

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2005

Present: Ald. Schnipper (Chairman), Albright, Salvucci, Stewart, Yates, Mansfield and Lappin

Absent: Ald. Gerst

Also present: Ald. Johnson, Linsky and Sangiolo

City personnel: A. Nicholas Parnell (Public Buildings Commissioner), Ouida Young (Associate City Solicitor), Arthur Cabral (Budget and Project Specialist; Public Buildings Department), Carolyn Sarno ((Facilities Manager; Public Buildings Department), David Tannozzini (Energy Engineer, Public Buildings Department) and Shawna Sullivan (Committee Clerk)

#122-05 ALD. ALBRIGHT, JOHNSON, LINSKY AND SANGIOLO requesting the adoption of written designer selection procedures consistent with those set forth in model state procedures, guidelines and policies.

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0**

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell and Ouida Young joined the Committee for the discussion of this item. Peter Vanderwarker, Donald Tsiang and Albert Fine of the Designer Selection Committee also joined the Committee for the discussion. The item was previously held by the Committee in order to get input from members of the Designer Selection Committee and the Law Department. The Chairman stated that the item was docketed, in part, because there was concern about the procedure that was used for the selection of the Project Manager. The Chairman asked that the discussion begin with the future and asked the members of the Designer Selection Committee to update the Committee on the process of the selection of the architectural firm, which will design the Newton North High School project.

The Designer Selection Committee has agreed upon general ground rules about the distribution of the RFQS. The Committee has also discussed the timing and roughly speaking the RFQ will be sent out in the next couple of weeks, the next three or four weeks the candidates will be reviewed, a short list will be produced consisting of as little as five or six firms or as many as seven or eight firms than an interview process will take place during July and hopefully the Committee will reach its decision of the three firms to recommend to the Mayor in mid to late July. The Chair than asked what mechanism the Committee will use to announce the time and place of each of the Committee's meetings, as one of the issues in the selection of the project manager was many people were not aware of the critical meeting where the three project managers to be recommended to the Mayor were selected. Mr. Fine responded that the Committee has selected tentative dates for the Committee meetings up until the end of July and if the Committee can hold to all of those dates, they will be published. Unfortunately, there is no set day or location for the meeting due to the change in nature of the meetings as the process moves forward and the members' schedules. The Designer Selection Committee has discussed ways to orchestrate

interviews in order to allow large numbers of interested observers to view the proceedings and than make responses that can be tabulated and presented to the Designer Selection Committee. Therefore, the interviews will be either televised or held in a large space.

The Chairman asked if the RFQ would encourage firms selected as finalists to have some type of design to discuss. The Designer Selection Committee members feel that there are a couple of issues with asking applicants for a concept design. The high school is a very complicated building and there is not enough time to come up with a quality design. The Committee feels that the criteria that needs to be used to select a good architect involves an interview, reference checks, visiting their buildings, sharing experiences of the Committee members involving applicants and not putting the applicants under the gun to come up with a design. The Committee also feels that once a firm is told that they are a finalist it should be two weeks and not be four to six weeks before the Committee sees them again and a firm cannot do a credible design for a \$90,000,000 project in two weeks. Ouida Young added that as part of the Designer Selection Committee's discussion focused on identifying the specific concerns that people thought could be addressed through a design approach. The Committee will ask the semifinalists to deconstruct past projects where they have encountered similar or identical problems, whether they are site problems, participation and incorporation of the public process or educational programming. The semifinalists will be asked to comment on how they have addressed these types of concerns in prior efforts, as part of the interview process. It is not asking what they would do in Newton North but how they have addressed and approached problems in the past. The Designer Selection Committee is very conscious of the concerns that have been raised around the design approach.

Ald. Stewart asked Mr. Vanderwarker what the ideal interview situation was for the interview process. Mr. Vanderwarker responded that a smaller more intimate room that allows the interviewers and interviewees to make eye contact. Mr. Tsiang suggested that perhaps NewTV can air the interviews and the Designer Selection Committee can hold a meeting for public comment after all the interviews are complete. Ald. Stewart asked how the work of reviewing the proposals would be done. Mr. Fine stated that he would be surprised if the Committee received more than fifteen proposals and it is the practice of the Committee for each member to review each of the proposals.

Ald. Albright thanked the members of Designer Selection for all their work and asked to what extent they were comfortable judging on past experience for a future project. Mr. Vanderwarker stated that the members of the committee have been involved in various aspects of building for many years and they have gotten to know architectural firms, warts and all. The members are aware of design skills, quality of consultants, etc...the best firms quickly become apparent. Mr. Fine pointed out that the firm of choice may design four or five alternate plans for Newton North High School, which will be looked at and judged and than a choice will be made by the Design Review Committee. The Chairman asked Commissioner Parnell to inform the Board when this happens so the Board can view the multiple designs.

Ald. Albright felt that there was some confusion regarding the guidelines and whether they apply to the selection of project manager. Ouida Young responded that Act 193 of 2004 requires that

there be a project manager for projects over \$5,000,000. The Act also states that the project manager must be chosen through a qualification-based process. The sheer legal answer to the question of whether the guidelines for the selection of a designer apply to the project manager is no, the committee does not have to follow the guidelines. It is up to the Designer Selection Committee to modify the guidelines if they wish to include the project manager. Ald. Sangiolo inquired whether it is possible to have guidelines for the project manager and if the Board can require those guidelines. Ms. Young responded that it would require an ordinance. Ald. Sangiolo then asked what information the City is asking the designers to look at. Commissioner Parnell stated that the education specifications, the School Committee's design criteria, the updated feasibility study and a good site plan will be included.

Ald. Johnson thanked Commissioner Parnell for providing the Board with a copy of the rankings for the Project Manager. She feels that the whole process of selecting a project manager and designer needs to be transparent to everyone. She encouraged the Designer Selection Committee to make sure everything was as public as possible and to publish everything. She would like people to understand why a selection was being made. Ald. Sangiolo asked when the project would be advertised. Commissioner responded that an advertisement stating that the packets are available on May 15, 2005 in the Central Register.

Ald. Yates asked how the Committee intends to make sure that the references received are accurate. Mr. Vanderwarker stated that it is hard to get accurate references but members will call colleagues in the business and ask for an off the record reference. Ald. Yates requested that the RFQ include a site plan of the pre 1972 high school. Ms. Young explained that the RFQ is not supposed include the site plan. Mr. Vanderwarker stated that the firms will research the site. Ald. Yates responded that he never assumes and would be more comfortable if the firms were made aware of the old school. Commissioner Parnell will reference the site plan on a list of resources and send the site plan to interested firms.

Ald. Linsky thanked the Designer Selection Committee for their efforts. It is the collective goal of all involved to have a world-class building. He is particularly concerned that people will not be able to be involved in the process, as it is taking place in the summer. He feels there is no reason that the City has to rush. He is also concerned that not enough architects are aware of the project and that four weeks is not enough time for firms to respond to the RFQ. Commissioner Parnell stated that he gets calls every day regarding the project and word of the project has spread far and wide. Mr. Fine stated that a month is more than a sufficient amount time to respond to the RFQ. Ald. Linsky urged the Designer Selection Committee to make sure the public has a chance to comment on the plans.

Ald. Stewart does not feel it is right to make the Designer Selection Committee justify their decisions. He is comfortable with the qualifications of the Committee to make these selections and does not want force the members to produce justifications.

Ald. Sangiolo asked why the Designer Selection Committee cannot request concept plans from applicants. Mr. Fine stated that concept plans would not be discouraged. Mr. Tsiang responded

that it takes up to a year to come up with five designs for a site. A firm can make a beautiful presentation of a concept plan and be a terrible architect. Commissioner Parnell stated that there will be many firms that team up to apply for the project.

Ald. Salvucci moved the item no action necessary, as the Designer Selection Committee followed procedure as dictated by State law. The Committee voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#157-05 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$560,000 from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of replacing windows at the Pierce Elementary School.

ACTION: **APPROVED 6-0-1 (Mansfield abstaining)**

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell and Arthur Cabral presented the item to the Committee. The Board previously approved design funds for the windows at Pierce Elementary School. The plans have been completed and the replacement project is ready to begin. The design has been reviewed and approved by the Design Review Committee. Ald. Mansfield was disappointed that the Committee was not provided with the plans for the windows. Commissioner Parnell stated that he would provide copies to the Board before the Finance Committee discussed the item. Ald. Yates moved approval of the item, which carried.

REFERRED TO PUB. FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#202-04 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$150,000 from Free Cash for the purpose of replacing windows at the Pierce Elementary School. (Held 05-19-04)

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 7-0**

NOTE: This docket item is no longer valid, as Docket Item #157-05 is also for the replacement of windows at Pierce School with a change in the funding source. Therefore, a motion of no action necessary was approved.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#158-05 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$149,000 from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of repairing the roof at the Countryside Elementary School.

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: Commissioner Parnell and Arthur Cabral presented the item to the Committee. The roof on the main building of Countryside Elementary School is 20 years old and damaged. Water is getting into the insulation layer in the roof. Ald. Yates asked if the brick work recently done on the school compromised the roof. Mr. Cabral responded that no, it was in a different area and did not have any affect on the roof. Ald. Albright and Mansfield asked for the plans to be reviewed. Mr. Cabral explained the legend on the plan and that infrared scan was performed on the roof showing all of the places

that water had compromised the roof. Ald. Yates moved approval of the item, which carried unanimously.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#159-05 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$405,000 from bonded indebtedness for the purpose of replacing boilers at various school buildings.

ACTION: **APPROVED 4-1-2 (Mansfield opposed; Albright, Yates abstaining)**

NOTE: #159-05 and 159-05(2) were discussed in conjunction. Commissioner Parnell and Arthur Cabral presented the items. The \$30,000 is necessary for design services for the installation of boilers at Burr and Ward Elementary Schools. The design for Bowen Elementary School has already been done and paid for by the School Department. The design work will be done by the City's on-call architects, as the designs are standard. The request for the \$405,000 is to replace the actual boilers and will include disposal of the existing boilers, the new boilers and related equipment and labor. It is best if the boiler replacement is done during the summer when there are no students in the buildings.

The Committee reviewed the breakdown of the cost estimates that were previously provided by the Public Buildings Department. Ald. Mansfield and Yates were concerned that the money for the equipment was being requested at the same time as the design funds. Ald. Mansfield pointed out that the Public Facilities Committee will not be able to review the plans for the boiler. Commissioner Parnell explained that boiler replacement was a standard project and he was able to accurately project the cost of the replacement. The elementary schools are in desperate need of the boilers before the start of the winter. Ald. Yates moved approval of the design funds and \$126,525 needed to replace the boiler at Bowen School as the design has been completed. Ald. Lappin and Stewart were both opposed to delaying the funding, as they felt it was unnecessary to review the plans and enough information had been provided to the Committee. Ald. Lappin moved approval of both items, which carried by a vote of four in favor, one opposed and two abstaining.

REFERRED TO PUBLIC FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#159-05(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$30,000 (from a combination of the Capital Stabilization Fund Bonded Indebtedness and General Purposes funds) for the purpose of procuring architectural design services for the installation of boilers at various school buildings.

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: Please see above note.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman