

Newton Center for Active Living (NewCAL) project

NewCAL Working Group Meeting					
Date: Tuesday, August 16, 2022					
Date: Zoom Meeting (online)					
Time: 9:30 AM					
Attendees:					
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 type="checkbox"/>	Nicole Banks	P&R Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jini Fairley	ADA Coordinator	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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"/>
Josh Morse	Public Buildings Comm.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rachel Sherman	City IT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Richard Rasala	Community Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Linda Walsh	Public Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sue Rasala	COA Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tom Rooney	Public Buildings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
John Rice	Community Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consultants		
Nancy Scammon	P&R Department	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tom Murphy	NV5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alex Valcarce	Public Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Melissa Gagnon	NV5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jonathan Yeo	Chief Operating Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Frank Kennedy	NV5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Joel Bargmann	NV5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Additional Attendees			Maria Hernandez	NV5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Norm Metz		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dan Chen	BH+A	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Camile Wimpe	BH+A	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Catherine Brownell	BH+A	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Wendy Zhuo	BH+A	<input type="checkbox"/>

Josh Morse opened the online Zoom meeting at 9:45AM.

The purpose of this meeting was to prepare for the upcoming Community Meeting on August 16.

Action Items, proposed by Josh Morse, for the Community Meeting (from Josh’s 8/09/22 email):

1. Interior Plant Plan
2. Exterior Planting Plan - Newton Community Pride and Landscape Architect
3. Meeting with Epsilon and John Rice
4. Meeting with the visual arts groups
5. Fundraising efforts
6. Furnishings, Fixtures, and Equipment Plans
7. Naming of the building
8. Planning for the use of the land at 47 Walnut Place
9. Plaques and memorials and how they will be incorporated
10. General Contracting versus CM at Risk
11. Project Schedule Refinement
12. Define enabling packages (Early work like historical salvage, hazmat abatement, and demolition)
13. Confirm Connick SGW placement on building (North and South facades)
14. Parking Management Plan
15. Swing Space Plan

Each of these aforementioned items was touched upon during the meeting. Josh’s comments are italics, with discussion comments following:

1. (and 2.) Interior planting plan/exterior planting plan

Josh mentioned he has been in touch with Newton Pride (expressed interest in a greenhouse – possible with the acquisition 47 Walnut Place). Josh will stay in touch with NP to partner on planting plans with landscape architects.

Discussion Comments:

- Can the deck be included in the exterior plans? A. Absolutely.
- What decking material will be used? A. A synthetic material that looks like wood, with drainage.
- Comment made that irrigation/access to faucets to facilitate watering of all plants.
- Will there be irrigations system? A. Josh imagines a drip irrigation plan is likely for non-planters.

3. Meeting with Epsilon and John Rice

Josh mentioned with respect to historical mitigation, the project should stay true to previous commitments (noting nothing is required legally). John Rice and Epsilon will be ramping up with

existing conditions documentation, photography, descriptions, stained glass windows approach to restoration/placement of the Connick Studio stained glass windows.

4. Meeting with visual arts groups

Many groups have already met on the facility and are bringing organized plan(s) to curate and rotate art in the facility with the goal of bringing the many walls available to life. More meetings in the next few weeks.

4. Fundraising efforts

The Senior Fund has already started. Josh suggests the need to talk about what for, how much should be raised, and what specific items are there that can be identified as donations? BH+A started a list.

5. Fixtures, furnishings & equipment plans

Planning and design will start to move forward in the next 3-4 months.

6. Naming of the building

Who will make final decision on the name?

- Does City Council need to approve a building name? A. Josh noted based on research, CC approval is not required, unless a donation is made with the caveat to have naming rights.
- Comment was made that the name is mostly going to be something to the effect: "The Audrey Cooper Center."

7. Planning for the use of the land at 47 Walnut Place

Start to plan over the next few months for when the time come and how best to plan the property.

8. Plaques and memorials and how they will be incorporated

Lots of good conditions already, have awesome pics and other documentation. Need an application/utilization plan.

Discussion Comments:

- A very large quilt hangs in the existing building; many have asked about its future.
- Comment made of the fire hazards associated with hanging flammables.
- An idea was made to segment and frame portions in behind glass.
- Some history and significance of the quilt should be reviewed. Can it be stored elsewhere?
- WG should review the applicability of it fitting/making sense in the new facility.
- Josh to swing by and visit the piece, associated documentation and do some follow up research.

9. General Contractor vs. CM-at-Risk

Need to decide between the two methods to procure the publically bid construction between hard bid/lump sum versus a negotiated method. Nail this down this fall

10. Project schedule refinement

Once past CC vote, can firmly tell the community when we break ground and when we will open. 12-14 months construction (an improvement as much as a year).

11. Define enabling packages

Portioning small element of the work such as hazardous materials, etc. City to work with BH+A and NV5 to seek opportunities that may benefit the project.

12. Confirm Connick Studio stained glass window reinstallation on building (North and South Facades)

Firm up location within the building. Not much coming from the community with placement on Walnut Street façade. Connick Studio would prefer north and south facades.

Discussion Comments:

- Comment was made that with no symmetry on the new building (north to south), suggest both SGWs to be in the activity dining rooms for maximum viewing.
- Josh offered that the Connick Foundation folks believe the windows were designed to be in the positions they are currently.
- Any risk or penalty to not following placement request by the Connick? A – probably not.
- Suggesting getting some other experts, such as the leader of the Newton South HS stain glass to review and comment. Josh to follow up.

13. Parking management plan

City to work with DPW, Planning and Police to nail down the required spaces on Highland and the supporting parking lot.

Discussion Comments

- Conversations with the new Arts Center have revealed that they are actively looking to move. Suggests a conversation with the Arts Center and what expectations they have going forward.
- Josh has been in conversation and after they complete their feasibility study phase, more will be known.

14. Swing space plan

Josh is hopeful to have a tentative plan in the next 2 weeks. Need to have a plan to present to the community.

Additional Topics Discussed

Storage

- Will storage discussion be included in the discussion with the Community? A. No, it is more a part of the Design Development process with the architect.
- Comment made that with 3 floors, storage needs to be distributed to facilitate balanced use.
- Josh offered that most spaces in the building each need to accommodate its own unique storage.
- Comment was made concerning the storage for the gym specifically, given the court makes up 4,500SF of the total 6,500 SF. Could the building be expanded to add more storage? A. Josh offered ideas on ways to increase gymnasium storage without increasing the overall building dimensions and possibly triggering a City Council site plan approval.
- Comment was made concerning the situation of the gym being partitioned for two separate events – no storage exists for the one side.
- John Rice offered that the NewCAL gym is being designed to be the same size as an elementary school gymnasium. Agrees storage would be helpful to have on both sides.
- Question about space for observing a game on the court. A. John Rice offered that there is not enough space for stands. Joel Bargman offered the balcony is the best place to watch activities on the court.
- John noted that for events that may seat 200+ people in the gym, a lot of logistics will be required.
- Question came about where A/V media electronics will be located. Josh offered that many rooms will be considered for connections. Each space will have opportunities to operate independently.

Budget

- Question was asked following comment made that since the Mayor that committed to \$20M for the project, rather than the previous amount stated of \$16M. Josh offered that cost estimating is particularly hard to manage in light of inflation, supply chain and materials shortages. \$20M is the best guess to a workable figure.

Art Room

- Question was asked where the kiln will be located. A. Josh offered that within the Art Room, but within a dedicated, separately ventilated space or room.

- Another concern for the storage associated with the art room. Josh offered that custom FF&E will facilitate storage to a large extent.
- Joel offered the design team is considering more “Maker Spaces” to plan for the future (digital media, 30-D printing etc.)
- Comment was made to consider the Art Room and Activity Room to be one larger space to facilitate more programs and extra storage requirements.

Josh asked for more feedback to the list.

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

- 08/16/22 Community Meeting – 6:30PM
- 08/30/22 Working Group Meeting – 9:30AM

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