

City of Newton



Design Review Committee  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT  
Peter Barrer, Co-Chairperson  
Ellen Light, Co-Chairperson  
Joshua R. Morse, Commissioner  
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Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

**MINUTES**

September 11 2019

Newton Library, Trustee’s Room

**Present:**

Peter Barrer – DRC, Co-Chair	Ambrose Donovan - DRC	Carol Schein - DRC
Andrea Kelley – DRC*, CC	Rob Hnasko - DRC	Amy Mackrell - DRC
Stephanie Gilman - DRC	Jonathan Kantar - DRC	Marc Resnick - DRC
Steven Siegel – DRC*, SC	Josh Morse – DRC*, PB	Alex Valcarce - NPB
John Mulligan – DRC Comm. Rep.	Maria Leo – DRC Comm. Rep.	Joel Bargmann – BH+A
Anne Cedrone – DRC Comm. Rep.		

**Absent:**

Ellen Light – DRC, Co-Chair	Thomas Gloria - DRC	Tom Enselek – DRC Comm. Rep.
Barney Heath – DRC*, Planning		

\* denotes non-voting members of DRC

On Wednesday September 11, 2019 the Public Buildings Department presented updates to the DRC on the Newton Center for Active Living and Newton Early Childhood projects. The Committee also discussed the recent Green Newton Award given to the DRC and Public Buildings Dept.

1. 2019 Green Newton Environmental Leadership Award

Peter Barrer, Co-Chair, of the DRC informed the Committee that the Design Review Committee and the Public Buildings Department received the 2019 Green Newton Environmental Leadership Award for the exemplary work performed by the DRC and Public Buildings to balance the dominating demands of program and budget with the need to save energy and reduce carbon emissions in our building projects. The award recognizes the efforts of the many individual who have worked on the City's projects since the development of Newton North High School.

It was also note by Josh Morse that the Center for Green Schools at USGBC is publishing an article that will feature a short description and pictures of the Zervas Elementary School for its significant impact on the green schools movement.

2. Newton Center for Active Living (NewCAL)

Josh Morse, Public Buildings Commissioner provided the DRC with an update overview of the project to date. He indicated that typically projects come to the DRC a bit later in the process once the project program has been developed and a site has been selected and approved. Given the nature and the public interest in the NewCAL project, the building department felt that it was important to provide the Committee with and update.

The presentation was done using the NewCAL project website which was recently updated with in-depth information regarding project programming, existing facility review, responses to frequently asked questions (FAQ's), visits and impressions of senior centers and multi-generational facilities in surrounding communities, evaluations of potential exiting structures and sites, and a walk through of the site selection process.

NOTE - the information highlighted below can be found at:

[https://newcal.projects.nv5.com/?doing\\_wp\\_cron=1568304239.3523619174957275390625](https://newcal.projects.nv5.com/?doing_wp_cron=1568304239.3523619174957275390625)

The site selection process was discussed. The process began with an inventory of every parcel of land owned by the City. This yielded some 145 sites. These included school properties, City facilities, and sites, parks, and playgrounds. Based on the anticipated program requirements the project requires approximately 2 to 2-1/2 acres of land depending on availability of adjacent existing parking. The list was then reduced to include sites that could meet these size requirements. In addition, sites that that were already heavily programmed, forests, conservation land, etc. were also eliminated which left 24 sites. Of the 24 sites 18 were not deemed desirable due to topography, shape, location or would require significant compromises. The result left 6 sites which were evaluated for test fits.

Newton Centre Hut (Tyler Terrace)

Weeks Park

Cabot Park

Albemarle Playground

Pellegrini Playground

McGrath Park

The test fits for each site were viewed and briefly discussed. Test fits and analysis of each site can be found on the NewCAL website. Commissioner Morse indicated the Albermarle Playground was ranked the highest City-owned site. The analysis of the other five sites showed that NewCAL could

not be built on those sites without removing existing green space. In addition, there were no obvious or feasible approaches to replicating the loss of the green space, or in some instances the loss of existing active uses.

Albemarle provides a location where the NewCAL project can be placed over existing previously developed land, provides the opportunity for synergy between the existing green space and the new facility, provides an opportunity to replace the Gath pool and expand it to include greater access for all, and has existing parking which can be managed to support the existing uses and the NewCAL facility. The presentation included some additional test fit ideas for Albemarle.

Commissioner Morse pointed out a number of challenges and opportunities associated with Albemarle including the potential to relocate Day Middle School teacher parking back to the Ed. Center, addressing the bus drop off and pick up for the Day School, and several environmental / storm water improvements that can be addressed.

The question was asked if any other sites included a pool. It was indicated that none of the other test fits included a pool the size of what would be proposed at Albemarle. There maybe some smaller zero clearance and hydrotherapy type pool.

3. Newton Early Childhood Program (NECP)

The group reviewed all of the DRC's conditions of Site Plan Approval, and how the team has met what it could. It was acknowledged by Public Buildings that the envelope insulation was the one condition the project could not, and would not, be able to meet.

There was a discussion of the energy savings investments that are being made in the project. The project will be all electric utilizing energy efficient VRF units for heating and cooling. This is in keeping with the goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and the City's carbon footprint. Discussed were the new building codes and utility rebate programs coming down the line, placement of condensing units outside the building. The presentation provided a reviewed the evolution of the interior design and looked at the progress plans that the working group saw on 8/30. We discussed project schedule, budget, and what we've done to control the budget. The meeting provided for a healthy positive conversation with the DRC and they were pleased that we have maintained the project on track.

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alex Valcarce, Deputy Commissioner  
Public Buildings