

Astoria Public Library
Astoria Library Board Special Meeting
March 11, 2013
3:30 p.m.

Present: Library Board members David Oser, Gregory Lumbra, Arlene LaMear, and Susan Brooks. ALFA representative Steve Unknown; Staff Library Director Jane Tucker and Community Development Director Brett Estes.

Call to Order: Chairman David Oser called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

The Library Board proceeded to Agenda Item 8(a) at this time. During the discussion, the Board consented to continue all regular business items to the March 26 2013 Library Board meeting and address Item 8(d).

Approval of Minutes:

Item 2(a): Library Board Meeting of January 22, 2013

Approval of Agenda:

Library Director's Report:

Board Reports:

Item 5(a): Liaison Report from City Council

Update on ALFA Activities:

New Business:

Item 7(a): Oregon Library Legislative Day is April 4, 2013

Chairman Oser noted that he, Ms. Brooks and Mr. Lumbra would be attending the April 4th event. Talking with legislators about the library renovation and other projects could be useful.

Old Business:

Item 8(a): Library Renovation Project

Chairman Oser announced that Director Estes would give an overview regarding the student panels prepared by the University of Oregon (UofO) architecture students for the Library Revitalization.

Community Development Director Estes stated the UofO requested that the City allow students in an architectural programming class to work on the library renovations. Programming involves looking at how different uses inside a building relate to one another, not design details. The class focuses on issues such as sightlines of open areas and placing children's areas next to young adults.

- In October 2012, the students attended a workshop in Astoria with Library Board Members, ALFA Board Members, City Councilors, and Library staff. The students asked questions and conducted interviews to gain an understanding of the issues. The students toured the building and walked around the block to gain some context of the entire space. At the end of the workshop each group, including the students, presented their initial findings. Five teams of students collaborated to develop the panels at their design studio. A group of people, including Chairman Oser, Mr. Lumbra, Director Tucker, Director Estes, and City Manager Benoit, traveled to Portland for the design charrette to provide feedback. Ruth Metz presented a lecture on the future of libraries, and everyone, including architecture professors and professionals, then provided feedback to the students. The groups worked collaboratively to prepare a final presentation that incorporated the various elements preferred by the clients with direction from their professors.
- The panels before the Board were the final set of panels for the project and would help introduce the library remodel to the community. While some media attention has been given to this effort, he

suggested exhibiting the panels to the public over three or four weeks, explaining the details of the project to encourage people to start thinking about the remodel process. As a class project, the panels might not capture everything the library needs, but that is where the library futurist will come in. However, these panels do provide a good opportunity to start conversations. Prior to unveiling the panels to the public, City Council should be invited to preview the panels so they can understand any issues and be prepared for any questions the public may ask.

- If the Library Board is interested in proceeding with determining a building program, staff recommends that a library futurist/planner be hired to begin the formal process of ascertaining the library's needs. This would involve more formal public interaction and dialogue, ultimately leading to a set of recommendations with which to move forward.

Chairman Oser asked if the funding for the library futurist would come from the City or from funds set aside for the library. Director Tucker replied the estimated cost of the futurist is about \$50,000, which will be paid from the Logan Fund. Director Estes noted from the Forest Grove Library fieldtrip that a set of goals, rough cost estimate, and public input are all necessary prior to fundraising. He hopes the library planner/futurist would help with securing these elements.

Steve asked what to expect from the futurist, would there be a presentation. Director Estes believed the futurist would work under the direction of the Library Board with input from stakeholders in the community and then give some sort of final presentation. When issues arise during the planning process, the futurist's plan will be referenced, similar to a master plan. In this case, financial issues will also be involved as this is a capital project, and hopefully, the futurist could recommend fundraising or grant opportunities or solutions. The Library Board will need to make a recommendation to City Council to ensure the futurists' plan is formally accepted, which will make fundraising easier.

Gregory Lumbra confirmed that the \$50,000 futurist package includes an architectural consultant who will also generate cost estimates.

Discussion continued about publicly displaying the panels and the anticipated procedure regarding the library renovation with these key comments:

- At this time, the idea is to display the panels at the library and designate times to invite the public to discuss the panels. Just displaying the panels may not give the City a good idea of the public's interpretations of the panels.
- People must understand that the panels were not displaying the final design, but the students' work.
- The opening night of the exhibition should include staff and Library Board members. Library Board and ALFA members' participation in this process is key to public relations. Anytime citizens get involved in a project, more people are willing to donate funds. Communicating citizen-to-citizen results in greater buy-in than when City Councilor or staff talks to citizens.
- The panels should be displayed so people can look at them any time enabling those unable to attend a meeting to provide feedback. A comment box or tablet could be provided for comments and input.
- It was noted the panels should be laminated for protection, which costs money and staff time. Director Estes did not want to spend too much money; however the Engineering Department plotted the panels and if one was damaged, it could be recreated in about 10 minutes.
 - Printing brochures from the same files used by the Engineering Department would incur design costs and getting all of the necessary information on a brochure may be difficult.
 - While putting the laminated panels in a book might be easier for some people, the smaller-sized panels are difficult to read.
- Having a Board member explaining that the panels are students' work and not the final design is necessary. Displaying the panels in an area where library staff could answer questions would be beneficial, as well as posting the panels on the website.
 - Ms. Metz expressed interest in attending the opening night so she can get feedback from those viewing the panels.
- Regarding hiring a planner / futurist, a scope of work would need to be developed that describes the tasks to be completed. That scope could be submitted as a recommendation from the Library Board to City Council to go out to bid. The Library Board does not have the authority to hire a futurist; a bid process must also take place. The Library Board's recommendation would not be for a particular futurist.
 - The Library Board should have a clear idea about what deliverables the scope of work will include, which is a plan with timelines, funding estimates, funding methods, etc. That plan will allow the project to move forward after the futurist has completed their work.

- Staff is responsible for presenting the Library Board's recommendations to City Council, who will make the final decision to approve a contract.
 - Councilor LaMear believed Council could approve a recommendation requesting that a particular futurist be given a contract without having to go out to bid. Director Estes noted the sole source process requires a public hearing before Council to address specific findings if that were the case and the City Attorney would need to be consulted.
- The process of presenting contract negotiations and recommendations to City Council was explained. Library Board members can testify before City Council.
- Councilor LaMear wanted to ensure that City Council saw the panels prior to displaying them publicly. Director Tucker suggested inviting Councilors one at a time to allow time to be able ask questions.
 - The timeline or deadline for the futurist to complete the work would be included in the scope of work. The futurist would know best how long it would take to complete the work. Having a clear scope of work is important as the Board must know what to expect for the \$50,000.
- There was discussion on how many community meetings should be held. Community meetings are important and at least two presentations should be scheduled so more people have an opportunity to attend. More specificity would need to be developed in the scope.
 - The timeline for construction is unknown at this point. Essentially, it comes down to money and the process of getting funding in place. With the Garden of Surging Waves, the project moves ahead as grant dollars are received.
- The first priority is to hire a futurist, and then as the futurist is finishing their work, a grant writer could be hired and the Board could work to coordinate any local fundraising. Grant applications should not be written until the project's goals are clear.
 - Instead of design plans, the futurist would create a building program that defines the desired elements, building uses, services offered, and sight lines. A cost analysis would clearly define the costs, even down to the number of chairs, and reveal any gaps in funding.
 - Agreement or buy-in from the groups involved with the library renovation is necessary as granting entities need to ensure that stability exists in a project; they do not grant funds to projects that have not been decided at the local level.
- Concern was expressed about the project losing momentum if the panels are presented to the community and the City is not close to getting a futurist on board. Director Estes replied that it was staff's goal is to present the panels to the public and in April and a contract for a futurist to City Council in May 2013.
 - Regarding a question as to the grant which was recently approved for the Astoria Senior Center, Mr. Estes stated the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) defines certain eligible projects and CDBG sponsored facilities for senior citizens of a particular age. The CDBG grant approved for the Senior Center could not be applied to libraries.
- Director Tucker stated everyone is aware that the library needs updated facilities, so it is time to concentrate on creating excitement about the project and stop talking about how bad the library is.
- As the public begins to ask about the project, the Board was encouraged to ask the public about their vision and for feedback, especially if they opposed the renovations.
 - Such questions could be sent via email to the Friends' contact list.
 - The Lower Columbia Preservation Society's newsletter had an article by Brant White opposing the renovation that Library staff should read.
- It is important that everyone contribute to the project's vision; it should not come from staff. The City can assist the Board by keeping them informed of what is happening next in the process.
- The City webpage could have a direct link to the library's site so visitors could get updates about what is happening with the project. Ami does a good job of keeping the library's website and social media posts updated.

Chairman Oser appreciated the discussion which helped clarify the relationship between the Library Board and City Council. He urged Councilor LaMear, Director Tucker and Director Estes to give the Library Board direction about what needs to be done, adding he was concerned about the Board overstepping its authority.

Councilor LaMear noted that Council relies heavily on the City's boards because they know what is happening and why. She believes Council would support what the Library Board recommends.

The Library Board proceeded to Item 8(d): Review of the Student Panels at this time.

Item 8(b) Naming the Fundraising Non-Profit

Item 8(c): Newspaper Column

Item 8(d): Review of the Student Panels

The Board and staff reviewed the displayed Student Panels with the following key comments:

- First Panel: Responded to comments about reorienting the building's entrance to provide better access to activities occurring on Duane Street. The new entrance created a main corridor that connects with the entrance on 10th Street. An east/west corridor ties the building to the adjacent Waldorf Hotel property. The meeting room is placed toward the front of the building for easier access afterhours. The project was phased assuming money would be an issue
 - Board members and staff liked the chairs, fireplace, lower shelves, and how the transition to the Waldorf Hotel was addressed.
 - Some groups concentrated on architecture more than others. Rather than removing the panels adding some clearstory windows was suggested to allow more light to enter the building.
- Second Panel: Included a project statement, which resonated with many people at the design charrette. The different uses were connected to a core service area and that design was applied to the existing building footprint, retaining the existing building entrances. Half of the mezzanine was retained and had an office looking down. A courtyard leading to City Hall was created either by removing the back portion of the Waldorf building, or building new building. The panel showed the square footage of each of the library's programmed areas
 - The idea of expanding downtown to all the blocks south is part of this.
 - The courtyard is secure, eliminating worry about people using the space after hours.
 - The mezzanine would require an elevator and two entrances/exits to the mezzanine level.
 - Having a community meeting room is a necessity in the community. This feature was not shown due to the photo staff removed showing the Waldorf Hotel replaced with a solid glass [inaudible]. This feature included a café, bookstore and the lobby leading to a beautiful meeting room where the glass walls could be locked so only the meeting space was accessible during off-hours.
 - This proposal featured a four-story building. The elevator, shown in the removed photo, provides access to a historical materials library on the second story and rentable space on the third and fourth floors. The first story was the library and meeting space.
 - This was a fantastic [inaudible], but it was expensive. The students did not take budget into consideration, but many of the items people have been asking for were included on this panel. Once the budget is determined, the challenge will be to decide whether to go for what citizens really want. The goal is to develop a realistic plan.
 - This panel also phased the project, with the library first, and the Waldorf addressed second.
 - In an earlier request to demolish the Waldorf Building, one of the reasons the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) voted to deny the request was that no definite plans existed for the library renovation at that time.
- Third Panel: Had more focus on design, , and that group received some feedback with that issue by some professors. The library connected to City Hall via a corridor and a new entrance to Duane Street would be created through the Waldorf. The Flag Room was moved to the Waldorf space.
 - The daylight entry was nice.
 - A second exhibit noted the technical facts of who uses the library and how the space would be used. Many people at the charrette liked how the needs and wants were connected to the goals the team identified as part of their project.
 - The team also broke the uses down into blocks showing the amount of square feet for each concept as well as the adjacency.
 - Three entrances are proposed. The entrance on 10th Street was removed; the entrance from the parking lot remains and entrances at the front and on the side to the Flag Room were added.
 - This panel suggests tearing down the Waldorf and rebuilding a new Flag Room in the back with a courtyard at street level to allow for access to the meeting room after the library has closed.
 - As presented, a tremendous amount of square footage is not used. Having moveable walls would integrate the Flag Room so the space could be used.
 - Library staff was separated from library activities. While visibility was a high need, this concept addressed staff efficiencies. The circulation desk was the same as that in the Tillamook Library. Much of staff's work would be done in a backroom, keeping the circulation desk area very clean.
 - The walls could be glass for better visibility.

- These students and others considered the current plumbing of the building so it would not need to be replaced.
- Having the hallway in back for access was nice, but it could also be a blind spot.
- The students were told that the building's façade could not be altered, but these students suggested that the Board consider switching the wide aggregate and narrow windows so the building would have larger windows.
 - Director Estes looked forward to responses about the Third Panel, even though it focused more on design.
- Only one team included the basement, and all but one team included use of the Waldorf space. It is critical to explain to people that the library is considering use of the Waldorf.
- Fourth Panel: Did not include the Waldorf, and proposed a two-story building with a skylight and light wells to bring light into the basement. Adjacencies were considered. Moveable panels would allow for flexible use of space. An entry was located at the corner of 10th and Duane. The parking location would allow for easy access by strollers. The basement contained technology/computers, group work space and historical periodicals.
 - Other libraries use security measures in two-story buildings, rather than increasing staff. A two-story building could provide areas for illegal activity.
 - This panel utilizes ramp ways which provided sight lines between the two floors.
 - The children's area was like a ball pit.
 - The Board really liked the corner entry, although the 10th Street entry faced incoming storms.
 - One concept included a beautiful glass enclosure at the entrance that was lit from behind; such an enclosure would provide protection from storms.
 - Glass floors could be used to increase sightlines to the basement. The pros and cons of glass floors were discussed. Several examples were discussed.
- Fifth Panel: For the final class, the students wrote out the different components of the whole program and integrated the components from a list of ideas, such as the light wells, having the courtyard in the back, some sort of structure in the front, etc. This final panel suggests two stories as a possibility. It includes a mezzanine and involves the hotel area.
 - The animal theme was nice.
 - Currently, cleaning costs are based on square footage of the entire building even though the meeting room stays locked. Flexible space is a positive component.
- Most of the student panels suggest glass for better sight lines, but architects do not use walls much anymore; instead areas of indicators are used, such as lower shelving oriented a certain way for better visibility. Many ways exist to increase visibility.
- The panels do not represent the final plan, but show a culmination of the best ideas to encourage conversation about the project. The public needs to know this is just brainstorming, though some people may still believe these are the final plans. The response is to explain that the panels are like art pieces and are meant to start conversation. Everyone has a different response to art, which gets people talking. The panels will help people understand what is possible.
 - Some visceral reactions to the panels could be expected. The panels are expected to do the same as pictures displayed during the Riverfront Visioning.
- The architect would address sustainability and seismic safety issues. Following the work by the futurist and grant writer and when enough money is raised, an architect will be hired to draft the final design, which would involve even more public input. City Council may need to make some decisions on architectural design and then construction would take place.
- It was noted that over the next 50 years, it might be nice to have use of the basement and roof; perhaps some kind of space that could be used as a concert hall or art museum.
 - The basement has a lot of square footage is not being used. Some students talked about renting out the space. If a recommendation to use the basement was developed, additional costs for installing an elevator and potentially additional staff would need to be factored in.

The Board and staff continued discussion about presenting the Student Panels to the public with these key additional comments:

- It was felt that Board members and staff should be available when the panels displayed as they may not speak for themselves without interpretation. Communicating that the panels represent a body of work compiled by students as a learning exercise for their class is important.
 - It was suggested that a brochure or pamphlet could cause confusion as some will mistake the pamphlets for final plans.

- Steve offered to ask if ALFA would be willing to fund a portfolio of the panels to make the panels more available and portable.
- Community engagement with the futurist is important. Director Estes believed ALFA and ALFA funding could best assist the library by spreading the word about the process when the Library Board and City Council have decisions to make rather than funding a portfolio at this time.
- Public burn out regarding the students' work was a concern because people may not want to participate later when there will be other opportunities for citizens to provide feedback. Public input will be necessary during the library planner / futurists work.
- The panels need to be publicly displayed so Board members and staff could talk with citizens one-on-one to understand the community's thoughts. Having someone at each panel to talk and receive feedback would minimize any faulty interpretations.
 - Asking people for their opinions about specific concepts or components could result in Board members and staff directing the conversation. Simply hearing comments from the public as they react to what they see will be more beneficial.
- Holding two or three public open houses in April in the Flag Room was suggested with one meeting on a Saturday. The Library Board and staff would be present to discuss the panels with attendees.
 - National Library Week is April 14 – 20, 2013, which would be a good time to have a meeting. Other dates were also discussed.
- Gathering newspaper articles to create a scrapbook to show how the project has progressed would help inform those unable to attend meetings or that come late into the process. The first article in *The Astorian* about the library renovation was terrific.
- Following a lengthy discussion, the Board determined that making the architectural students' work the focus of the open houses and not the library's final design would help clarify that the panels were in no way considered final library designs. Having Professor Huggins and the students present would affirm that the panels are students' work. Additional comments included:
 - Paper copies of the panels could be displayed as having them mounted or framed might imply they are actual architectural plans.
 - A sign could be placed over each panel stating, "Starting the Discussion".
 - Inviting local students to the meeting was suggested
 - Director Estes agreed to contact Chelsea Gorrow for a potential article in *The Daily Astorian* about this project being a community outreach partnership that helps both the students and library. The public would be invited to view the students' work and provide feedback.

Board Member Comments: Chairman Oser announced Emily Hill has resigned from the Board to attend graduate school for nursing. Any suggestions for a Board member could be emailed to him or staff and discussed at the next meeting.

The Board discussed the need to give the library renovation project a formal name and agreed the library planner / futurist should be consulted to come up with some name ideas.

Staff will present a general outline for a scope of work at the March 26, 2013 meeting so the Board could respond to some type of framework. Staff could also report on the City's progress for finding a futurist. If the Board approved, a motion could be made recommending that a futurist be hired. He expected the scope of work could be finalized in April and a contract presented to City Council in May 2013.

Public Comments:

Items for Next Meeting's Agenda:

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Tucker, Library Director