



**MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE
ON BUILDING Re-USE MEETING
Wednesday, September 20, 2006 at 7:30 a.m.
City Hall, City Manager's Conference Room**

The Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Building Re-Use met on Wednesday, September 20, 2006 at 7:30 a.m. at City Hall in the City Manager's Conference Room.

Present were Economic Develop. Program Manager Nancy Carmer, City Council Representatives Laura Pantelakos, M. Christine Dwyer and Ken Smith. Also present were public representatives Heather Hurtt Chair, Beth Shepard-Rabadam and Tom Heany.

I. Principles & Criteria – The Chair referred to the sub-committee that met last week. The Chair redid an action plan and time line and will go through this.

Beth Shepard-Rabadam, Richard Cyr, Tom Heaney, Senator Clark and Heather Hurtt met to discuss their approach to create 7 principles and criteria for evaluating ownership opportunities. They defined the context for the task, a property may come to the City by way of donation and we may determine whether or not we want to accept it or property may be available on the market and determine whether we want to buy it or we may own a property that we may decide we may want to retain it or not retain it and want to have a filter for evaluation. They thought the approach may be high level principles 5 or 6 at the most, maybe 3–5 if we can consolidate and then create a criteria in more detail that would take us through action items.

Heather Hurtt stated the idea was to have a macro and sort of a micro approach and not to confuse the two.

Councilor Ken Smith suggested when dealing with high level principles it is important to have the phrases well footnoted so that people know exactly what is being talked about, such as City services or public benefit.

Beth then went through the six principles for acceptance or acquisition and retention of property that the city should consider retention of property or ownership of property by donation or acquisition when the property:

1. Accrues one or more public benefits to the residents and business of the City
2. Enables the city to provide essential public services to the residents and businesses of the City
3. Enables the City to fulfill one or more goals of its current Master Plan
4. Enables the City to meet anticipated needs of its residential and/or business communities, according to demographic and economic projections
5. Presents long-term strategic and economic value to the residents and businesses of the City
6. Provides the highest and best use of the property to the residents and businesses of the City

After discussion the Chair will put another draft together.

II. Initial Financial Analysis Update – Old Public Library - The chair stated one of the goals is to develop a financial analysis template that can be used in the future as well as presently. Tom Heaney referred to the operating costs of the Library for the period 7/1/05-6/30/06 and there are some holes in this, there are some things we need to factor in, for example grounds maintenance, DPW does the plowing, so we would have to estimate what it would cost the new owners and if we should retain the bldg, we need to recognize the cost. He will try to fill the holes to make sure we have every line item. Nancy Carmer stated that we are researching this.

The Chair stated one of the key numbers of these buildings is because so many buildings are in disrepair, there needs to be a clear understanding of the cost of actually getting the building back. Councilor Smith stated this is done each year in the CIP process, which is a five year plan of expenses. Part of the South Meeting House contract is that they have to do the maintenance at their expense. Suggested the City go out and inspect these buildings on an annual basis.

Nancy Carmer referred to the Attar Engineering report on needs assessment of a building audit done for the Lafayette School and the old Library in 1995 by the Community Development Block Grant with a budget included, also included was an ADA analysis. Suggested a sub-committee look at this.

Laura Pantelakos reported that City buildings do not have to be up to code which puts us in a different position of what has and what has not been looked at.

Councilor Smith reported that with ADA compliance there are waivers for historic buildings. Councilor Smith felt it is important to keep the costs of operating the building simple, keep it generic and let the developer do the cost analysis. Costs vary according to the use.

Councilor Pantelakos would want to know the cost per year if we keep a building.

Tom Heaney referred to capital and their intention is not to do due diligence for a potential buyer but to take a look at the building. Tom Heaney stated that the Committee needs to go thru a process of agreeing on every building we look at whether someone gives it to us, something we are thinking of getting rid of, there is a process that should be followed.

Tom Heaney felt the operating side would be fairly easy, he has data and is relying on Richard as he would have some realistic numbers. Referring to the capital side, how in depth do we need to go? There is material that we can draw data from. Speaking with Public Works would be helpful and update the Attar report.

Councilor Smith stated we are talking about nine buildings that time will become approachable including the Children's Museum, the Player's Ring, Connie Bean, the Library, Rock St., Lafayette School, Creek AC, Wentworth School and Sherburne School, that we will be dealing with. The rest would be anything that comes in, and coming in we would always do the due diligence.

III. Overview of Planning Board Due Diligence Process – Councilor Smith ran a parallel report not only by Re-use Committee but by the Planning Board, by Charter and Ordinance the Planning Board has to do a report of disposal or retention of the building. They have at least 30 days prior to final action is taken and they have to have a report back within 60 days. Because it is required we go through the Planning Board process suggested instead of the Re-use Committee do their report go to the City Council in January, then the Council refers it to the Planning Board. As he suggested Monday night was that we will do our work, the Planning Board will do their work, the Council will get both reports about the same timeframe and the Council can then make a decision during the February-March timeframe on what to do with the building as opposed to 3 or 4 months later.

IV. Public Input Research Recommendations/Discussion – Councilor Dwyer handed the Committee an outline of Public Input. Would like to make sure that the public input sessions that we have are not confused with public hearings that the City Council holds. Councilor Dwyer

explained that the Listening Session I. is about criteria that we are applying. Listening Session II applies the criteria to the Public Library. Felt it would be helpful to have Listening Session I before the City Council work session on the criteria and have Listening Session II after the City Council has had a chance to discuss the criteria with this Committee. There would be brief presentations on the criteria, then have small round table discussions about the criteria (guiding principles).

Councilor Pantelakos suggested having the full committee there and not sub-committees. Councilor Smith felt this is a good way of handling this.

The Chair referred to the time line and talked about pushing the time line out to February for Phase I. Councilor Smith suggested keeping it at January and as that gets closer adjust if necessary.

The Chair will rebuild the timeline Final recommendations to City Council on principles and criteria in late January and final recommendations on re-use or disposition of the properties March 1. Councilor Smith suggested doing them as we go.

V. Next Steps – The Chair stated there will be a work session Thursday evening, prepare another draft of principles and work on criteria matrix.

Tom Heaney will meet with Richard Cyr to gather financial analysis data.

Need to do a site walk at the South Meeting House. Nancy Carmer will call the Museum to see when they are available.

Councilor Dwyer will work with the City Manager and Heather so there is no conflict with dates.

MOTION made by Councilor Smith to accept the two subcommittee minutes held September 13th and 14th. Seconded by Councilor Pantelakos.

The minutes of the Library Site Walk held September 13th and the minutes of the Sub-Committee held September 14th will be accepted at the next meeting after the members have had a chance to review them.

Councilor Smith withdrew his Motion.

The minutes will be given to Ann Sharp to include in Councilor Pantelakos' packet.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Hurtt, Chair