



Programs & Services Committee Report

City of Newton In City Council

Wednesday, January 4, 2017

Present: Councilors Rice (Chair), Sangiolo, Auchincloss, Schwartz, Leary and Hess-Mahan

Absent: Councilors Kalis and Baker

Also Present: Councilors Crossley, Albright, Laredo, Lappin, Brousal-Glaser, Ciccone, Cote, Harney, Fuller, Lipof, Blazar, Yates, Lennon and Norton

City Staff Present: John Daghlian (Associate City Engineer), Jim McGonagle (Commissioner of Public Works), Shane Mark (Director of Operations), Nicole Freedman (Director of Transportation), Police Sergeant John Babcock, Nadia Khan (Committee Clerk)

Referred to Public Facilities & Programs and Services Committees

#388-16(2) Approval of conceptual library design for grant application

NEWTON FREE LIBRARY DIRECTOR requesting approval of conceptual designs for renovation and addition to the Newton Free Library as basis for application to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for a Library Construction Grant.
[12/07/2016 @ 3:20 PM]

Public Facilities voted No Action Necessary 5-0 (Councilor Lennon not voting)

Action: Programs & Services voted No Action Necessary 5-0 (Councilor Hess-Mahan not voting)

Note: The Programs & Services and Public Facilities Committees met jointly on both agenda items to discuss the application for grant funds and City Council's approval of the conceptual design for renovations and additions to the Newton Free Library.

Library Director Phil McNulty presented plans and budget estimates at a Committee of the Whole on December 5, 2016. At that time, Director McNulty noted that the estimate for the renovations as designed totaled \$70 million dollars. The Council was not willing to support a project of that scope and requested that the Board of Library Trustees reevaluate the plans.

Director McNulty presented updates to the Committee and stated that the Board of Library Trustees will not be moving forward with the grant application at this time. After Council feedback in December, the Board of Library Trustees worked to reduce the project scope by eliminating unessential design features. While the changes resulted in cost savings, they did not bring the project cost to a figure that the Council would be willing to support. Because the Board of Library Trustees wants to ensure that the designs submitted to the Mass Board of Library Commissioners

are the final plans that the City moves forward with, they do not have time to revise the plans prior to the January 26, 2017 deadline.

Director McNulty stated that the Board of Library Trustees worked to incorporate citizen feedback and wishes when designing the renovations and noted that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners seem to grant funds to cities with larger projects more readily; something he found discouraging. Director McNulty noted that the Board of Library Trustees hopes to take the five years prior to the next grant application deadline and work with the Council to revise the plans so they accurately reflect the library's program needs. An item has been docketed to invite Director McNulty to provide updates and seek Council feedback as necessary.

Councilors questioned how the scope of the project became so large. Director McNulty noted that the design changes increased the building size by approximately 18% and believes that much of the cost increases can be attributed to construction cost increases. Committee members noted that the project additionally had significant scope creep which resulted in the inclusion of some unnecessary design features.

Director McNulty noted that the intention is to evaluate the library's priorities and determine the most efficient path for meeting them. He stated that the children's program is the most in need, but also the most difficult. He hopes to determine a solution for the children's program and ensure that other improvements are sequenced in accordance with those changes.

A Committee member noted that the renovations to the library included a new archive, which can be completed independently and will increase available space for the children's program.

Councilor Albright moved no action necessary of the item in Public Facilities and Councilor Sangiolo moved no action necessary of the item in Programs & Services; both motions carried 5-0.

Referred to Programs & Services, Public Facilities and Finance Committees

#388-16 **Authorize Library Board of Trustees to apply for grant funds for library renovation**
HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting that the City Council authorize the Board of Library Trustees to apply for any state funds which might be able to make improvements and additions to the Newton Free Library and which will defray all or part of the cost of the design, construction and equipping of the library project; and to authorize the Library Trustees to accept and expend any such funds when received without further appropriation. [10/31/16 @ 2:05 PM]

Action: **Public Facilities voted No Action Necessary 5-0 (Councilor Lennon not voting)**
Programs & Services voted No Action Necessary 5-0 (Councilor Hess-Mahan not voting)

Note: See note above.

Respectfully Submitted,
John B. Rice, Chair