



# 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 Monday, September 29, 2008, 6:00 p.m.

### 1. Call to Order

Members present:

Larry Tucker, Chairman  
Andy Bowden, Landscape Architect  
Walt Richardson, Architect  
Stephen Sandland, Architect  
Linda Taylor, Architect

Staff present:

Steve Badum, Public Works Director  
Shirley Oborny, Administrative Assistant

Members of the Public:

Jay Baker	Ron Hendrickson
Ann Balderston	Michele OBrien
Philip Bettencourt	Debbie Stevens
Wendy Brooks	Karen Tringali
Don Christeson	Jan Vandersloot
Gordon Glass	Jim Warren

### 2. Approval of Past Meeting's Minutes

No minutes were presented for approval.

### 3. Public Comments on Non Agenda Items

No comments were offered.

### 4. City Hall and Park Master Plan Project

Chairman Tucker invited the public to make comments about the presentations from Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>. The following statements are summaries of the comments:

Mr. Glass:

- extra 100 spaces for library badly needed;
- doesn't think using sidewalk on Avocado to link City Hall and library is adequate for the public;
- using the existing library stairway landing is not ADA acceptable;
- suggested secure alternative link could be created 30' east of the library's stairwell and hopes City Council could find the budget to include that kind of link;
- outdoor area needs to be sheltered from wind while retaining view;

- escalators could be considered because they're more efficient for keeping steady flow of foot traffic;
- suggested department floor plans be flexible to accommodate relocating of staff as needed;
- foot bridge linking two park areas not ADA acceptable and suggested an underground wide passage.

Mr. Ficker made a general comment regarding grading. He advised the committee not to be too concerned with grading because some companies have told him that with six months lead time, they may be willing to pay the City to take the dirt away.

Ms. Stevens:

- view of ocean defines character of City;
- 30' concrete tower above the view plane inappropriate;
- sail more acceptable but 10' into the view plane is too much;
- trellises shown in another plan are more in spirit of design parameters given;
- lighting from the buildings should be considered in reviewing each plan;
- keeping MacArthur Boulevard berm in place will help with light and glare coming into community;
- likes the backbone trail proposed by Johnson Fain as opposed to expanding the wetlands and making park not usable.

In response to these comments Chairman Tucker reiterated that the committee is not supposed to design the building. Their charge is to rank the designs from 1 to 5 on a technical basis and make recommendations to City Council. They will choose the best project for the City and there will be opportunities for the public to voice their concerns to the Council.

Mr. Baker said he hopes the committee uses the public's comments in their ranking process.

A resident who lives at 1201 Surf Line Way stated that prior to the election it was promised nothing would enter the view plane. An architectural feature may be beautiful but residents don't want to look at it everyday. He also said the lighting is a concern as it is for the library.

Mr. Bettencourt commended the committee and City Council for their efforts in conducting the design competition.

Dr. Vandersloot:

- purpose of Measure B for using park location was low cost and any plan over \$50 million is contrary to the intent of the measure;
- design parameters stated park should be preserved and most designs presented changed it;
- not enough water on the site to make a tide pool, for example;
- park is naturally lush and needs to be cleaned up, restored, and given public access to;

- doesn't like LPA's proposal to fill park with dirt from site;
- keeping park in natural state will save money;
- public expects to retain view of ocean coming down MacArthur, not to see buildings;
- berms should be retained;
- doesn't think architectural amenities should rise above view plane;
- doesn't like LPA's tower;
- some proposals have circulation issues and he rejects LPA's awkward solution;
- retain public view of harbor by retaining high point.

Mr. Tucker asked for discussion and review of the five designs. The committee's comments came first (Committee member names are in bold), followed by the public's comments (names of members of the public are in italics)

## **LPA**

### **Mr. Richardson**

#### **pros:**

- simple, straightforward;
- likes vertical element of the tower if smaller;
- strong pedestrian entrance off Avocado;
- project fits site and slope;
- simple circulation scheme for cars and pedestrians;
- good one-stop shop location;
- prominence of Council Chambers and appropriate location;
- retention of berm;
- mitigated lighting conditions; and
- utilization of glass for natural light.

#### **cons:**

- access to library not desirable for public to walk to front side;
- bridge and elevator could involve security issue;
- questions if views ocean are being capitalized;
- water retention on roof of Council Chamber; and
- park is weak part of scheme.

### **Mr. Sandland**

#### **pros:**

- having parking structure along MacArthur and building along Avocado has costs benefits;
- not having to excavate area underneath building;
- three-level parking structure tucked into hill least obtrusive and most economical;
- building plan well laid out and thought out;
- neighborhood concept with natural ventilation;
- except for half of lowest floor of parking structure, all three levels could be naturally ventilated;
- entrance easy to identify;
- entrance on south end of structure but would be better to come from east side of City Hall;

- Council Chambers and multi-purpose space being separated with capabilities to be utilized together;
- separation between vehicular traffic going north/south handled well;
- LEED situation good; and
- restroom for park area good.

**cons:**

- view plane being penetrated by tower;
- total removal of wetlands area would cause huge problem for City; and
- tide pool area not good use for site since real tide pools at CDM State Beach and Little Corona are less than two miles away.

**Ms. Taylor**

Thinks building is good and appreciates effort that went into design, views, etc. but not sure it's right for site because park being main event didn't come across in proposal.

**Mr. Bowden**

**pros:**

- layout and architectural style;
- main entrance off Farallon;
- promenade leading to front and back of building providing views along path;
- coastal walk from city hall to park;
- connection to Central Library;
- initial idea of buoy;
- parking covered with rooftop garden and trellis; and
- small useful play area.

**cons:**

- not clear on how parking structure works;
- pedestrian connection to library seems like an afterthought;
- water cistern good idea but not practical if not enough rainfall to irrigate often;
- northern park parcel doesn't have much use;
- mosaic shapes might not be appreciated from ground level;
- stream could have bad water quality or smell bad;
- tower too tall; and
- building needs to be set back off Avocado a little to accentuate landscape.

*Mr. Vandersloot:*

- park is weak part of plan;
- grading entire site should not be promoted;
- bringing in water from wells to maintain enough for the plan is not cost efficient;
- questions what level entrance to parking structure is;
- no cost provided;
- compares the manufactured wood product to materials used at the Environmental Nature Center;
- would not choose this plan.

*Ms. Tringali:*

- agrees with Ms. Taylor's comments; doesn't think anything should protrude into view plane including an object or light.

*Ms. Stevens:*

- agrees with Ms. Taylor's comments that park was ignored; and
- least favorite plan because park/views were not important.

*Mr. Ficker:*

- City Council needs to look to this Committee for professional advice;
- referenced a memorandum from him to this committee and to City Council where he stated he wasn't pleased with the title of competition, "Park and City Hall." Feels it should have been "City Hall in the Park;" and
- reiterated that a strong point in the debate about location of City Hall was residents in their homes and commuters driving down MacArthur didn't want to see buildings, they wanted to see the view.

*Mr. Hendrickson:*

- thinks City Hall is predominant feature as opposed to the park;
- only two paragraphs out of 16 in design feature spoke about park; and
- wants architects to know park is the most important feature.

*Ms. Balderston:*

- public view plane must be protected by making buildings discreet; and
- emphasis needs to be on park to honor initial decision of City Council.

## **ROSETTI**

### **Mr. Bowden**

#### **pros:**

- big picture idea of park plan, well thought out and more practical than some others;
- parking for park outside main parking garage;
- entrance from Farallon;
- main central pavilion area w/all three buildings surrounding it;
- nothing extends over view plane;
- programmable space in park;
- easy access from main terrace area to park without crossing main entry road; and
- planning design approach used in park landscape;

#### **cons:**

- site plans jumbled;
- abundance of different roof plans make it hard to determine where and what shape building is;
- having to walk through parking garden to get to park;
- underground parking lot confusing;
- no real connection to Central library;
- Central Library needs to be connected to create a civic center;
- long way from City Hall to park;

- angular shapes in park should be more natural; and
- bridge over San Miguel could be costly.

### **Ms. Taylor**

#### **pros:**

- overall organization seems to work;
- allocation of surface parking for short trips to City;
- strong presentation of ecology of park and potential;
- paths of park;
- park aspect good and protected views;
- space allocation appropriate;
- budget addressed; and
- sustainability addressed.

#### **cons:**

- 3-level parking structure between library and City Hall cuts off potential synergy between the two buildings;
- confused about whether glassed over pavilion in middle is main entrance or parking lot is main entrance;
- awkwardness of three pavilions and their relation to each other needs work; and
- need more information on geothermal usage.

### **Mr. Sandland**

#### **pros:**

- very creative;
- very organic, as if it grew out of park;
- presentation about materials that would improve existing scrub growth;
- parking on north parcel;
- wetlands;
- amphitheater size;
- surface parking lot for quick visits; and
- parking structure on south side provided a barrier to library but in lieu of some additional fenestration to the library, it could work;

#### **cons:**

- some single level parking underneath buildings had dead-end aisles;
- parking structure presentation confusing;
- City Council Chambers not as prominently located as other plans;
- multi-purpose room not near Council Chambers;
- costs higher due to three separate buildings;
- not convinced with geothermal presentation; and
- significant grading needed for parking structure.

### **Mr. Richardson**

#### **pros:**

- very interesting architecture; and
- nice landscape ideas in park;

#### **cons:**

- complicated plan that will affect price;
- buildings didn't take advantage of site or view opportunities;
- no clear and simple circulation between library, city hall and park;
- upon entrance, one must drive through a parking lot then through a parking structure;
- buildings internally-oriented without great open areas;
- community room buried at back of site and inconvenient at night;
- one-stop shop concept segregated onto two floors;
- not sure if green roof would be a maintenance issue;
- parking structure divorces library from Civic Center and park; and
- too many planning aspects of the plan bothered him.

*Mr. Glass* felt landscape architect had best feel for natural California horticulture. Thinks architect attempted to be too creative and result is customers having difficult time finding where to park and where to go. He likes the underground parking on west side of Bear Street in South Coast Plaza near Crate and Barrel. The high ceiling, white paint and good lighting make it a pleasant way to get into the building. They also have cross ventilation. The public coming to City Hall needs to feel welcome, not as though they're trudging through a great concrete cavern.

*Mr. Warren* said he liked the quick stop parking.

*Ms. Stevens* liked the park but was confused about where things were and how it was laid out.

*Mr. Vandersloot* liked the north parking lot. He thinks the park is a strong point of the design; although, filling the wetlands area near the amphitheatre isn't necessary. It should be left natural but cleaned and restored, provide access to trails and lookout points and include interpretive signage and places to sit down. He liked the surface parking, the retention of the MacArthur berm, and the view protection aspect. The office space use is efficient. The parking structure between the library and civic center could be an obstruction from the library to the park. He stated that this plan was one of his favorites.

*Ms. Balderston* liked the low lying nature of the plan but has concerns about how much space it consumes. She's also concerned about maintaining the high view point.

## **BOHLIN CYWINSKI JACKSON**

### **Mr. Sandland**

#### **pros:**

- creative scheme;
- parking structure backing against MacArthur;
- creative soft arc in one direction;
- separated out the Council Chambers;
- sail structure design;
- olive grove continuing from library; and
- connection to library.

**cons:**

- difficult to navigate with layout of department “pods”;
- configuration of reception/counters on west side conflicts with customers parking on east side;
- no synergy between Council Chambers adjacent to multi-purpose room;
- sail structure height;
- cost of roof, sail structure, skylights and overhang probably higher than estimated;
- first floor windows facing residents (impact of light); and
- amphitheater too large.

**Mr. Richardson****pros:**

- most exciting architecture, dramatic, rendering off Avocado beautiful;
- olive grove along Avocado;
- light air energy concept within building; and
- icon of Council Chambers.

**cons:**

- cost;
- light issues for residents above;
- circulation within building;
- lobby should be on parking structure side of building;
- functionality of entry plaza doesn't work due to cross circulation of everything;
- amphitheater too large;
- main circulation of project crosses through amphitheater into park; and
- one-stop shop spread between two floors and two buildings.

**Mr. Bowden****pros:**

- very innovative and exciting roof;
- style and light, airy feel of building; and
- great view from Avocado.

**cons:**

- no green roof component;
- sail is key element but detrimental to views coming from neighborhood;
- light from building;
- amphitheater too close to entry;
- big conflict between pedestrian access from City Hall to park crossing over main entrance road;
- no use designated for north parcel; and
- wetlands expensive to achieve.

**Ms. Taylor**

She agreed with many things the other committee members already said. She said the compelling thing about this scheme is a wonderful architectural idea within the framework of the park. It's probably the most balanced in terms of having a great city building and a great public space. She thinks it's a very exciting project and the team is capable of

producing a project everybody could be happy with; however, she doesn't know whether it's within the committee's purview to begin to look at things like that.

*Dr. Vandersloot* agreed that this plan is the most exciting and innovative plan but it's too exotic and futuristic for the City. He didn't like the amphitheater and thinks that area should be a view hilltop or left natural. There isn't enough water on site for wetlands enhancement because it's a narrow riparian corridor for intermittent flows. He did like the parking concept of parking near the destination department. He suggested the committee not rank it high on the list.

*Ms. Stevens* said she's concerned about the light and glare. She doesn't like the idea of getting removing the pretty areas by creating wetlands. She thinks it would be difficult to maintain. She'd also prefer ocean views over an illuminated sail.

*Mr. Warren* said the initial idea was for a small grassy amphitheater so people could come outside to read, not for big events. It was supposed to be a small, cozy nook.

## **GONZALEZ GOODALE**

### **Mr. Sandland**

#### **pros:**

- excellent building design;
- addressed configuration of uses within city hall very adequately;
- Council Chambers and multipurpose room adjacent to each other with function space in between (critical to design it that way);
- access from Avocado (thinks there's an opportunity for a few short-term parking spaces in grove of trees);
- parking excellent solution with natural ventilation and light bounced into structure by using architectural elements in building;
- night lighting good and subtle;
- very elegant structure and could be a great symbol for City; and
- likes linkage to library.

#### **cons:**

- too much excavation in amphitheater area not necessary;
- amphitheater too large; and
- restaurant not viable without parking.

**Mr. Sandland** said he would like more information on elevations on "concept diagram logic" page. It appears it could be four stories high with the park and green roof on top. He couldn't tell whether that's from a height or excavation standpoint.

### **Mr. Richardson**

#### **pros:**

- nice connection from park to civic center, no conflict with traffic or cars;
- good architecture and nice civic complex;
- nice approach and elevation along Avocado;
- good setback creates opportunity for landscaping for building in park concept;

- simple forms for construction;
- natural ventilation;
- use of water within civic center building and terraces (ponds and waterfalls);
- pleasant garden stairway/elevator element;
- Council Terrace and Chambers work well together;
- nice terraces and outdoor spaces, would be logical to have eating facility; and
- functional offices and one-stop center with nice outlook.

**cons:**

- unclear how arrival entrance would be (landscape garden);
- entry plaza drop-off area has some traffic conflicts that need addressed;
- outlook of community room faces back of library;
- very little opportunity for views because it's behind the library;
- not clear about Civic Mound; and
- difficult to determine how high building is above MacArthur, a couple sections indicate building is a story or two above MacArthur.

**Mr. Richardson** said he'd like to see the view plane in relation to the buildings.

**Mr. Bowden**

**pros:**

- entry arrival in civic terrace is the most inviting;
- relationship of city hall, Council Chambers and layout of whole plan;
- likes path from civic terrace straight into park site;
- northern parcel has a designated use - sculpture meadow; and
- one of the better concepts for areas surrounding city hall buildings.

**cons:**

- not sure intention of Civic Mound;
- Civic Mound difficult to maintain and not very functional;
- large amphitheater for viewing wetlands;
- enlarged wetlands area;
- no parking provided for northern parcel; and
- no parking for restaurant, no access for deliveries, etc.

**Ms. Taylor**

**pros:**

- impressed with amount of time and detail used in developing every aspect;
- shared lobby space between Chambers and multipurpose room;
- good integration and access to park area; and
- connection to library.

**cons:**

- one elevator for all uses could become crowded;
- large size and maintenance of arroyo;
- appears this design would have the most building appearing above MacArthur;
- Civic Mound very manicured and seems to be more a part of the building;
- entry plaza very large and not very useful with only small number of parking spaces on Avocado; and

- dated appearance to architecture.

*Ms. Brooks* said architecturally she's the least excited about this design; however, she is the most excited about the possibilities created by having the Council Chambers and multipurpose room next to each other with space in between for functions. The community has a great need for a facility with more space. She also suggested contact be made with the OC Museum of Art about their many failed attempts to incorporate a café into their facility. She feels a kitchen and catering facility is definitely a must.

*Mr. Glass* suggested escalators be considered along with an elevator to move people more quickly. He said this plan and the Bohlin Cywinsky Jackson plan have very formal landscaping instead of being enveloped by natural landscaping.

*Ms. Stevens* said the model shows the plan stays within the view plane but removed the berm. She's concerned with the light. She likes the parking structure. She thinks expanding the wetlands removes some useable parts of the park. Likes restaurant idea or fast food but it needs parking. If there isn't anything on the parcel it will become a lost piece of land.

*Dr. Vandersloot* said this plan would require too much effort to dig down to get water for the wetlands. He reiterated keeping the park more natural and pointed out that by doing that it will save a lot on cost. Likes the entrance and sees an opportunity for surface parking. The Civic Mound is not necessary because the height is already there. Thinks there are protrusions into the view plane. He liked the linkage to the library. Some of the features are good but unnecessary and expensive. He would not recommend it be high on the list.

## **JOHNSON FAIN**

### **Ms. Taylor**

#### **pros:**

- retention of almost entire site as a restored habitat;
- truly is a city hall embedded into the nature park;
- significant building faces library and views beyond;
- significant civic space that uses library;
- open plaza with natural light into building;
- staff and public would enjoy the space;
- simple rectangle approach to building;
- Council Chambers and multipurpose room linked together and could easily be designed to open up to each other;
- good circulation coming from Avocado and immediately into lower level parking structure;
- economical to have park carry over top of parking building;
- plaza area and park both provide views;
- timeless design having integration with landscape; and
- strong design and great project.

**cons:**

- need cost estimate for underground parking – ventilation would need to be done mechanically; and
- would like to see parking structure connect to parking level of library.

**Mr. Bowden**

**pros:**

- good example of a city hall with a park around it;
- extreme expanse of rooftops gardens;
- main terrace area with large courtyards;
- addressed connection with main terrace to library;
- programmatic elements zoned within park site;
- main terrace area to the park without crossing main entryway; and
- least invasive park in regards to grading needed.

**cons:**

- thinks library building would block views of ocean;
- missed opportunity to have access to view rooftop gardens;
- lacking architectural content in presentation;
- wave forms in landscape cannot be appreciated from ground level; and
- no overflow parking ability for library.

**Mr. Sandland**

**pros:**

- strong pavilions in the park concept;
- agrees with Mr. Bowden's comments on park;
- meandering boardwalk;
- site plane maintained (needs clarification on how roof would be used);
- light wells and tree wells; and
- connection to library.

**cons:**

- concerned about circulation to parking structure (referred committee to Building Level Plan 1);
- 60% of first floor exterior wall is retaining wall;
- one wall looks out into parking structure;
- doesn't think elevation (referred to Elevation 150-160) can accommodate Council Chambers. He and Ms. Taylor said they need clarification in that regards;
- no cost information;
- multipurpose room terrace looks directly down on library loading doors; and
- no materials information.

**Mr. Richardson**

**pros:**

- strongest north/south connection of property;
- ties library, civic center and park together in nice way;
- city hall building takes up less space in park;
- simple box shaped architecture;

- relationship to library is good;
- simple courtyard, people place;
- minimum grading in park;
- one-stop space with outdoor outlook; and
- nice scheme that fits site.

**cons:**

- connection to library requires a lot of work in that space;
- building is buried and not visible at all from Avocado (need more information to understand it);
- entry area wall is 20' or higher;
- didn't understand drop-off area (referred to Level 1 plan); and
- pedestrian entry from Avocado complicated.

*Mr. Glass* said it appears that part of the building can be seen from Avocado. Doesn't think the rest of the park needs that much landscaping. Agrees with Dr. Vandersloot about keeping it natural. He suggested:

- Johnson Fain building/SWA landscape; or
- Johnson Fain building/Olen landscaping.

*Ms. Brooks* liked the building (would like to see a rendering). The wall between the Council Chambers and multipurpose room could be mitigated and likes that it can be opened up. Doesn't like the community room facing the back of the library.

*Ms. Stevens* liked the access to the park and the preservation of the views. She thinks more information is needed because it looks like the offices on the east side look into the residential area. There could be some light glare issues. The plan goes along way to meeting many of the concerns.

*Dr. Vandersloot* said it's one of the two best plans. It does the best job of incorporating the city hall within the park site. The model shows the berm along MacArthur either reduced or removed which would affect the view of the land and ocean coming down MacArthur; however, he thinks it could be modified to put the berm back. Likes rooftop gardens. Doesn't think striped landscaping is necessary. City Council Chambers and community center at good level for views. Thinks berm along Avocado could be reduced to show view of building.

*Mr. Warren* suggested the berm be retained for the views. Likes the concept and design.

Miscellaneous comments made by Committee members

**Mr. Richardson** made a general comment about the Avocado/San Miguel intersection. He said either the City or somebody involved could enhance that connection by using some textured paving, monuments, flowers, or lighting, etc. that makes a strong visual tie from the upper park to the civic center.

**Mr. Richardson** said for all designs, very little thought was given to AV needs for Council Chambers.

For clarification purposes, Chairman **Tucker** read an excerpt from the General Design Parameters pertaining to whether architectural features were allowed to penetrate the view corridor. He said merely going into the view plane is something the architects would not have known they weren't supposed to do. To imply that the design should not go into the view corridor is beyond the purview of the Committee.

Chairman **Tucker** directed staff to obtain additional information from the firms:

- cost from LPA;
- view plane height from Gonzalez Goodale (view corridor on "Concept Section Diagram/Construction Logic" sketch);
- cost information, material callouts and clarification of floor elevations from Johnson Fain.

#### **5. Confirming or Amending the Committee's Calendar**

The next meetings were set for October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008, and October 27, 2008.

#### **6. Adjourned to next meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

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