

PRELIMINARY SITE OPTIONS PUBLIC PRESENTATION

MEETING DATE. September 25, 2021

PROJECT: Senior Center Architectural Design Project
Worthington, Massachusetts

PARTICIPANTS: TOWN OF WORTHINGTON RESIDENTS:
Approx. 40-50 persons in attendance
COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Peg O'Neal, Worthington SB
Phyllis Dassatti, COA
Marie Burkhart
Kevin O'Connor
Dave Christopolis, HCDC
Kathy Ford, HCDC, recording
ARCHITECT:
John MacMillan, Caolo & Bieniek

1. Dave Christopolis, Executive Director of Hilltown CDC gave a brief history that has brought us to this funding design phase of the project, and introduced John MacMillan of Caolo & Bieniek Architects.

John MacMillan referred to display boards that had been available for viewing in advance of meeting start. He presented three preliminary siting options and two building options for the project (pdf's of drawings attached) per preliminary program from the 2019 study. Priority was given to the building's association with Town Hall and location of parking.

Site Option A positions a rectangular building perpendicular to Town Hall with front facing street and parking to west, south and east. Option B turns the building front to face south with parking at east and south sides, and Option C, similar to A, places parking at north between Town Hall and new building. It was noted that of the three options, Option C works for the bldg in either orientation.

The following design features of each option were briefly reviewed: orientation of building, how much sun in rooms throughout day especially in morning hours, setback from street and Town Hall, maintaining new building sf less than 5000 sf to eliminate need for sprinklers, access of building entrance from parking and increase in number of handicap spaces, stormwater management, separate septic field from town hall system, wide porch/patio, service functions hidden in back of building.

The building plans are developed to prioritize more usage in morning hours with a cafe located adjacent to the entry and kitchen. There would be three unisex toilet rooms, a large dividable multi-purpose room, several classrooms and offices, a kitchen with rear access and storage/utility spaces. The A floor plan is 4,250 sf. The B floor plan is 4,517 sf because of the additional hallway. Of the two building options, the primary differences would be location of the tandem restrooms and if the additional corridor. The corridor would reduce the exposed to weather and travel distance between bldgs by +100' and allow access to classroom without passing through Multi-purpose space. .

After presentating site plan and building options, public discussion was invited. In general, site **Option B** was the favored option. In this, the connection and access to town hall is maintained more clearly, parking is closer to the front door, services are well screened in the back, open patio also serves as emergency egress, massing of proposed gables matches town hall massing, storm water can be captured efficiently in swale and basin flow across property, and can include bonus parking (around back) for Town Hall. The following questions/answers and comments were made:

2. *Comment:* Options A & C compromise the quality of existing green space next to town hall with parking in front view and extent of new building and parking to the south.

3. *Question:* If the town hall needs to expand, will there be enough space for an addition if necessary?

Answer: A& B options do not prevent that. However it was clarified by committee member Kevin O'Connor that a separate and parallel study is currently underway to re-allocate office space within the existing town hall footprint and that this project is funded only for the design of a senior center.

4. *Question:* Can building in Option B be set back further from front?

Answer: Setback for building in all options is approx. 50' (code min. is 35') A deeper setback can be looked at.

5. *Comment/Question:* "I am really excited about this project. I am also feeling protective about the unique green space that exists now and a concern about open space, and where we can re-create that open space in project. I am also protective of the gym/main hall space in town hall. How do we preserve what we have?"

Answer: The intent is to keep gym space as it is in town hall. The issue of open space will be addressed in the site plan development of the eleven (11) acres this new building will sit on. It was noted that the land slopes behind in a way to create new interesting open spaces, like a natural amphitheater. John M. clarified that the current driveway could also be moved to access the rear of the property in this consideration.

6. *Comment/Question:* Prefers Option B but concerned about north facing community room in the building plan. Can a different plan be considered?

Answer: John M. clarified that the quality of welcoming in morning hours for optimal socialization is a design priority and will be looking at how to develop collaboration between the informal spaces used to gather daily and the larger community room.

7. *Question:* Are 60 parking spaces necessary? Can it be reduced to 20?

Answer: John M. clarified that it will be up to the town and zoning to determine parking minimums.

8. *Comment:* Currently, COA monthly potluck draws 70-80 persons. The proposed multi-purpose room is not sized to accommodate this.

Answer: There were multiple suggestions to provide additional dividable partitions between spaces to enlarge capacity of multi-purpose room.

9. *Question:* Are the hardscape exterior spaces (patios) covered or uncovered?

Answer: Yes, it is preferred, John M. clarified that it will come down to cost.

10. *Question:* Is a health office necessary?

Answer: Phyllis Dassatti, Interim COA Director clarified that coordination service for seniors in such an office is desirable, where flu clinics can occur and essential services separate from the Health Center could be provided.

11. It was clarified that the current kitchen in town hall is operational but not adequate for the extent and access to proposed new COA activities.

12. *Comments* (J.P Welch):

- have one toilet room lockable from outside of off-hours public use
- provide adequate exterior (hose bib) frost hydrants (*John M. said will be provided per code*)
- provide outdoor pavilion like structure at patio or with concrete floor with vinyl sides, to extend season, with hose bib and area for outdoor grills
- consider carefully orientation for natural light
- NO LIGHTS LEFT ON ALL NIGHT. motion lights only
- Outside performance space. A small stage at the bottom of the hill and people sit on the hillside of grass. This does not need to be fancy but the stage will need power.

13. *Question:* Can the Fiddlehead Inn, potentially up for sale, be considered as an alternate site?

Answer: Kathy Ford clarified that current funding procured for this design phase is based on the previous planning study when the then Blackburn Inn was no longer for sale. Terms of this current funding do not allow us to make a change now. It was also clarified that the COA considered this building years ago and found the spaces to be too limiting for large capacity use, and the Town would have to purchase the building in addition to costly renovations.

14. *Comment:* It was noted that lighting/heating/acoustics are important issues for the elderly population.

15. *Comment:* The use of the building for intergenerational activities in addition to the quality of natural light will be important.

16. *Question:* To what degree will this be a green building?

Answer: John M. clarified that the building will not be LEED certified but will be designed following the main LEED principles for design. For instance, in site Option B, the south facing roof can be utilized for solar, mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems will emphasize energy efficiency to receive rebates, and there will be lots of daylighting.

17. *Question:* How will the exterior cladding be designed to minimize painting maintenance?

Answer: The most cost effective option is vinyl siding. The next best option is cement board, which allows more trim options for compatible (historic) trim detail and only needs to be painted every 12-15 years.

18. *Question:* What are the limits of the multi-purpose room for gathering like music/entertaining functions?

Answer: Occupancy of room will be determined for maximum capacity of chair seating in addition to table. and chair seating

19. *Question:* Will dark sky lighting criteria be used in the design?

Answer: John M clarified that we would try to use practical methods, mostly that all exterior lights would be turned off by a time clock at a designated time. Photometric studies of parking area will provide information for minimum of light required, use of low poles, and possible landscape buffers provided if necessary.

20. *Comment:* Getting notices of future meetings and information about the progress of the project to the town at large was discussed. It was stressed that it is important to get as many people involved and informed about the process as possible. Kathy Ford indicated that public notices will be posted in popular town locations, Library, Town Hall, Corner Store, Maples, Health Center, on Town website and in seniors newsletters. Public and Committee meeting minutes will be posted and available on the town website.

21. There will be a follow-up PUBLIC presentation of the final preliminary design, tentatively scheduled for Saturday October 16 at 10:00 in the Conwell School tents, to be confirmed.

cc. Committee Members, John MacMillan (C&B), minutes and drawings posted to town website