


Newton Center for Active Living (NewCAL) project

Working Group Meeting						
Date: Tuesday, October 22, 2019						
Date: Newton City Hall - Room 204						
Time: 9:30 AM						
Attendees:						
Alex Valcarce	Working Group	Y	Linda Walsh	Working Group	---	
Amanda Berman	Working Group	---	Maureen Lemieux	Working Group	---	
Barney Heath	Working Group	---	Nancy Scammon	Working Group	Y	
Bea Goldsmith	Working Group	Y	Norm Meltz	Working Group	Y	
Bob DeRubeis	Working Group	Y	Rachel Sherman	Working Group	---	
Brooke Lipsitt	Working Group	Y	Richard Rasala	Working Group	Y	
Carol Schein	Working Group	Y	Sandra Butzel	Working Group	---	
Cheryl Lappin	Working Group	Y	Seth Bai	Working Group	---	
Deb Youngblood	Working Group	---	Sue Rasala	Working Group	Y	
Jack Neville	Working Group	Y	Susan Albright	Working Group	Y	
Jayne Colino	Working Group	Y	Thomas Rooney	Working Group	---	
Jini Fairley	Working Group	Y	Tom Murphy	NV5	---	
John Rice	Working Group	Y	Melissa Gagnon	NV5	Y	
Jonathan Yeo	Working Group	---	Joel Bargmann	BH+A	Y	
Josh Morse	Working Group	Y	James Bruneau	BH+A	Y	

Josh Morse opened up the meeting at 9:35AM.

The focus of the meeting was to prepare for the upcoming Community meeting on October 24.

The plan for the Working Group meeting today was to review concepts for the Newton Centre triangle site. In addition to evaluating the Newton Centre site, the project team and City are reviewing feedback from the Community with regard to the Albemarle site. The City noted that regardless of the NewCAL project, there are plans to improve vehicular and pedestrian traffic at Albemarle.

The feasibility of repurposing the Ed Center (100 Walnut Street) for the NewCAL project was discussed. The building is ample sized at 70,000SF and the site is adequately sized. The building is fully programmed by Newton Public Schools with Administrative offices (30,000SF), IT and infrastructure (20,000SF) as well as Educational programming (20,000SF). The cost could be \$45-\$50M to recreate space for that programming elsewhere in the City. Given the overall size of the Ed Center and the NewCAL program, the City would need to review whether NewCAL could co-exist at the Ed Center with one of aforementioned programs.

It was noted that Newton Centre has a lot of available parking, just not premier parking. The Cypress Street parking lot is used primarily for commuters. As part of the Newton Centre Triangle task force study, angled parking was looked at along Langley Road, Lyman Street, Center Street (near Tyler Terrace) and along the Newton Center Green (between Langley and Lyman). The strip of green space along Lyman Street runs above an aqueduct so parking. The Newton Centre Green, along Centre Street, could be used for temporary parking during construction.

With regard to the Albemarle site, that site option has been tabled, although is not off the table. In the meantime, the City asked the design team to look at ways to improve the pedestrian and vehicular crossings as well as reclaim the green space and relocate the basketball and tennis courts which would be claimed by NewCAL. Bicycle racks would be relocated. There could be a new increase of 100 parking spaces with angled parking along the Fessenden school property and Albemarle. It was noted that there may be pushback from NFD with regard to speed bumps along Albemarle Road.

As part of the evaluation process, sites being evaluated are Albemarle, Newton Centre triangle, 150 Jackson Road (Aquinas) and the Armory. It was discussed that soliciting feedback from the public re: multiple site options may be helpful. The Parks & Recreation Commission is not in support of pursuing additional park sites.

Big picture concepts were discussed for the Newton Center triangle site. Key design elements for consideration include parking (at grade, above grade and below grade), additional green space, housing and retail development. On this site, NewCAL would likely be a 2-story building with an elevated walking track in the gym, level with the 2nd floor. It was noted that more than a building taller than two stories would be challenging to function as a senior center.

A plan was discussed as the best way to solicit feedback from the community at the scheduled meeting on Thursday evening. Presenting an aerial view of the Newton Center triangle site and opening up the meeting for comment was discussed as a possibility.