


# Newton Center for Active Living (NewCAL) project

NewCAL Working Group Meeting					
Date: Tuesday, December 21, 2021					
Date: Zoom Meeting (online)					
Time: 9:30 AM					
<b>Attendees:</b>					
Working Group		Present	City Staff		Present
Susan Albright	City Councilor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Seth Bai	Veteran's Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sandra Butzel	Community Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	Devra Bailin	Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jayne Colino	Senior Services Dir.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nicole Banks	P&R Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jini Fairley	ADA Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amanda Berman	Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bea Goldsmith	Community Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Barney Heath	Planning Director	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joan Belle-Isle	COA Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ellen Ishkanian	Mayor's Office	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maureen Lemieux	Chief Financial Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Zachery LeMel	Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brooke Lipsitt	Community Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jack Neville	P&R Commission	<input type="checkbox"/>
Norm Meltz	COA Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rachel Sherman	City IT	<input type="checkbox"/>
Josh Morse	Public Buildings Comm.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Linda Walsh	Public Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Richard Rasala	Community Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Consultants</b>		
Sue Rasala	COA Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tom Murphy	NV5	<input type="checkbox"/>
John Rice	Community Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Melissa Gagnon	NV5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nancy Scammon	P&R Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joel Bargmann	BH+A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Alex Valcarce	Public Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dan Chen	BH+A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jonathan Yeo	Chief Operating Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ruofeng You	BH+A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Josh Morse (Newton Public Buildings) opened up the online Zoom meeting at 9:33AM.

The intent of this meeting is to review feedback received at the last Working Group meeting with regard to design options for the roof deck canopy, floor plan refinements and ways to create a more traditional building aesthetic.

In response to previous comments, BH+A presented updates to the floor plans which include:

## First Floor

- Additional door at the front entry vestibule, off Walnut Street
- Entry canopy wraps around the corner of Walnut Street, creating a softer edge. The proposed curve emulates the opposite corner on Highland Avenue, at the location of the former Rox Diner.
- Entry corner is orthogonal, which is more symmetrical and works better in both plan and elevation.
- No longer a wall at the lounge entry; lounge is able to pull back to align with the juice bar allowing the lobby to be larger and more grand.
- In lieu of two terraces, one terrace wraps around the corner of Walnut Street to Walnut Place.
- Terrace area to the north, along Highland Ave, could be part of the building, with direct access from the library, or that zone could be designed as green space, as part of the landscape.

## Second Floor

- Game Room moved down to the second floor (switched with the Art Room). This relocation eliminates the small niche, which opens up the lobby to a two story atrium. There is still space for two (2) regulation size pool tables.
- More direct access was created from the gymnasium to the toilet rooms.

## Third Floor

- Art Room moved to the third floor (switched with the Game Room), to take advantage of the northern light. This relocation provides the Art Room with direct access to the deck.
- Fitness room is somewhat oversized however space is needed for mechanical equipment.

## Roof Deck

- South deck is completely covered, outside of fitness room
- Middle deck is ½ covered, roof line is parallel to wall below
- North deck is open
- Roof line is a continuous curve to help soften the building edge, similar to the canopy

## Elevations and Perspectives

Rendered drawings were presented of all four (4) elevations as well as were perspectives, including more context of Newtonville (“Rox Diner” shall be removed from future presentations). Updates are as follows:

- Articulation of exterior materials including brick, stone and curtain wall
- Main entrance and stair tower are articulated with different materials than the main building
- Glazing area relative to wall surface is at 26%, which meets the Energy Code with a 30% minimum required threshold.
- Articulation is being studied in terms of coping, corbeling and fenestration

Discussion points are noted as follows:

- Is there an advantage to the small amount of green space outside the lounge area, along Walnut Street, or would that area be better suited as pavers?
- With regard to passive house standard goals it was noted that there is a goal of net zero and glazing is being studied carefully. With a current ratio of 26% of glazing relative to wall surface, the design is off to a good start in meeting energy requirements. A significant portion of the 2019 Energy Code requirements are similar to passive house standards.
- The Walnut Street elevation needs to be studied further, to create more of a street presence, with more grandeur. The East elevation will be very important to many people. The following ideas were offered:
  - A gable roof at the center core - enhance the East elevation with vertical presence. Pediment roof could cover roof deck, being placed as close to Walnut Street as possible to minimize shading and impact of solar panels. A potential clock element was suggested.
  - Brick on the third floor level
  - Different shades of red brick or stone cladding w/color variations (New England color focus)
  - Salvaged stained glass windows could be incorporated, perhaps into the windows at the first floor lounge (at a level to be visible and appreciated) - tie the new building to its past
  - Salvage and reuse existing fruited oak columns along East elevation - or replicate the imagery
  - Roof could be higher with a slate gray color
- Extending roof overhangs will increase horizontality. The building needs elements to break verticality.
- Entry canopy should be more prominent:
  - Canopy ends abruptly around the corner - could extend down Walnut Street
  - Canopy signage would identify entrance location
  - Canopy structure would provide weather protection - solid with trellis projections at end.

- The stair tower could be transformed into a feature element, perhaps with a clock element.
- Perspective views may be more realistic. Decision makers will view the building design from head on whereas in real life, the majority of the public will view the building from a perspective view.
- Trees will need to be studied overall, particularly at the proposed locations of the main entry plaza as well as the terrace along Highland Avenue.
- The terrace along Walnut Street, off the activity room, may not be necessary.
- The two (2) terraces, at Walnut Street and Walnut Place, could possibly be connected without wrapping around the corner, which could allow for maintaining an existing tree.
- More green space will require more grass maintenance. The notion was dispelled for artificial turf.
- Change in curb line was discussed:
  - Pulling the curb back 6'-8' would increase green space and set back along Walnut Street. The street will need to be opened regardless for utility installation for the new building.
  - Options to recreate the four (4) lost parking spaces along Walnut Street will need to be reviewed with the Transportation Department.
- The West elevation could be activated with a mural, public art or perhaps a trellis

There was interest in a future charrette style meeting where the WG could respond to the presentation of different shapes, elements and materials.

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

- 01/04/22 Working Group Meeting – 9:30AM
- 01/18/22 Working Group Meeting – 9:30AM
- 01/20/22 Community Update Meeting – 6:30PM

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