

Old Library Accessibility Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 17, 2017 – Upper Town Hall

Members Present: Wendy Cote-Magan, Mark Mikitarian, Lucy Wallace; Ken Swanton
Guests Present: Tim Bragan, Town Administrator; Julie Meyers; Ron Ostberg; Bill Scanlan, Town Planner; Willie Wickman (*Note: Guests attended only to participate on specific topics and left once covered.*)

The meeting was called to order at 10 AM by Mark Mikitarian.

MAAB Update

Wendy Magan reported on her October 12th meeting with Tom Hopkins regarding the Town's application for several variances. She noted the meeting went very well and that Tom felt the requested variances were reasonable. He did note we need to add a request for variance for the column in the handicap bathroom. Fortunately, its size and location do not impair the ability of a wheelchair to turn in the bathroom. This item would be added as Addendum #1, variance #13 to our application. Mark reported that the application had been FedExed to MAAB and copies provided to the appropriate parties. The application will be considered at October 30th MA Architectural Access Board meeting. We will know on October 31st if our variances have been approved.

CPC Update

Mark attended the October 11th CPC meeting to answer questions regarding our request for \$50,000 in 2017 CPC funds. He reported that CPC has \$140,000 available for projects, but \$170,000 in applications going before the Special Town Meeting in November. The CPC voted to award the OLAC \$47,000. However, with the possibility that the \$100,000 request from the Conservation Commission for the purchase of Dean's Hill being pulled, the CPC will reconsider and award OLAC the full \$50,000.

Historical Commission Meeting

Wendy, Ken Swanton and Lucy Wallace had attended the October 4th Historical Commission meeting to seek its endorsement of the project. Wendy reported that one of the members, an architect, had raised questions about the design of the ramp. She offered to meet with that member off-line to go over the plans in greater detail and, in preparation for that, had met with Ron Ostberg. Lucy noted that more detail (such as the materials for the ramp) would be developed during the detail design/construction plans phase of the project. And her understanding was that the Historical Commission would have an opportunity to review the materials when we apply for the Certificate of Appropriateness. Ron agreed, and made some suggestions materials' qualities we should consider. For instance, the building has three different materials on the façade, beginning with the granite foundation, then the rough stone and topped with brick. He suggested the material used for the ramp's support and the front stairs mimic or replicate the textures of the building facade. In addition, the railings for the stairs and ramp should either be black metal or copper or other metal that will develop a patina over time. Ron felt the length of the bridge (~18-20') could be prone to bouncing and, therefore, we consider a stabilizing post/pier in the middle.

Ron encouraged the inclusion of a landscape architect on the architectural team developing the next round of plans as the walkway to the ramp appears lost in space and would need careful landscaping to “explain” it. Ken Swanton was concerned that this service was not included in our estimate.

Ron had several additional suggestions. For instance, that the steps to the side entrance be reused in the green area around the building and, that with the removal of the side stairs, the side yard be repurposed as a play area for children.

Finally, Ron suggested we ask Abacus to improve the elevation drawing of the building with the ramp to better visually explain the proposed front entry and ramp. Lucy wondered if the ramp could be photo-shopped onto one of the photographs Wendy has of the building. Wendy will contact Austin Ludwig or David Pollack. Mark noted that they had not submitted their final bill and so, received their final payment. Ron felt it was legitimate for us to request a better drawing as part of our outreach for the project.

Ken offered to contact Ben Guthro, Chair of the Historical Commission, to ask him to be prepared to speak at the Special Town Meeting and report that the Commission endorsed this project. He also would cue Ben to note that details on materials and colors would be resolved when the project goes before the Commission for its Certificate of Appropriateness during the detail design/construction plans phase.

Cost Analysis

Ken reported that he had been working with Marie Sobalvarro on the estimated costs for the project, given the concerns she had raised about items that had been excluded. He distributed copies of her spreadsheet comparing her estimates with OLAC’s. Under General Construction, the major difference in cost was due to her inclusion of ~\$17,500 in escalation costs. Ken explained that the estimate was based on doing the work in FY19 so escalation was not necessary. Marie had also reduced contingency and other percentages used by our estimator that are added to fixed costs.

Other costs Marie added or raised, based on her experience with other town projects, included the cost of permits, architectural/engineering fees and material testing. Marie urged OLAC to add a Clerk of the Works to our estimate (\$5,100), which the Committee agreed to do.

Bottom line, with the adjustments made by and to Marie’s estimate our original estimate of \$471,668 was reduced by \$12,296 to \$459,392. We agreed to keep our request to CPIC at \$471,668 as a cushion.

MA Cultural Facilities Fund (MCFF)

Lucy introduced Julie Meyers, Volunteer Coordinator for the HCC, who is helping with our grant application to the MCFF. Lucy distributed copies of the Letter of Intent which we need to submit to MCFF by November 17th. She explained that the application was being made by the Town, not HCC, as it is a town building. As such, she asked for confirmation on a couple of the answers she had provided. Julie explained the Letter of Intent is essentially a gate-keeper to confirm the applicant is eligible for a grant. Ken urged that the Letter of Intent be submitted before Special Town Meeting so we can report on the amount we are seeking and that we have begun the process.

The grant application will be due January 12, 2018. Julie feels an item on the application we need to be particularly careful in answering relates to our need for the funds, especially if the Town

Meeting has approved full funding of the project. Willie Wickman reported that she and Julie had recently met with Jay Paget, director of this grant program, and that he both supported the appropriateness of the application and offered to help us as we drafted it.

Julie walked the Committee through her calculation of funds we should request. Lucy noted that for project less than \$1 million, the applicant is required to provide a 1:1 match and that other state funds could not be included in the match. Funds we could not include in our match, therefore, would be the portion of state funds in the CPC award (20% or \$10,000) and the amount we hope to get from the MA Office of Disability (\$100,000). This would bring total eligible request (eliminating the amount covered by other state funds) from \$472k to \$362k and, with a 1:1 match, we could apply to MCFF for to \$181k.

The Committee thanked Julie for offering to help Lucy with this grant application.

Finance Committee

CPIC had sent a list of questions concerning this project to the Board of Selectmen. Ken and Lucy had drafted responses which were distributed to the Committee for review. Lucy will incorporate the responses as suggested and send a revised draft to the Committee for final review before forwarding to CPIC and the Finance Committee – hopefully no later than tomorrow morning. Mark noted the OLAC request is on the agenda for the October 18th Finance Committee meeting and said he would attend. Lucy and Ken will attend as well.

MA Office of Disability Grant

Bill Scanlan reported that he had finally spoken to the grant program administrator, Evan Bjorklund, to get clarification on the need to spend grant funds by June 30, 2018 given the grant award would not be made until January 15, 2018. Unfortunately, not only must the funds be spent by June 30, 2018, but the project must be completed by that date. The Committee debated ways of breaking the project (the ramp) into its own project and if it could be completed within this tight timeline. After some deliberation, it was agreed that it would not be feasible to do this and, therefore we should not pursue this program. On the bright side, we can increase the amount we request from MCFF.

RFQ for Architect – Detail Design/Construction

Marie Sobalvarro had previously sent the Committee copies of the architect RFQs for Schematic Design (Abacus project) and for the Town Hall Detail Design/Construction Plans. While Marie as the Procurement Officer needs to prepare most of the RFQ we want to release for the next phase, we should review the two samples and provide the information which is particular to this project. It was agreed we would like the RFQ released as soon as funding is approved.

Mark will be out of the country from October 21st to October 30th.

Next meeting set for November 1st at 1 PM to prepare for the November 6th Special Town Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 PM.