


Newton Center for Active Living (NewCAL) project

| NewCAL Working Group Meeting | |  | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Date: Tuesday, November 23, 2021 | | | | | |
| Date: Zoom Meeting (online) | | | | | |
| Time: 9:30 AM | | | | | |
| Working Group | | Present | City Staff | | Present |
| Susan Albright | <i>City Councilor</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Seth Bai | <i>Veteran's Services</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sandra Butzel | <i>Community Member</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Devra Bailin | <i>Planning</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Jayne Colino | <i>Senior Services Dir.</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Nicole Banks | <i>P&R Commissioner</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Jini Fairley | <i>ADA Coordinator</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Amanda Berman | <i>Planning</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bea Goldsmith | <i>Community Member</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Barney Heath | <i>Planning Director</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Joan Belle-Isle | <i>COA Chair</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Ellen Ishkanian | <i>Mayor's Office</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Maureen Lemieux | <i>Chief Financial Officer</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Zachery LeMel | <i>Planning</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Brooke Lipsitt | <i>Community Member</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Jack Neville | <i>P&R Commission</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Norm Meltz | <i>COA Member</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Rachel Sherman | <i>City IT</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Josh Morse | <i>Public Buildings Comm.</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Linda Walsh | <i>Public Health</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Richard Rasala | <i>Community Member</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Consultants | | |
| Sue Rasala | <i>COA Member</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Tom Murphy | NV5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| John Rice | <i>Community Member</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Melissa Gagnon | NV5 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Nancy Scammon | <i>P&R Department</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Joel Bargmann | BH+A | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Alex Valcarce | <i>Public Buildings</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Dan Chen | BH+A | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Jonathan Yeo | <i>Chief Operating Officer</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Ruofeng You | BH+A | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Josh Morse (Newton Public Buildings) opened up the online Zoom meeting at 9:30AM.

The intent of this meeting is to review the Community update meeting which took place last week on 11/18/21. It was noted that there were approximately ten (10) participants who voiced comments which all came down to the following basic set of concerns: The building is too big, the building is too tall, the building is too close to Walnut Street, the building is too modern looking and should be more brick and conservative/traditional looking, the site is not big enough, there is not enough green space on the

site. There were also comments about advocating for the purchase of the Swedenborgian Church which is across the street from the senior center, on Highland Avenue.

It was noted that the program has been established and the building size cannot be reduced at this stage in the process. Also, other sites are not being considered. Design efforts will be focused on what can be changed with regard to building materials and the “look” of the building.

The following discussion points were noted:

- The Walnut Street elevation should be more brick with more variations on the other elevations.
- Fenestration should be designed in a more familiar way to Newtonville.
- Possible green space may not become available to the project within the timeframe to have an impact on the design.
- The Church building has been studied. The existing SF is well below program requirements with all usable space being inaccessible, above grade and not in good condition. The Church was designed for a program very different from the senior center needs and would require a total renovation.
- Two areas to focus on with the current design are: Exterior cladding and green space.
- Community access to outdoor terraces. Perhaps one terrace should have interior access only and the other can be accessible from the outdoors, by the general public.
- Outdoor access points to be studied, particularly with regard to security.
- Building height. Can the overall height be reduced without sacrificing programmatic elements? Currently 40’ to base of the hip roof and 48’ to the top of the roof. Height could be reduced by 1’ or 2’ however interior height will be more valuable than reducing building height by a small amount. First floor height is fixed for parking and gymnasium ceiling needs to be high for volleyball.

BH+A presented floor plans which were shown at the Community meeting on 11/18.

The presentation was primarily focused on three deck roofing concepts (Options 1, 2 and 3), presented as early concept rendered perspectives from the corner of Walnut Street and Walnut Place. Each option was presented with three variations:

- Option 1: Single Roof with Continuous Straight Roof Line (current proposed design) - 3/4 deck covered outside fitness, 1/3 deck covered near central lobby area, completely open at northern corner.
- Option 1A: Single Roof with Continuous Curved Roof Line - 3/4 deck covered outside fitness, 3/4 deck covered near central lobby area, completely open at northern corner.
- Option 1B: Single Roof with Continuous Curved Roof Line, opened up with glazing to bring in some natural light to the deck as well as the fitness room - 3/4 deck covered outside fitness, 3/4 deck covered near central lobby area, completely open at northern corner.

- Option 2: Enclosed South Deck – 100% deck covered outside fitness, 3/4 deck covered near central lobby area, completely open at northern corner.
- Option 2A: Enclosed South Deck with Sloped Roof – 100% deck covered outside fitness, 1/2 deck covered near central lobby area, completely open at northern corner.
- Option 2B: Middle Roof – 100% deck covered outside fitness, 100% deck covered near central lobby area, completely open at northern corner.
- Option 3: Single Roof Detached (stepped down from main roof line) curved – 100% deck covered outside fitness, 100% deck covered near central lobby area, completely open at northern corner. Reduces scale by providing a lower contiguous roof.
- Option 3A: Single Roof Detached (stepped down from main roof line) angular – 100% deck covered outside fitness, 100% deck covered near central lobby area, completely open at northern corner.
- Option 3B: Single Roof Detached (stepped down from main roof line) follows building edge – 100% deck covered outside fitness, 100% deck covered near central lobby area, completely open at northern corner.

A concept rendering of the East elevation was presented for each option, with the concept of the center portion of the building standing out at the central deck area.

The following points were note with regard to the roof options and deck usage:

- More open options are more appealing, whereas massing appears greater when the deck is closed in.
- Stronger columns provide visual interest. Overall, aesthetics should be dressed up.
- Continuous roof lines simplify massing from the street help to make building appear more horizontal reducing visual height and adding visual interest to the building.
- Option 3B reads as a deck from the street level while providing coherence between south and central deck areas. Solar panel opportunities are increased.
- A fully covered central deck area is preferred as building appears lopsided with only 2/3 coverage.
- The front entrance needs to have more presence.
- Question raised about how much of the deck with be usable in all kinds of weather. Programming could expand to a covered roof deck if there was a movable wall.
- Having the option to expand outdoor programming to the deck is good.
- Covered space will be sufficient whereas enclosed space will add visual bulk. Options 2A, 2B and 2C can be eliminated.

After deliberation, the Working Group took the following straw vote:

- *Southern portion of roof deck shall be fully covered – all in favor*
- *Central portion of roof deck shall be covered out to edge of deck – Per discussion, the vote was in favor of the a more simplified continuous roof line, without a jog. A small portion of the central roof deck shall be exposed to accommodate planters.*

Additional points were noted:

- Appearance of columns shall be reduced as much as possible.
- Stackable sliding doors may be a better option as opposed to a movable glass wall.
- Brick shall be the predominant material, with stone and metal used where it makes sense.
- Consistency with area buildings is attractive although the new building doesn't need to mimic.
- The main entrance could be enhanced by extending the entry canopy around to Walnut Street and adding doors to the Walnut Street side of the entry vestibule.
- Salvaged granite posts could be at main entrance.
- Operability of windows will need to be studied.
- Concern was expressed about a possible wind tunnel with multiple doors to the vestibule, particularly with automatic door openers.
- Multiple entrances will need to be balanced with security.
- Larger trees should be shown in future presentations.

BH+A noted the overriding massing strategy is to differentiate between the two and three story volumes.

After deliberation, the Working Group reached the following consensus with regard to vestibule entries:

- *There should be two entrances at the vestibule, one at Highland Ave and one at Walnut Street.*

Upcoming Meetings (all online with remote participation via Zoom):

- 12/07/21 Working Group Meeting – 9:30AM
- 12/15/21 Design Review Committee Meeting – 6:00PM
- 12/16/21 Community Update Meeting – 6:30PM
- 12/21/21 Working Group Meeting – 9:30AM

NV5 shall coordinate with the City of Newton in distributing Zoom info for all meetings noted.