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**Belmont Public Library**  
**Belmont, Massachusetts**  
**September 27, 2016**  
**Feasibility Study Committee**  
**Flett Room**

**Minutes:**

7:05 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Peter Struzziero

Attending: Elaine Alligood, Gerry Boyle, Pat Bruschi, Clair Colburn, Nancy Dignan, Jenny Fallon, Hannah Fischer, Kathy Keohane, Anne Paulsen, Peter Struzziero

Also attending: Stewart Roberts, Architect

Review of Minutes: The minutes of July 27, 2016 were approved as amended by unanimous vote.

Peter Struzziero reported that he had a very positive meeting with Anne Marie Mahoney, Chair of the Capital Budget Committee. He has also met with the Director of the Council on Aging, representatives of the Garden Club and the Health Director. Meetings with the Conservation Commission and the Board of the Council on Aging will take place on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Meetings with representatives of the Warrant Committee, the Capital Budget Committee, the League of Women Voters and the High School Building Committee are being scheduled. There will be a children's program seeking input on the future library on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Struzziero invited Stewart Roberts to present slides of the progress on conceptual designs for various possibilities for the project for discussion and feedback.

Mr. Roberts explained that one goal of the designs will be to limit the entrances from the current 3 to 1 if possible for better control and management of circulation. He also explained that because the current structure has steel framing in the middle and wooden framing at the sides, it would be possible to add 3 story additions to the front or rear of the building, but only a 2 story addition at the sides. He presented 6 options: Renovation only; Renovation with an addition on the front; Renovation with an addition on the side; and 3 potential versions of new construction, A, B, and C.

1. Renovation only with use of additional attic space (~30-31K sq ft):
  - Possibilities are limited by the nature of the current building's construction and the need to meet seismic and load bearing codes. Squeezing out some inefficiencies in the use of space, it would be possible to enlarge the children's area somewhat, though not to the total requested space. Not everything planned will fit: spaces for paperbacks, some fiction, a 3<sup>rd</sup> quiet study room, spaces for Friends of the Library and computer lab space are left out of this concept plan at this point.
  - Drawbacks of this plan include not enough space overall for projected uses, limited space for books (would not accommodate present collection) and continuing to have 2 circulation desks when 1 is preferred for control and efficient use of staff.
2. Renovation with 3 story addition to the front (38K sq ft):

- This option adds an addition to the front of the building bringing it out to the 25 ft zoning setback. No parking changes are proposed with this option. Main Entrance from the street would be to the lower level which would include: circulation, popular materials, fiction, meeting rooms and some administrative space. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor would include non-fiction, periodicals, reference and the Director's office. The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor would house the children's area. Exterior brick wall will have to be maintained as part of the interior, because it is necessary to support the structure. Opening between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> stories would have to be maintained because structure would not support extending the floor of the 3<sup>rd</sup> story.
3. Renovation with 2 story (bigger floor area for each level than 3 story option) side addition (38K sq ft):
    - Some parking spaces would be lost in this option. Main entrance from the street again to the lower level, ("hill" in front removed) which would include: circulation, popular materials, meeting rooms, and children's area. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor would include adult area, reference, young adult area, conference rooms and periodicals. The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor would house administration and storage.
    - Questions and comments about this option included: Solid 2 story wall so close to pool would not be inviting; could staircase be located at back wall to take advantage of view of brook and woods?; should we consider trading private office spaces for more study/conference rooms? Rename "Genealogy" area to more accurately communicate to the public that it is space for historic Belmont material.
  4. New Construction A (2 stories, 38K sq ft):
    - Some green spaces are included on the site. About 5 parking spaces more than currently available are included. New construction can allow much more efficient use of space. Plan would be to have entrance at lower level which would include circulation, meeting space and children's area, with adult services and administration on the upper level.
    - Comments included: This option seems to lose any connection to the outside for interior spaces.
  5. New Construction B (2 stories, 38K sq ft):
    - Different shape allows potential for a garden space at the rear connected to/accessible from interior space. Plan includes same distribution of uses in different layout. There would be potential for clerestory windows to light upper level reading areas.
  6. New Construction C (2 stories, 38K sq ft):
    - This proposes a long thin building pulled to the front of the site. It would allow for 67 parking spaces. The design when further refined could vary the facades somewhat to avoid the "box" look. This design is simple and would allow more "wiggle room" to accommodate needed spaces.
    - Comments included: Because of all the parking lot surrounding the building the benefit of proximity to the brook and woods would be wasted; connection to the outside green space from inside would be very limited; possibly least attractive building and use of the site.

General discussion of the options included: New construction allows much better efficiency and design potential – more "bang" for the investment; should investigate whether an extra ½ floor would be allowable under regulations for design purposes; design should have a very obvious entrance from the street which "funnels" people into the building; cost is a central consideration,

but estimates for renovations and new construction may be very close because of expense of dealing with issues in the current building construction.

A poll of the committee resulted in asking Mr. Roberts to continue to develop and refine all options except "New Construction A."

The fall Special Town Meeting was discussed and it was decided not to make any presentation to the meeting but to provide handouts which would provide current information about the process and advertise the next public forum.

Next steps will include meeting with the Conservation Commission and the Council on Aging Board on Monday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Struzziero, Ms Dignan, and Ms Fallon will meet with the Council on Aging and Mr. Roberts, Ms Alligood, Ms Keohane, and Ms Paulsen will meet with the Conservation Commission.

The next Committee meeting will be on Thursday, Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>. The Children's Program will be held on Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>. The next Public Forum will be on Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> (tentative), perhaps at the Beech St. Center.

Motion to adjourn made by Ms Brusch and seconded by Ms Alligood was passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Submitted by,

Jenny Fallon, Secretary Pro Tem