

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2004

Present: Ald. Schnipper, Gerst, Salvucci, Stewart, Yates, Mansfield and Lappin

Absent: Ald. Albright

Also present: Ald. Johnson, Baker, Sangiolo, Hess-Mahan, Harney, Linsky, Gentile and Vance

City personnel present: Nick Parnell (Commissioner of Public Buildings), Ouida Young (Associate City Solicitor), Susan Heyman (School Committee), Reenie Murphy (School Committee), Nancy Levine (School Committee) and Anne Larner (School Committee)

Appointment by the President of the Board

#337-04 ROBERT O. SMITH, P.E., 55 Chester Street, Newton, 02461 appointed as a member of the Design Review Committee for a term to expire 12/31/05. (60-day Board Action date 10-8-04).

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: Mr. Smith was present for the discussion of his appointment to the Design Review Committee. Mr. Smith is a registered professional engineer who specializes in heating and air conditioning design. He has been a Newton resident since the 1960s. He has served on the Citizens' Commission on Energy and would like to serve the Committee as a member of the Design Review Committee.

Ald. Baker is very pleased that Mr. Smith is willing to serve, as his expertise will benefit the Newton North High School project. Ald. Yates asked if Mr. Smith had ever been in the high school and observed the problems with heating and ventilation and whether he could offer any solutions to the HVAC problems, while the new high school is built. Mr. Smith responded that he has been in the school but not when it was fully occupied and would need further information on the HVAC system in order to offer any solution. Ald. Gerst asked if Mr. Smith had reviewed any of the reports on Newton North. Mr. Smith stated that he has not seen any reports in regards to Newton North but would like an opportunity to read them. Ald. Mansfield suggested that Mr. Smith also look at the reports and plans for Newton South High School, as Ald. Salvucci has stated that there appear to be HVAC problems at Newton South. Commissioner Parnell will provide the reports. Ald. Stewart asked if Mr. Smith had any experience with school buildings. Mr. Smith has worked on many schools.

Ald. Mansfield moved approval of the appointment. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the item. The Committee thanked Mr. Smith for his willingness to serve on the Design Review Committee.

REFERRED TO PROG. & SERV., PUB. FACILITIES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#320-04(2) **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE** proposing a resolution to His Honor the Mayor, the Superintendent of Schools and the Design Review Committee requesting an analysis of reusing all or part of the space at the existing Newton North High School by the City or through leasing to a private establishment.

PROG & SERV APPROVED 5-2 (Baker and Fischman opposed) on 7/21/04

ACTION: **APPROVED 4-3 (Schnipper, Salvucci and Lappin**

NOTE:

Ald. Johnson presented the item to the Committee. Ald. Sangiolo proposed the resolution after she learned that the reuse of Newton North High School had not been investigated. The Programs and Service Committee approved the resolution during the July joint meeting of Programs and Services and Public Facilities Committees. It was then decided to refer the resolution to the Public Facilities Committee and Finance Committee at the August 9, 2004 Board of Aldermen meeting.

Ald. Lappin asked if the space needed to be used for athletic fields. Ald. Johnson responded that it has not really been studied. Ald. Stewart feels that it is hard to oppose an analysis, although he does not support reusing the building at this time. Commissioner Parnell stated that he would look at previous studies. The athletic and field space has to come from somewhere. Ald. Gerst asked how much time and money would be needed for a study. No one was sure of the time frame or the funds required for a study. Ald. Johnson explained that Representative Khan has expressed some interest in an art center to be located in Newton and that Newton North may be an appropriate site but not at the expense of the educational program. Ald. Mansfield felt that it would be valuable to look at the reuse of the building. He also stated that if the City were to use the building for something other than a City use it would trigger the reuse process. President Baker was asked why he voted against the resolution. President Baker explained that he was concerned that the School Department needed the whole site for the new school. President Baker also agreed to work with the Clerk's Office to formulate questions to the Law Department regarding the reuse process. Ald. Salvucci pointed out that there was an article in the "TAB" stating that the whole site is needed for the new school. He questioned why the City would want to use the building as it has been determined that the building cannot be renovated safely. He also questioned where the money was going to come from to fund the study.

Members of the School Committee than spoke on why the School Department feels it is necessary to dedicate the entire site to the new school. Susan Heyman

explained that the site is very small and the students and staff use every inch of available space. She cannot imagine how two uses could coexist on a site that already has parking and access problems. She also questioned how the City would fund the renovation of the building. Ald. Sangiolo responded that it would be possible that private developers could fund the renovation. She also explained that it would be irresponsible if the City did not look at reusing the building. The building is assessed for many millions of dollars. Reenie Murphy echoed Susan Heyman and stated that parents feel strongly that as many athletics as possible remain on site.

Ald. Schnipper stated that she could not support the resolution as the site is already too small for a high school and it is not logistically possible for the students to go to classes in both the old and new buildings, as they will not have time to traverse the distance between the two buildings. She also explained that she would love to have a cultural center in Newton but feels that if it were to be located at Newton North it would diminish the educational program and increase operating costs by bussing students for sports. She also pointed out that it would create further traffic in an already congested neighborhood. She is saddened that the building cannot be renovated but believes the building needs to be demolished. The building does not work and the new school needs the whole site. Therefore, time and money should not be spent on something that cannot work. Ald. Gerst feels that the City must look at the possibility of reusing the building, as once it is gone the City cannot get it back. Ald. Yates supported the resolution although it is probably not feasible to put another use at the site. He feels that it is important to look at all possibilities before dismissing them.

A motion to approve the item was made, which carried by a vote of four in favor and three opposed.

#320-04(4) ALD. SANGIOLO, HESS-MAHAN, JOHNSON, BAKER AND HARNEY
proposing an ordinance to create a project manager selection committee for major City construction projects.

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

NOTE: The Chair informed the Committee that she had spoken with the Mayor earlier in the afternoon and he suggested that the Designer Selection Committee should choose the project manager for construction projects. Ald. Sangiolo explained that she had docketed this item in response to the concerns of several Aldermen regarding how the project manager was selected. At the joint meeting of the Programs and Services Committee and Public Facilities Committee in July, the Mayor stated that it was his decision on who to hire as a project manager. She felt that many Aldermen believed that there needed to be further input into the choice. She pointed out that there was a draft ordinance attached to the agenda for the

meeting explaining the membership and roll of the project manager selection committee.

Ouida Young explained that new State law requires that the City must hire a project manager for any building project that will cost more than \$1,500,000. The law also requires that the project manager be chosen using a selection process that is driven by qualifications.

Joseph Michelson, Chair of the Designer Selection Committee, stated that when the project manager for Newton South High School was chosen the Designer Selection Committee followed the process outlined in the new state law. He explained that an RFQ was sent out and several companies applied, all applications were reviewed, the best-qualified applicants were interviewed and the Designer Selection Committee forwarded their top choices to the Mayor. At the request of President Baker for input from other members of the Designer Selection Committee, Mr. Albert Fine stated that he believes that the Committee has the expertise to recommend a qualified project manager for city projects.

Ald. Johnson asked what kind of criteria would be used in selecting the project manager for Newton North. Mr. Michelson responded that he could not answer the question at this time, as the Committee has not reached the point of creating an RFQ. The Committee will begin work on the RFQ at the next meeting. Ald. Johnson would like strong communication between the Designer Selection Committee and the Board. Commissioner Parnell will provide the Board with the RFQ when it is prepared. Ald. Johnson also asked Ms. Young to provide the Board with the new legislation for project manager selection (attached). Ald. Mansfield was pleased to hear that there is already a process in place to choose a project manager. He suggested that the City ordinances be updated to include the new requirements. He also pointed out that when appointments to the Designer Selection Committee are made that it is important to keep in mind that the appointee should have some familiarity with the qualifications for project managers. Ald. Yates suggested that a new item be docketed to amend the ordinances.

Ald. Yates moved no action necessary, which the Committee voted unanimously.

#320-04(5) ALD. SANGIOLO & HARNEY proposing an ordinance to require the Designer Selection Committee in conjunction with the Board of Aldermen hold a design competition for construction projects where the total cost exceeds \$90 million.

ACTION: **HELD 7-0**

NOTE: The Chairmen explained that there would be a public hearing on a design competition for the new high school on September 22, 2004, so she anticipates that this item will be held until the public has an opportunity to voice their

opinions. She would like the discussion to be an opportunity to raise any questions that the Board members may have regarding a competition and to listen to the Designer Selection Committee's opinion on design competitions.

Committee members asked Ms. Young if it was legal for the City to hold a design competition. Ms. Young stated that she is not prepared to comment at this time. She stated that the City must follow the process laid out in the state law but is hesitant to comment on how a competition fits into the process. She would like to know what type of competition is being proposed. She would like to hear the discussion to determine what types of competitions are being considered.

President Baker asked to hear from the Designer Selection Committee. The Chair of the Designer Selection Committee, Joseph Michelson, stated that the Designer Selection Committee would comply with the wishes and rules of the City regarding the high school project. However, several members of the Committee are willing to comment on design competition. Mr. Peter Vanderwaker spoke first. He has participated in competitions as a juror and a submitter. He is not in favor of a design competition, as it requires a jury of qualified professionals that have to be paid for their time and it is very time consuming. He asked the Board to think about the time and money involved in a competition. He felt the Board must also look at a timely completion and remember that it is not just building design but programmatic design, as well when constructing a school building.

Jeremiah Eck is not in favor of a design competition for many reasons. As an architect, he has participated in many competitions as both a juror and submitter. Competitions are very time consuming and expensive. The City has very little experience in design competitions and there is no guarantee that the competition will produce a better design. Direct communication is discouraged in a competition. There is no magic bullet for a better high school. Mr. Eck also feels that there will be no problem finding a great architect for the high school project. Mr. Albert Fine echoed Mr. Eck's sentiments. Mr. Ed White, who is a builder, stated that his company has build three award winning buildings and none of these buildings were done through a competition. He reiterated the belief that a competition is too time consuming and expensive.

Several Aldermen requested further information on the design competition. Ald. Johnson would like to know what the increase in money and time would be if the City were to hold a competition. Ald. Yates would like further information on the process used for Perth Amboy High School competition held in New Jersey and examples of current competition projects. Ald. Linsky suggested looking at having a two-track process and adding the design competition winner as a fourth recommendation to the Mayor. Ald. Yates believes that when Chicago held their design competition it was a two-track process. Ald. Stewart requested other examples of high schools designed through a competition. Mr. Eck explained that

there are very few public high schools in the United States that have been designed through a competition. Ald. Baker requested a recapitulation of the library process, as it is an outstanding building from an architectural standpoint. He asked how the Designer Selection Committee requested applicants to respond to design challenge and what criteria would be used for a design competition. Ald. Mansfield would also like to know how the architect for the library was chosen and a brief summary of how the Designer Selection Committee chose the architects for the library. Mr. Michelson stated that the Designer Selection Committee visited all the previous works of the architects for the Library. Ald. Gentile would like the differences between how the City currently chooses an architect and a design competition. He needs to know that the proposal will provide a better building.

Ald. Harney explained that he co-docketed this item because he has spoken with many citizens who are in favor of a competition. He does not want to rush into this project and feels that nothing should be off the table. There is no need to rush and it is important to explore the option of a competition. Ald. Salvucci stated that the Board should listen to the members of the Designer Selection Committee as they are experts and all have experience with competitions. Ald. Sangiolo sees a competition adding concepts and drawings. She is not necessarily advocating a full-blown competition.

Commissioner Parnell reviewed the process of selecting an architect. It is as follows:

1. A request for qualifications is prepared asking for past history and experiences with all the studies of proposed project attached.
2. The RFQ is widely advertised in architectural magazines and trades.
3. Interested architects call for the RFQ packet.
4. A deadline for submittal is set.
5. Returned packets are circulated to Designer Selection Committee members.
6. A meeting is called to review qualifications.
7. The Committee chooses whom to interview.
8. The Committee selects three architects to forward to the Mayor.

Mr. Parnell also stated that not every architect is qualified to design a school building.

There was a brief discussion regarding whether there were schematics submitted by the possible architects for the Library and whether the City could request schematics from architects applying for the High School project. Jeremiah Eck stated that it would be very costly, as it takes thousands of hours to prepare schematics. Ald. Lappin moved hold, which carried unanimously.

REFERRED TO PROG&SERV, PUB. FAC & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#320-04(3) **PRESIDENT BAKER AND ALD. SANGIOLO** requesting discussion of elements of a resolution to help shape the scope of work for initial design services for the construction of a new Newton North High School, including, in addition to the program of educational elements, consideration of the experience of similar projects elsewhere, including problems and successes; long term operating costs; design team engineering experience and expertise; neighborhood input; adaptive reuse, if any, of the existing facilities; and how, in light of these and other relevant factors, the designers would propose to respond to the challenge of a new high school building.

ACTION: **APPROVED 7-0**

NOTE: President Baker docketed this item in response to previous discussions on the high school. The item is designed to focus on what was brought up and questioned so the RFQ and RFP can include the issues and allow designers an opportunity to address them. The item is not meant to address the educational program.

Ald. Stewart believes the approach should be to look at the RFQ before it is sent out. The Board is a policy body not a detail body. Ald. Schnipper asked if high performance building design is part of the RFQ. Commissioner Parnell has received call from high performance building advocates and the general gist has been incorporated into the draft RFQ. The Designer Selection Committee and the Design Review Committee will jointly craft the RFQ. Commissioner Parnell will share the RFQ with the Public Facilities Committee.

Ald. Yates moved approval of the item, which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sydra Schnipper, Chairman