

Session 14-05 a Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Building Review Committee was called to order by Acting Chair Beth Wythe at 5:35 p.m. on May 22, 2014 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMITTEE MEMBERS ROBL, PAINTER, CRANE, AND WYTHE

ABSENT: COMMITTEE MEMBER CASTNER (EXCUSED)

STAFF: CAREY MEYER, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
DAN NELSEN, PROJECT MANAGER
WALT WREDE, CITY MANAGER
RENEE KRAUSE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

DESIGN: USKH - DALE SMYTHE, PROJECT MANAGER
MEREDITH NOBLE, PUBLIC RELATIONS/FUNDING
JERRY NEUBERT
BERRY ARCHITECTS – LOREN BERRY, JACK BERRY (FIRE & POLICE SPECIALISTS)

AGENDA APPROVAL

Ms. Wythe asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

PAINTER/ROBL – SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF SYNOPSIS

A. Synopsis for April 29, 2014 Regular Meeting

Ms. Wythe requested a motion to approve the synopsis of April 29, 2014

PAINTER/CRANE – MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 29, 2014 MEETING AS PRESENTED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORTS

There were no reports.

Before opening the Public Hearing Ms. Wythe stated for clarity of the record that the sites being considered for selection were the Homer Educational Recreation Center Site, the Wildberry Parcel and

the existing Property. The maps provided of the original six sites that were considered by the committee tonight however sites 2, 4, and 5 were removed from consideration by the committee at the previous meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING

A. Proposed Building Site Selections

Ms. Wythe opened the Public Hearing for public comments.

There were five who testified against using the Homer Educational and Recreation Center (HERC) site as the future Police and Fire Department Complex.

Ms. Wythe closed the public hearing.

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Proposed Building Site Selections

Ms. Wythe requested the members of the committee to express their opinions on the proposed site selections.

Chief Painter provided the following comments on the existing site:

- concern working out of a temporary site for an extended period
- previous discussion years ago on acquiring the Borough Maintenance property
- even a substantial remodel of the buildings would not be suitable for a 20-30 year period
- only benefit was the known travel/response times
- temporary location may require staff and equipment at two separate locations
- there is history to the building which was built by the volunteers
- limited use of the grounds during construction
- demolishing a building that could be sold, refurbished and repurposed and is much newer than the HERC buildings.

Chief Robl provided the following comments on the existing site:

- there are less issues to the police department during construction on the existing site
- remodeling the existing building will not gain the square footage that is required by the department
- placement of the existing building on the parcel does not allow for expansion
- possible incorporation of the Borough Maintenance land would offer more space to continue operations while construction is in progress on the existing site
- the Wildberry site contains buildings that need to be removed from that property as well as some additional issues
- the HERC site offers the most suitable access for both departments and allows room for expansion in the future

Mr. Crane provided the following input on the sites:

- two sites contain buildings of some historical value to the community
- he cannot provide a preference on any site at this time, and the committee has not made a hard and fast decision on the site.
- he has experienced working out of a temporary site during a remodel of Station 5 in Anchorage
- it is too premature in decision making in his opinion on relocating temporarily

- there are many unique challenges for each department to consider during this undertaking that are dangerous
- costs are unknown at this time

Ms. Wythe stated that she would like to hear from the Design Team on the sites selection influences moving forward.

Dale Smyth, project manager, USKH introduced the members of the Design Team present. He also provided a brief summary of the GC/CM process. Mr. Smyth then outlined the three steps in their process: Process Planning, Site Selection and Public Involvement and Funding options.

Mr. Jack Berry provided a brief presentation on the space needs process to obtain a general design for the building. During his presentation he showed pictures of current conditions of the Police Department and Fire Department.

Some areas highlighted in the buildings were insufficient storage, compliance with Federal and State mandates regarding prisoners and access to operations areas by prisoners.

Ms. Wythe requested Chief Robl and Chief Painter to relate the existing deficiencies that they are facing with their existing facilities.

Comments were made on the responsibilities of the city to provide fire and police services as a first class city and that each year this is delayed the cost to the city is higher.

Chief Robl related the following regarding the Homer Police Department (HPD):

- roof leaks
 - drainage issues with water leaking directly into the jail which causes icing issues in winter It is believed that this is caused from the construction of the parking lot at the high school. In the 1970's the building may have worked as the police station however not today.
 - work areas are too small. All critical needs such as copying, fax, supplies are outside of the dispatch area.
 - jail overcrowding with 700 arrests last year it is not uncommon to over crowd the jail. HPD is required to transport the prisoners to Kenai.
- Chief Robl recounted an attempted escape when transferring a prisoner to visitation resulting in a physical struggle between personnel and the prisoner. One such event the prisoner headed for dispatch but luckily dispatch was able to get the door shut in time.
- HVAC is in need of replacement. The prisoner's air is exhausted into general staff areas. Most prisoners have one or more communicable diseases.
 - They lack the proper storage areas for evidence that is mandatory to keep as long as forever in certain cases. This is not an isolated problem affecting just Homer. Anchorage has the same problem. Chief Robl provided examples on the evidence that is required to be retained which included large items such as furniture.
 - training cannot be done on site due to space requirements.
 - Efficiencies are lowered due to time spent to work around space requirements. This results in less officers on the street.
 - do not meet the Federal and State requirements to maintain sight and sound separation between male and female prisoners and between adult and youth offenders.

Chief Painter reported:

- the building is in good shape
- some inadequacies were addressed in the 1990's
- the building houses the City's emergency operations and there is no guarantee that the building will withstand an earthquake, this same room is used as a training facility.
- there is a lack of storage
- due to the limited size of the equipment bay they are required to design a piece of equipment to fit the building this increases equipment costs.
- during day to day operations they have room in the facilities to accommodate staff however when they have a large event they call in volunteers and then they need additional parking for 40 vehicles immediately.
- they only have two bunk room for overnight calls; other rooms were converted into offices for staff. They would like additional rooms to reinstate the resident responder program.

Ms. Wythe commented on the desire for the police and fire departments to be in a highly visible location to provide services to the community and non-community. The initial selection of property was based on what was owned by the city and can be used to obtain further funding toward the total costs of the project. At this point in time the Fire Station has a potential resale or repurposed for other uses such as a community center. The police department has little if any value. She wanted to make sure the audience was aware of the discussions already held by the committee.

Ms. Wythe requested a motion to hold an additional meeting and public hearing on the proposed building site selection.

ROBL/PAINTER – SO MOVED.

There was brief discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

B. Approved Design Task Outline Review

1. Explanation and Discussion on Overall Scope of and Process for the Project

Ms. Wythe requested the representatives of the Design Team forward to the public table for ease of discussion. Their objective is to approve the schedule and outline.

ROBL/PAINTER - MOVED TO APPROVE THE DESIGN TASK OUTLINE REVIEW AS PRESENTED IN THE PACKET.

Dale Smyth covered the main tasks in the outline:

#1 - Fire and Police Station Building Program – includes the Space Standards, Space Needs, Adjacency Diagrams, and Site Selection

#2 – Site Selection and Concept Design – includes Site Selection, initial concept design and Final Concept Design

#3 – Public Involvement – includes introduction and public outreach, Seek involvement and input and finalize and seek support. This was to run concurrent with everything.

A discussion ensued on the next meeting date and public involvement which can be done without selecting the site such as how the public would like the building to look like, what are important issues to consider and how would you like to receive project updates such as the stories related tonight. What the staff of the fire and police is dealing with is what the public needs to be aware of now. It was noted that Mr. Crane would be gone until June 23, 2014 and Chief Painter will be gone also. However, Dan Miotke can attend in his place. After review of the calendar June 17, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. to review the schedule for public involvement.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Scheduling the Next Steps in the Process – Development of a Case Statement

This item was not addressed by the committee.

B. Scheduling the Next Meeting Date

There was a brief discussion on when the next meeting and or public hearing should take place.

Ms. Wythe requested a motion on establishing June 17, 2014 as the next meeting date.

ROBL/PAINTER – SO MOVED.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Resolution 14-36(A), Creation of the Committee

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Kathy Hill commented on the need to “sell” the project to the public.

Deb Lowney commented on the importance of safety to the community but adamantly supported keeping the HERC for the benefit of the community. She reminded the committee that they should do their campaigning without a location in mind and make sure people understand that the site is not selected.

Carey Meyer, Public Works Director, commented on their recent work with the architects and other previous projects that had support groups to provide outreach to the community.

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

There were none.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

Ms. Wythe commented on the critical cross-points by Council moving the project to get it on the CIP and on Juneau's radar this year and one action on Council's part was to do a preliminary site review which preliminary is the key word. She acknowledged the community attachment to the HERC building and also noted that the building is an inordinately expensive building to maintain in an open state, it has no means of support, it is being used in violation of the fire code at this time and she has been raising the roof with the City Manager almost on a weekly basis. If the city is going to use it then they need to find the money to bring it into code. If not then they need close the building. She further commented that bottom-line Homer is not a community with a way to finance Parks and Recreation. They do not have money in the budget to maintain that building in an open state. To operate this building, even just the gym, illegally, is not okay with her. Even if they fix the building they will not have the money to run the building. She then responded to the comments on the issues surrounding the use and preservation of the property as it stands and that it requires more discussion on the options available to them. She is very interested in what will be done for public outreach since this project is not a fancy one that people will readily attach themselves to. She appreciated the audience for expending the time to attend the meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

None.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE

Mr. Painter had no comments.

Mr. Robl commented on public outreach in Homer in the summer will not reach many people. He noted that they can reach some people but it would be more effective in the winter months.

Mr. Crane commented on accessing the talents of Meredith and providing the "dirty pictures" to staff they will get some mileage out of it. There are people here who support fire and police in a big way. If they go to places like the Elks and Rotary they may do some good.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Committee the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m. The next regular meeting will be **TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2014 AT 5:30 P.M.** and will be at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, and Alaska.

RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: _____