


## Newton Center for Active Living (NewCAL) project

<b>Community Meeting</b>					
Date:	Thursday, November 17, 2022				
Location:	Zoom webinar				
Time:	6:30PM				
<b>Attendees – City Staff and Consultant Team:</b>					
Josh Morse	<i>Public Buildings Dept.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joel Bargmann	<i>BH+A</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alex Valcarce	<i>Public Buildings Dept.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dan Chen	<i>BH+A</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Melissa Gagnon	<i>NV5</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Thomas Murphy	<i>NV5</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Josh Morse, the City of Newton Commissioner (Public Buildings Department), opened the Community meeting at 6:32PM. There were 18 participants in attendance.

The meeting was recorded and is posted on the project website: [2022 1117 NewCAL Community Meeting Video](#)

The presentation is posted on the project website: [2022 1117 NewCAL Community Meeting Presentation](#)

Josh Morse noted that the project is moving through the Design Development phase and is moving into the Construction Documents phase. The project is on track to start selective demolition, followed by full demolition, this Spring, with groundbreaking ground next Summer. It is anticipated construction will take 14-16 months, with the new building being complete in late Summer/early Fall 2024.

### DESIGN PROGRESS UPDATE

Dan Chen of BH+A provided an overview of design progress and developments since the last Community meeting on October 20. The presentation was predominantly focused on the following:

- Plan development
- Interior renderings
- Exterior elevation design

It was noted that the proposed building is at the current senior center at 345 Walnut Street, at the corner lot bordered by Highland Avenue and Walnut Street. There are two entrances with the primary pedestrian entry at the corner of Highland Avenue and Walnut Street and the second entrance in the rear of the building, which is accessed via Walnut Place, where there are 31 parking spaces beneath the building.

The building orientation is to the north. Solar panels on the roof were identified. The surrounding context is landscaped areas with trees, a patio directly outside the building to the south along Walnut Place, as well as a paved area at the entrance on the corner of Walnut Street and Highland Avenue.

Building programming is organized as follows:

First floor - Most public programming areas – If entering via Walnut and Highland, visitors will face a reception/welcoming area. If arriving by car, or dropped off, visitors will enter from the rear entrance, which is accessed from Walnut Street. The two entrances are visually connected and bring visitors to the central lobby area. There is a visual connection from the lobby to the large dining and activity room. The main communicating stair and the elevator are centrally located, in the main lobby.

Program areas include a lounge, library, and large multi-function space which can be divided into two spaces, plus reception, administration, and a commercial kitchen. Restrooms are all individual. There is a stage in the multi-function room, with a storage area behind the stage.

Outside of the multi-function spaces is an outdoor patio, which is surrounded by a fence, to function as an extension of the interior program areas.

Second floor - The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor can be accessed via the communicating stair or the elevator.

Program areas include a large multi-function gymnasium, conference room, (3) classrooms/activity rooms, art studio with a large kiln/ceramics room, sink and storage, and a suite of senior services administration spaces with open workstations. The gymnasium has (3) storage rooms and a walking track above. The gymnasium can be divided with a curtain into two courts. There is a lounge/seating area at the top of the stair.

Third floor – The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor can be accessed via the stair or the elevator.

Program areas include a fitness room and a walking track suspended over the gymnasium. There is an outdoor deck with direct connection to 3<sup>rd</sup> floor program areas. Approximately 50% of the deck will be shaded with a roof overhang above.

Roof Plan – There roof will have solar panels above the gymnasium roof and mechanical equipment. The cupola will bring some additional natural light into the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Stair #2 extends to the roof to allow for servicing of the equipment.

## **INTERIOR PERSPECTIVES**

Interior perspectives were presented with some of the following highlights noted:

- Lobby communicating stair – view of the lounge area and the entrance from the rear parking area, elevator, and the multi-function space beyond with pairs of glass doors.
- Lobby view towards multi-purpose room –visual connection of lounge with multi-function rooms beyond.

- Second floor stair to third floor – where a visitor would end up on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, either by the communicating stair or by elevator.
- Gymnasium (2 slides) – upon entry with walking track above, storage areas, glue laminated beams and widows above. There will also be a dividable curtain. Wall pads will provide protection as well as some acoustic properties.
- Walking track – relationship with exterior windows which provide lots of natural light.
- Third floor stair landing – arrival by stairs from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- Third floor lounge – near game room, looking back towards fitness room

## EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS

Rendered elevations and perspectives were presented relative to building organization and programming.

### West Elevation (along Walnut Place)

The following program areas were identified:

- Articulation of panels at the multi-function space, behind the storage area. Space does not require windows.
- Solar panels above on roof with cupola beyond with second set of stairs connecting all (3) floors.

### East Elevation (Walnut Street):

- Main entry with double height lobby space, lounge area with art room on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor above; multi-function space on 1<sup>st</sup> floor with activity room above. Fitness room, lounge and game room, all on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, opening to the roof deck.
- Solar panels on roof above with second set of stairs connecting all (3) floors beyond.

### North Elevation (Highland Avenue)

- Main entrance at corner of Highland and Walnut
- Studying articulation of the downspouts and gutters
- Studying masonry articulation at the large façade at the gymnasium

### South Elevation (Walnut Place)

- Full length of multi-function space with outdoor patio, roof deck with cupola beyond
- Gymnasium volumes with surface parking and entrance to parking below

## EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE

An exterior rendered perspective was presented, from the corner of Walnut Street and Highland Avenue. The corner entry was highlighted with the stair and gymnasium beyond. Entry canopy will provide some weather protection. Exterior materials are masonry, brick, pre-cast panels, fiber reinforced product for cornice, asphalt roof and a pre-manufactured cupola with lighting.

## PUBLIC COMMENT – QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- Drop off on Highland Avenue. A question was asked about drop-off at Highland Avenue. BH+A noted the design includes a curb cut for cars to pull off the street for drop-off and pick-up.
- Communicating stair. Jayne Colino asked if the stair orientation can be flipped to be more visual upon entry. BH+A noted the landing may be distorted in the perspective view. BH+A is studying ways to adjust the perspective angle as well as the design itself. Josh noted the stairs could possibly face the circulation desk or perhaps two sets of stairs, from two directions, meeting at one intermediate landing.
- Walking track width. In response to a question, BH+A noted the track is 6'-6" wide which is a function of the court below. The goal is to maintain a 30" minimum lane width. BH+A will study options to expand the width without compromising the court below. Jayne Colino noted walking direction can be alternated on different days to avoid walkers passing in opposite directions.
- Cupola size. In response to a question, BH+A noted the size of the cupola is correctly proportionally sized relative to the overall size of the building.
- Five large squares on Highland Avenue. In response to a question about whether the squares could become painted murals, BH+A responded options are being studied. Josh Morse noted there has been discussion to provide hooks at these squares to allow for a semi-permanent rotating display whether screened artwork or durable banners. There are many possibilities.
- Building artwork. A comment was made re: artwork recently noticed with photography done on metal and asked if that media would be durable to be on outside of building. BH+A noted that various artwork medium will be studied for the interior of the building.

Jayne Colino noted visitors should continue to stay connected during the interim process. Senior services and programs have been temporarily relocated to Newton Highlands at 20 Hartford Street (Brigham House) and 90 Lincoln Street (Hyde Community Center).

The next NewCAL Community meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 6:30PM.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 PM.

Prepared by: Melissa Gagnon, NV5 [End of 11/17/22 Meeting Minutes]