Taft Public Library Trustee Meeting Notes

2/8/12

Attendees: Bob Carlson, Carrie Grimshaw, Bill McHenry, Kathy Carlson, Carolyn Peterson, Ken Best (of DRA of Newton Centre), Susan Darnell (via Skype), Andrew Jenrich (7:30)

Meeting called to order at 7:05.

Don Morin motions to pass over the minutes of the February 3, 2012 until a later meeting; Bob Carlson 2nd.

Our primary focus of this meeting is to meet with the architectural firm, DRA Architects of Newton Centre, Massachusetts.

Ken Best arrived and introductions were made. He presented a PowerPoint presentation with discussion of:

* Community support will be offered throughout the process; 1 meeting is included w/ initial phase
* DRA can offer value & would be grateful for the work – important project
* Role & Responsibilities; key player is cost estimator (Leach Consulting, LLC, a “top notch” company); structural engineer (Szweczak Associates); & Mechanical engineer (CES Associates)
* Fee is limited; listed costs included & costs not included (costs of testing such as hazardous materials, survey)
* Schedule is adequate; in later phase of project would invite the public to offer opinions of the layout before final schematics are developed
* Community workshops offered
* LEED / sustainable design experience
* Designed first LEED certified library building in Massachusetts (renovation – North Adams Library)
* Experience w/ fitting libraries into buildings not built as library
* Ken has been designing libraries & historic buildings for 30 years
* Experience converting older buildings to ADA accessible
  + Current building is hazardous to all seniors (not ADA)
  + Outside elevator is suggested
* Project goals listed along w/ challenges (floor loading, staff control at current staff levels)
* Realizes need for flexibility to design a space for future change
* Presented options - #1 – partial collection (mostly children’s) on 1st floor; #2 – Offices & Young adult & adult collection in basement level
* Insulation & natural light were discussed
* Will listen to the needs of the Trustees and find solutions; use a four step process of
  + Collecting
  + Listening
  + Visioning
  + Schematic plan

Questions presented:

Q – Do you have history of the cost estimator results?

A - Advise to go with the 3rd or 4th bidder; too low is not accurate & too high is not appropriate to present to public. The cost estimator will estimate the hard costs, Ken will estimate the soft costs (furnishings, etc.).

Q – Can we move the ramp to the back?

A – I don’t think you need the ramp. Place the elevator at the right place & the ramp isn’t necessary.

Q – Elevator cost?

A – $85,000 – $100,000

Q – Tell me more about a community workshop that was successful & ideas that were implemented?

A – Columbia, CT not a huge turnout. The building shares parking with other public facilities. There was an idea to move the one-way exit to the library & town green. The idea was to move the driveway towards residential housing. The residents didn’t like that so DRA revisited the entryway/exit & constructed a new driveway system.

Q – Have you ever worked in a community such as Mendon where finances are such a volatile issue?

A – There’s always going to be people who say a library isn’t needed. The most successful argument I’ve heard is “this is the best time to do a library, not worst” – desperate need for a larger building; not handicap accessible; savings are tremendous now wait 5 years & the cost will be so much greater. When presenting the household increase I reccommend presenting as a daily cost.

Q – What do you suggest to do w/ the rectory?

A – Phase 2 & even then convert to a meeting room by reconfiguring the walls in the rectory. Separate the building & rent or lease it.

Q – Do you have a vision for restricting the shape of the building?

A – I noticed it isn’t insulated. We can insulate it two ways – from the inside or the outside w/ a product around the outside which we can then change the shape it.

Q – How would you change it to not look like a church?

A – The coopela makes it look like a church; the front steps do too. It all comes down to dollars & cents & that’s where you can decide how much we can afford to get away from the church character.

Q –When you give us a price, do the projects come in at that price or will it be over?

A – When you bid the project, you can bid the project with alternates which give options to keep cost down. Contingencies of about 10% will be built into the budget.

Q – Do you recommend we try to make this building LEED certified?

A - LEED is a plaque on the wall; going through the process will show how to bring a building through the sustainability process. It’s up to the committee to decide how much LEED construction we choose to use & have knowledge of the community & how important it is to the community. Can still do the high standards of heating; functioning up to standards; etc. w/o being LEED certified (be LEED equivalent)

Q – Can you roughly estimate the cost of this interim project?

A – Estimate $200 per sq. ft.

We agreed TPL will get back to DRA within 2 week timeframe. He was agreeable with that time frame. He departed the meeting at 8:25.

Discussion followed about his ideas to keep the project in line w/ our budget. He’ll have a list of alternatives to cut down on designs to keep costs down. He had a very practical approach. Ken’s flexibility was creative and highly regarded by the trustees.

The architectural firms were scored according to the rubric developed. Carrie will call on references this week. Susan will contact Ann Mazar to get the St. Mike’s building onto the list for the Green Community Project.

Next meeting 2/15/12 at 7:00 at Taft Public Library.

Meeting adjourned at 9:38.