

Approved November 20, 2013

Taft Library Building Committee Meeting
Mendon Town Hall
Mendon, MA 01756
Tuesday, November 5, 2013
7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

Joe Cronin, Susan Darnell, Amy Fahey, Paul Fitzgerald, Dan Labastie, Don Morin, Moritz Schmid, Jay Washburn; Kevin Rudden arrived at 7:50pm

Others Present:

Mary Bulso, OPM, Lamoureux-Pagano Associates
Andrew Jenrich, Library Director

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Joe Cronin at 7:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: A motion was made by Susan Darnell, seconded by Dan Labastie, to approve the agenda.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTED: Unanimous.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes from October 30, 2013

MOTION: A motion was made by Susan Darnell, seconded by Dan Labastie, to approve the meeting minutes from October 30, 2013.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTED: Unanimous.

IV. Review Final Plans for Interview of Responder to RFQ for Designer Services

The Committee interviewed Abacus/Situ at this meeting. Amy had agreed to contact references for this firm. She intended to speak with a reference from the Peter Bulkeley Terrace Elderly Housing project in Concord, MA and the Harvard University Media Slide Library in Cambridge, MA. She was able to talk with someone from the Concord, MA project, but the contact that was listed for the project in Cambridge, MA told her that Paul Puciata did not work on that project. She was told that Daly Genik Architects of CA were the prime architects. She then left a message with the other contact listed for the project but she did not hear back from them.

As a result, she made several more calls and was able to speak with Sam Klaidman, the Chairman of the Framingham Building Committee about the Framingham Library project(s). He couldn't say enough great things about Abacus. A summary of the two reference checks is attached to these minutes.

The Committee then discussed its plans for the upcoming interview. The team agreed that each person would ask a question from the following list, as well as any others that might come to mind during the discussion.

Questions for the Designer Services Interview

- a. Tell us about your work experience with libraries. You've seen the site and reviewed the documents we have made available. The project is unique in that we're renovating a church into a library. Do you have any creative ideas about this project? What excites you about it?
- b. What challenges do you anticipate with this renovation project?
- c. Tell us about your past library project experiences, specifically for your lead architect.
- d. How do you manage the general contractor to maintain the project schedule without sacrificing quality workmanship and avoiding change orders and cost over runs?
- e. Do you understand that we only have \$125.6K for the Designer Services work, which is all inclusive? What is your billing structure/payment frequency?
- f. Based on what you know today, what do you think the cost of the renovation project should be?
- g. What type of communication can we expect? What type of reports? Attendance at building committee meetings?
- h. Describe a time when you hit a major obstacle during a project and what you did to resolve the issue.
- i. Is there any work that was outlined in the RFQ that you take exception to?
- j. Do you understand that the total "all inclusive" project budget is \$1,700,000 and that your firm can design a project that will fit this budget, yet incorporate meaningful changes to the building to transform it into a viable library facility for the town on Mendon?
- k. The library water supply will be by well water, which may be required to be a public water supply, requiring undeveloped space surrounding the well per DEP requirements. With a small site such as we have, 2.8 acres, how can this issue be addressed by your project team, and what alternative resolutions may be available to the project?

V. Interview Responder to RFQ for Designer Services

The Committee interviewed the team from Abacus/Situ, which included David Pollak, David Eisen and Allison Marschilok from Abacus, and Paul Puciata from Situ. The team gave the Committee a presentation of their ideas for the new library, including suggestions for a bay window out front to allow patrons to see in and out, potentially adding a porch out front, including one stairway on the side to save space, and excavation in the rear to add more light to the lower level and to allow for a ground level entrance, eliminating the feel of a basement. They use a three dimensional software tool called Revit for their design work, which has been a very effective tool for them.

Abacus has had experience with a local vocational technical high school on a housing authority project in Leominster. In response to what makes them nervous, the team mentioned the masonry walls and wall studs, making them unsure which walls are structurally required, as well as the possible lack of insulation. They had

no concerns with adding support to strengthen the first floor. With regards to hazardous materials, the first step in the project will be to perform an assessment of what materials might exist. When asked about communications, both David Pollak and David Eisen committed to attend most meetings and to remain in constant contact using email, ftp file transfers and phone calls. They felt that the three most important areas of focus to guarantee a good project are communication, communication and communication. They want the client to own a project, but they will provide a vision and will transfer it to reality for the client.

Abacus/Situ does not have any concerns with working within the existing budget. They have completed two recent projects simultaneously, one for ~\$500K and one for ~\$800K with zero change orders for either. They credit this due to good specifications up front. The Framingham library project had only one change order. Abacus explained that they have had lots of Chapter 149 renovation projects and adaptive reuse, while Situ has had lots of interior experience with libraries.

When asked about the \$125.6K stipend for their work, Abacus/Situ stated that they will bill as a percentage of the project phases as the project progresses. With regards to the RFQ, Abacus/Situ took no exceptions to what was documented. Abacus/Situ stated that their job is to deliver the project within budget. Their intention is to make the Building Committee look good so that they look good. Their task is to try to be economical and practical but provide a great effect for a lower cost. The Abacus/Situ team has received many awards for their low income housing project work.

After the interview, the Committee had a brief discussion about how it went. The team was impressed, feeling great that the Abacus/Situ team had ideas and showed great interest in the project.

VI. Items not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to meeting

None

VII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 7th to interview DRA.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: A motion was made by Jay Washburn, seconded by Moritz Schmid, to adjourn. No further discussion

VOTED: Unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

IX. ATTACHMENTS – Reference checks performed by Amy Fahey.



Abacus Reference
Concord MA.docx



Abacus Reference
Framingham MA.docx

Minutes by Don Morin