

20071025 WT Town Hall Renovation Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting at Town Hall was convened at 1630 by Bea Phear.

PRESENT: Bea Phear, Kent Healy, Virginia Jones, Kate Warner, Chuck Hodgkinson, Kathy Logue, Staff Liaison and Keenan and Kenney

ABSENT: Jim Osmundsen

ALSO PRESENT for all or part of the meeting: Jen Rand, Staff Liaison, Glenn Hearn, Joe Eldredge

PRELIMINARY SCHEMATIC PLAN FOR THE BUILDING # 3 dated 10/22/07

K & K were present to discuss their 3rd scheme for the building. K&K said the current scheme would have a second, bigger vault in the basement to accompany the day vault; would have a crawl space under the main building and they would need to meet with the Building and Fire Inspectors about whether sprinklers are needed. They said the building is type B and therefore sprinklers might not be needed. Cited Section 34 compliance alternatives: that addition could have no combustible materials (for example, steel studs instead of wood studs) and that might be acceptable.

Also showed a couple sketches of possible elevations and showed pictures of mansard-roof houses from "A Field Guide to American Houses" as inspiration for the entry possibly having a flat roof.

In general, comments were favorable. People felt the design was "moving in the right direction". The following comments and concerns were expressed:

KENT: Committee should decide what size addition is appropriate. With elevator and stair already going to basement, the incremental cost of a full basement under the main building is little. We will need to support the main building in any case. A basement can have mechanical equipment, storage and is cheap space. Also thinks building should be lowered. (K&K said East stair would need to go down to the basement. Thought height of basement would be need to be about 7'-8" clear.)

GINNY: Agrees with Kent about basement. Thinks Building Dept. and Board of Health should be on 1st floor because of amount of public traffic. And that Meeting Room should be on 2nd floor. Thinks plan is much improved. (K&K concerned with 2 means of egress if Meeting Room is on 2nd floor.)

CHUCK: As a concept, thinks they "are there". Asked about structural support. Estimated square footage-- current is about 4800 s.f. Addition adds 2300 s.f. including basement under Addition. + 1600 s.f. if basement under Main Building.

If we cost it out and go with the full basement under Main Building, what do we give up? Asked about circulation vs. workspace and wondered if circulation could be less. Concerned that with 2nd vault in the Addition basement and, elevator machine room that there is very little room left. Asked about Air Conditioning (AC). With partitions and walls up, there will be less cross ventilation. We should plan on AC. Commented that Entry has no sense of place. Ramp and Stair that faces State Road. (East Stair) -- have the exit and ramp on Music Street instead? Hold

West Stair back so that windows in the Stair can align with the Main Building windows? (some committee members liked the idea of the windows being different.)

KATHY: Her main point is that the mechanical equipment took up a lot of space in schemes by previous architects. Has K&K figured that out here? -- so that we know if we have the option to not have the basement under the Main Building? Do we need an extra exit (as shown) off the West Stair and does that add a 3rd ramp? If the building is lowered, that lessens the extent of the ramps. (K&K mentioned that we might not need a ramp by the East door of the East Stair? and that we might not need a ramp by west door of West Stair). For moving the Meeting Room up to 2nd floor. Suggested possible fire door between the Main Building and Addition to help make this possible. Said that question is what spaces get used most frequently during the day and Meeting Room is not it. It is mostly used in late afternoon and at night. Town Clerk has lots of business and needs to be near vault.

BEA: thinks they captured what we have asked for. Likes Meeting Room on first floor. First floor has lots of extra space. We don't need a conference room (in addition to Meeting Room) on 1st floor. Therefore, Health and Building Depts. could fit on this floor. Go back to single vault instead of having 2? Question of elevator door location: can a stretcher work with this location and the hallway width? (K&K said this is a more standard location for an elevator and that they think there is room for a stretcher.) Brought up security issue of how things are arranged on 1st floor. Executive Secretary would not be able to see who is coming in when they are alone on the floor.

Questions about Entry. (K&K said that it will have sidelights and a door with transom windows above. 10-12 foot high space.)

KENT: If 2 vaults, one should be on top of the other for structural simplicity.

KATE: Move Meeting Room to 2nd floor. Chilmark has that in their new Town Hall Addition and it works very well. Try to move East Stair to corner by Addition so the corner of State Road and Music Street is freed up?

JOE:

1. Basement needs 2 hour isolation from first floor because of the number of floors.
2. Lower building so don't need long ramps.
3. Keep roof line of Addition lower than that of the Main Building. Historic Commission will want this.
4. Column patterns don't have to be rigid. Beams run North-South.
5. With all the low partitions and open plan, how is the building going to be laterally braced?
6. Room for wheelchair passage between office spaces? Feels office arrangement is chaotic.
7. Suggests triple flight stairs instead of 2 runs per stair-- save 200 sf per stair.
8. Access to East Stair is not adequate.
9. Circulation is redundant.
10. Indented Entry-- why?
11. Wants A.C.
12. 1 vault instead of 2-- make vault higher and take advantage of added height for increased storage capacity.
13. Move East Stair to outside the Main Building so the floor plan is not so chaotic.

GLENN: Agrees with Kent about the cellar. Lower the building. Executive Secretary too far from the Entrance. Health and Building Depts. down and Meeting Room up-- good swap.

KATHY: Why are people away from the windows? (K&K said it is a heat and AC issue-- harder to make people comfortable if they are right by the windows.)

General Discussion about conference rooms. Need full height walls and rooms about 10' x 10' with a table for 4 people.

K&K talked about the issue of lowering the building and the granite. Granite a part of Town Hall character. Committee agreed that granite is not sacred-- would prefer shorter ramps.

DISCUSSION OF FUNDING REQUEST FOR BID PACKAGES

Jen Rand said that a Special Town Meeting is scheduled for 11/27 but may be cancelled. Finance Committee will meet and discuss whether the requested \$12,000 for printing and other costs of bid packages can come from the Reserve Fund. If they agree, then Town Meeting can be cancelled. Kathy, Kent and Chuck agreed to attend that meeting.

DISCUSSION OF WHAT TO PREPARE BY ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

K&K proposed going to Town Meeting with Design Development completed and an Estimate of Project Costs. (as opposed to getting Construction Documents done in time to have firm bids to present at Town Meeting.) K&K is concerned that we still have not approved the floor plans, that they need to meet with the Building and Fire Inspectors and that time is tight.

Also cited that in some towns on the Cape, they have not received a sufficient number of bids (particularly sub-bids) and that bidders feel more comfortable spending the time to bid a project if the money is already committed. (otherwise, they spend the time bidding the project and then the Town may reject the project spending..)

What does the Group think?

KATHY: Buys us some flexibility. Thinks it can work but doesn't know if it will work.

KATE: I have no idea.

CHUCK: Sleep on it.

GINNY: Makes me nervous to go without firm bids. Would have to present a cogent reason-- it is all in how you present it. (argument might be that it would offer a more favorable bid climate). Contact naysayers and discuss with them in advance of Town Meeting.

KENT: Get money first.

GLENN: A lot of explaining to do if you don't have the bids for the Spring meeting.

OTHER TOPICS:

Ginny and Chuck to work on Public Forum.

Kathy reported that she and Kent have met about the Site Plan and outlined the decisions that the Committee needs to make; the things the Town needs to do. Trying to meet with Jamie Doyle.

Meeting adjourned at 18:55.

Respectfully submitted

Kate S. Warner

Approved October 30, 2007