed that the plan addresses many things, e.g., PRD is cared for, LEAP and Magic Garden are accommodated, but she did not see accommodation for COA&HS. Ned confirmed that COA&HS would have to work within the pods.
 - Ned explained some of the difficulty. The cost estimator reevaluation puts the 2018 100% option closer to \$30MM now. That means that 50% of 25MM is more difficult to achieve.
 - Ellen commented that it may not be financially doable.
 - Dan noted that there has always been onsite and offsite programming. They will have to look harder at offsite options.
 - Abigail added that reduction in services may happen because offsite becomes difficult to staff. If the 50% option is what the community wants, then the Town must present the choices and their tradeoffs.
 - Susan repeated that residents must understand what additional staff would be needed to support offsite, and she suggested that a clear written answer be provided.
 - Dilla inquired what the cost would need to be on the pods if the Town did not move forward with a project.
 - Dan said that it needs to be discussed. The Town estimates are old.
 - Ned said they can figure out what can be done with existing buildings and what can be done with off-site programming. If that is the plan for 50%, then a more complete picture needs to be painted.
 - Susan asked about renovation of the Harwell building and whether the best plan was to leave it alone. Ned said he didn't know. If the plan was to capture other uses, then it would probably be worth it. It would have to accommodate a significant chunk. It's expensive to touch it if there is no gain in space.
- Peter asked to talk about programming and space needs considering the time. Abigail has put together figures.
 - Abigail noted that Jessica Downing had not been notified of COA&HS intent to cover this topic and PRD should review their numbers at the same time.
 - Peter stated that a standard needed to be set. The Committee voted to allow the numbers presented on programming, he said, but had not voted to accept them. Does the Committee believe in them?

- Alison preferred to push the discussion to a later date, which would allow people to get the handout and review the numbers. The Committee reviewed potential timing and conflicts. Peter reminded the Committee that there is a lot of concern whether these figures are accurate or not and preferred to have a discussion session on June 28.
- Jonathan suggested that it was important to understand the methodology used to develop the numbers and then return to discuss.
- Tim Higgins recommended that the Committee form a small working group to review and report back to the whole.
 - Sarah C asked if the proposal was a comfortable path forward. The essence is that the entire committee votes on this and accepts it.
 - The Committee will need the numbers in advance. ICON will translate it into space needs.
- Rob added that if the Committee stands behind the numbers, then he hoped residents would have confidence in the numbers.
- Susan asked that the numbers be put together in a way that that the Committee would be comfortable standing behind them. Ellen confirmed that they needed to be in a brief format.
- Dan said they would provide detail on how they came up with the numbers.
- The Committee agreed that the working group to include Abigail, Dan, and Jonathan would put together numbers by June 28. Abigail will not be present on the 28th. If further clarification is needed, then it will be addressed again in July.

IV. Communications Subcommittee Report

- Krystal did not have anything new to report.
- Rob inquired if there was a way to be notified when things are uploaded to the CCBC website. Dan will try to make sure that anything posted is in his update.
- Sarah C asked if the Committee would make sure that updates are copied to LincolnTalk.
- Susan said that information is also going into Magic Garden and LEAP communications.

V. CCBC Administration

- Sarah C asked for approval of the minutes for the May 23 Forum and the May 31 CCBC meeting. Krystal moved to accept the minutes with edits. Jonathan seconded the motion.
- The minutes were approved as amended.

VI. Open Public Comments

- Dennis Picker read a statement outlining two concerns.
 - He questioned whether the LEAP program could continue to operate out of Pod C without renovations and asked that the Committee meet with LEAP to consider renovation as a separate future project.
 - He disagreed with ICON that the 13,000 sq ft draft represents only essential needs and felt that multipurpose room 2 and the activity space could be combined. He asked that CCBC entertain a robust public discussion to examine this conclusion.
- David Cuetos noted that it is important to get COA&HS data because it seems that attendance is less than the capacity numbers.

VII. Adjourn

Sarah C asked for a motion to adjourn. Krystal moved adjournment and Dilla seconded the motion. Sarah C requested a show of hands for all in favor. The vote was unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.