



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

City Hall Design Committee

Minutes of the City Hall Design Committee meeting held in the City Council Chambers, City of Newport Beach, on Wednesday, February 25, 2009, 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order

Members present:

- Larry Tucker, Chairman
- Andy Bowden, Landscape Architect
- Rush Hill, Architect
- Stephen Sandland, Architect
- Linda Taylor, Architect

Staff present:

- Dave Kiff, Assistant City Manager
- Steve Badum, Public Works Director
- Dave Webb, Deputy Public Works Director
- Shirley Oborny, Administrative Assistant

Consultants present:

- Gregory R. Motolla, AIA, Bohlin Cywinski Jackson (BCJ)
- Steven Chaitow, AIA, LEED AP, BCJ
- Paul Sieron, Partner, PWP Landscape Architecture (PWP)
- Sarah Kuehl, Partner, PWP

Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission (PB&R) subcommittee present:

- Phillip Lugar
- Marie Marston
- Tim Brown

Arts Commissioners present:

- Wendy Brooks
- Robert Smith

Members of the Public:

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|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Barry Allen | Phillip R. McGraw |
| Wendy Brooks | George Schroeder |
| Don Christeson | Robert Smith |
| Bruce and Karen Clark | Mary Ann Soden |
| Laura B. Dietz | Elizabeth Stahr |
| Sean Duby | Gary Standard |
| Novell Hendrickson | Debbie Stevens |
| Ron Hendrickson | Bernie Svalstad |
| George Jeffries | Karen Tringali |
| Marty Kurner | Jan Vandersloot |
| Caroline Logan | Denise Waltemath |
| Hugh Logan | James Warren |
| Phillip D. McGraw | Sandra Warren |

2. Approval of Past Meeting's Minutes

The minutes from the November 10, 2008, meeting were not published in time for approval. Chairman Tucker said they would be brought back for approval at the next meeting.

3. Public Comments on Non Agenda Items

No comments were offered.

4. City Hall and Park Master Plan Project

Chairman Tucker said this committee last met on November 10, 2008, at which time it concluded its initial phase of work by approving a report with a recommendation to the City Council on November 25, 2008; a ranking of design firms that made it to the final five as well as several recommendations of this committee. At the November 25th meeting, the City Council extended the scope of the committee's assignment to also comment on the design development phase and appointed a subcommittee of its members to provide input with the Building Committee as the design process moved through the iterative phase. The subcommittee members are:

- Andy Bowden
- Rush Hill
- Steve Sandland

Continuing, Chairman Tucker said the City Council envisioned that staff and the subcommittee would report back to the full City Hall and Park Design Committee periodically with public participation and comment.

At the conclusion of this meeting, he said this committee will make any recommendations it believes appropriate to the City Council Building Committee with the entire City Council making final decisions. After Chairman Tucker outlined the schedule for this meeting, BCJ began its presentation.

Mr. Motolla, BCJ, said they met with the Building Committee and City staff in order to understand the nature of the comments given in the City Hall and Park Design Committee's report and the City Council consensus report. He said they have tried to be very responsive to the comments. He reported they are about half way through the concept refinement process heading towards full resolution of the design issues in time for the April 14, 2009, presentation to the City Council.

Ms. Kuehl, PWP, talked about their site analysis utilizing a PowerPoint slide show (attached). Mr. Motolla, using the same presentation, talked about revisions made to the sketch site plan as a result of comments and concerns received. Mr. Chaitow, BCJ, talked about approaches they are taking to sustainability and aiming towards LEED Silver on this program. He explained the proposed path to sustainability and energy use they are working on with ARUP, the engineering firm. Using a massing modeling program, *Sketch Up*, Mr. Motolla showed an animation of the site.

Mr. Bowden asked about the vines on top of the parking structure. Ms. Kuehl explained there would be continuing trenches of soil needed for the root volume and she's still considering what type of vines will be used. Mr. Sandland asked that a lightweight frame material be considered for the top floor of the parking structure. Mr. Mottola said they are

considering lighting for the top floor that would not leak above the rim of the light nor the top floor of the parking structure.

Ms. Kuehl commented that the reason for planting the slope that leads from the MacArthur berm to the top of the parking structure as opposed to a stone wall, for example, was to give it a park environment feel. Trees would probably not be used due to the view plane.

Mr. Sandland asked what kind of landscaping would be used to the left of the entrance. Ms. Kuehl said they discussed a softer, more naturalistic planting vs. a formal landscaping. It will depend on the grading results of the survey. Mr. Sandland suggested it be rolling as opposed to a wall. Mr. Hill thinks there should be some formal manicuring on the north side to define the entrance of a special place. He feels the transition from manicured to natural plantings should be jagged. Ms. Kuehl said the landscaping along Avocado will also depend on the grading.

In response to Ms. Taylor, Mr. Badum said there would probably be two outbound lanes (onto Avocado from the site) and one inbound lane at the entrance but the area is still being studied. Ms. Kuehl said they envision the entrance as a European square with enhanced pavement. On the right-hand side there will be a drop-off area. They don't have a final direction on what to put in the middle of the square.

Ms. Kuehl said the direction they have received so far was not to include an amphitheater. She feels the Civic Lawn area could serve that function without looking empty when it's not in use.

Mr. Hill commented that this is the first time he's heard of the possibility of a dog park and questioned whether it would block the view. Chairman Tucker said the Building Committee brought it up in a discussion about how issues of fencing and ground cover could be dealt with.

With respect to site circulation, Mr. Hill feels there have been vast improvements from what the plan initially looked like. Regarding functionality, he also feels the changing of the grading and steps is also an improvement. He is still concerned about the glare issues of the building's clerestory windows, the sail and the proposed glass wall on the library.

Chairman Tucker asked if there would be backfill against the west side of the building. Mr. Motolla said at this time it's roughly level to the ground story. There might be a little landscaping there.

Chairman Tucker asked why the view area was moved a little to the north. Ms. Kuehl said it was moved north to allow for the parking garage. It allows for an angled view. The height of that area is actually two or three feet higher than the highest point of the roof of the building.

Chairman Tucker asked about the grading of the wetlands. Ms. Kuehl said the intent is to maintain it as an area of significant habitat value and passive recreation. The only grading would be a little around the wetlands in order to cut the slope down to get to the site grade needed for the building pad and some grading to the north.

Mr. Sandland said the wind issue could be handled with the way the Council Chambers and Community Room are shaped. He suggested some wind tests be conducted.

The PB&R was invited to make comments.

In response to Ms. Marston's request, Ms. Kuehl reviewed the list of potential programs for the park and made comments about each one.

Mr. Brown said he was disappointed the amphitheater had been removed from the plan. Chairman Tucker responded that the "amphitheater" feel was relocated between the parking structure and the City Hall so the gathering area is now that manicured area. Mr. Brown said he urges the design team to consider restroom facilities. Ms. Kuehl explained that there has been open discussion about the potential problems associated with park restrooms; however, there will be restrooms at the Community Room. Mr. Brown asked about trail surface materials. Ms. Kuehl said whatever surface they choose has to be ADA compliant. They'll look at stabilized decomposed granite ("DG") and asphalt, for example. Some of the paths might be accessible to bikes but not all of them.

Mr. Brown liked the surface parking away from the parking structure. He said the underground parking needs to be easily navigated so visitors are not intimidated by it. He cautioned that the types of trees used should be ones that don't create problems in the future. He suggested water-conserving plants. He thinks a dog park has many possible issues that need to be looked into.

Mr. Lugar asked how much of the wetlands area and native vegetation could be altered. Ms. Kuehl said they probably wouldn't touch the wetlands area but they may install a walk bridge over it and enhance the wetlands by removing invasive exotic species.

The Arts Commission was invited to make comments. Mr. Smith said they are interested in opportunities for artwork to be hung on the walls of the City Hall. He asked the architects to consider areas on the outside walls of the parking structure and/or City Hall building for relief art. He suggested a sculpture garden in the north parcel such as the Olympic Sculpture Park in Seattle, Washington. Some of the art could be permanent and some rotating. Another area for placement of art could be in the City Hall drop-off area.

Ms. Brooks agreed with Mr. Smith about incorporating art into the interior and exterior of the buildings. She suggested other locations such as little niches outside the building or in the space between the Library and City Hall buildings.

Mr. Sandland inquired about the expansion of the library because it had never been part of the program before; however, he liked the idea but wanted to make sure there's a budget for it and that the City Council wants it. Mr. Kiff said the Building Committee was very interested in hearing what the City Librarian, Cynthia Pirtle, and the Board of Library Trustees had to say about potentially combining a library expansion effort into the City Hall and Park project for cost effectiveness and design reasons. He said the public would be asked for input before the City Council would move forward on that.

Public Comments

- Mr. Allen commended the architects for their work. In reference to comments made about putting grass in the park area, he said he's always wanted a lawn and picnic tables. He would like the architects to know there is a group of people who will not give up on that idea. He's also concerned about the light and glare. He doesn't understand

the concept of adding a second story section and walls to the library. For a long time the light at the library has been a problem. He's concerned that the addition to the library and the space between the Library and City Hall will bring more light issues. He suggested a ground-level walkway between the two buildings.

- Mr. Warren said he liked the changes that have been made to the plans. He asked if there could be angled curb cuts along Avocado for quick, easy access into the City Hall building. This might create enough spaces to eliminate the top floor of the parking structure which would preserve the berm, etc.
- Ms. Waltemath commends the progress made to the plans. She doesn't want an amphitheater. As a Harbor View resident, she would not look forward to loud concerts. She is concerned about more lighting and glare from the library if it were added on to. The proposed louvers need more studying. She also would like to see what the vines on the structure would look like and she feels that if it would take a long time for the coverage to grow it might not be worth it.
- Ms. Stevens also commends the changes made. She is concerned with the add-on to the library because she believes the Library currently is the biggest source of glare.
- Mr. Vandersloot commended the architects for treading lightly on the landscape, retaining the wetlands and coastal sage scrub. The natural area is mature and doesn't need much work to it. What's missing is the grassy knoll where the entry point is now. It has the best views of the Harbor and those public views should be maintained. It was originally called the amphitheater area and could be made into a grassy knoll/picnic area. He suggested moving the great lawn to the other side of the City Hall or moving the parking structure closer to the City Hall to allow a pathway to be built above the parking structure. This would preserve public views of the Harbor. He thinks the parking structure should be a green roof where the public could walk on it. He asked why the Council Chambers and the Community Room have been separated. He liked the idea of putting ornamental flowers down MacArthur. He suggests the viewpoint be moved closer toward the garage a little. The original passive park plan called for an amphitheater behind the library. He suggested it could still somehow be incorporated into the Library/City Hall connection.

Ms. Kuehl said ornamental planting means different things to different people. In reference to the parking structure she felt it proper to have the park landscape wrap around the garage as opposed to bringing more attention to the garage by having its plantings be specific to the building.

- Ms. Warren invited a member from the Project Team to come to her home and see their view because they are the most impacted lot in the City. She suggested the trails be ADA and she is in support of the dog park.
- Mr. Hendrickson is pleased about the connection from the Library to the City Hall. He is in support of the library expansion as long as the glare can be controlled.

Discussion of recommendations/comments for the Building Committee:

- Mr. Sandland - asked for clarification of the Library's addition;
- Mr. Bowden - said many of his previous criticisms have been mitigated. Connection between the north and south parcels needs work. Likes the "belvedere" outlook area, the sculpture garden, green roof and green wall concept, and thinks the Civic Lawn could serve as an amphitheater or multipurpose area. He's concerned about whether vines on the parking structure could be maintained. Chairman Tucker agreed with Mr.

Bowden about his concerns over the length of time to grow vines and the maintenance of the vines.

- Ms. Taylor said she'd like to know what the cost would be for a green roof. She likes the development of the library and hopes it could be designed to actually shield some of the current glare. She would like more studying done on the connection between the Council Chambers and Community Room, perhaps glass, since they are so close already. It may help to alleviate the wind tunnel. She said something interesting could be done there to maintain the separate buildings. Mr. Motolla responded that the reason for separation of the two buildings was to take advantage of the great climate and use the porch sheltering instead of paying for enclosed condition space between them. They could remain separate when needed and flow through from one another when necessary.

In response to Chairman Tucker, Ms. Kuehl explained that a collection of public art can be built over time as opposed to rushing to fill designated areas quickly. There could be incidental public art weaved through the site over time as well. In regards to a possible tot lot, there could be areas throughout the park that could be special for kids (and artful) but there really isn't an area near parking and restrooms to accommodate a typical tot lot.

In response to Chairman Tucker, Mr. Motolla said if the library addition comes to fruition there has been talk about BCJ designing it as part of this project.

Recommendations for the Building Committee

Chairman Tucker said he feels the recommendation to the Building Committee is to stay the course and integrate the library space to mitigate light and glare. He also agrees with Mr. Hill's comments about the north and south side of Farallon not needing to be treated differently in terms of the entry experience.

Mr. Sandland says a green roof over the parking structure should be looked at. He's referring to a complete roof similar to the one at Pelican Hills Resort. He thinks the entry experience off Avocado needs to be studied. He likes the idea of a belvedere on the northern parcel that could allow for a future bridge.

Mr. Hill thinks the glare issue across the project should continue to be worked on as well as continued improvement of functionality.

Public Comments about the Recommendations for the Building Committee

Mr. Allen explained how activity is not really allowed on top of a green roof.

Mr. Hendrickson suggested an artificial green roof be considered.

5. Confirming or Amending the Committee's Calendar

Two tentative dates will be considered and confirmed as soon as possible: March 23rd or April 1st

6. Adjourned to next meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

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