

**SENIOR / COMMUNITY CENTER
ARCHITECTURAL SELECTION COMMITTEE
JUNE 10, 2015
SPECIAL MEETING**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Richard Ostop opened the Special Meeting at 4:05 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room at the Town Offices. Other members and alternates in attendance were Donna Beinstein, and Jeff Shea. Also present were Janis Prifti, Clerk; and other interested parties.

AGENDA

1. Public Comment on Selection of Architect

Chairman Ostop reviewed the purpose of the Special Meeting was to gather input from the public on what the Committee should consider in selecting an architect for the project. He indicated a plan to interview 5 architects at a public meeting scheduled for 6/18/2015 at the Library. Mark Orenstein of 82 Old Meadow Plain Road suggested reading through online information regarding issues that confronted the Laguna Beach, CA Community Center; he opposed having a technology-training center given the existing Library center, but felt Wi-Fi should be ubiquitous. Chairman Ostop explained a Program Manager has been hired to lead the study regarding what the facility should contain. Chairman Ostop noted the Committee visited about 5 area senior centers and that Southwick's Senior Center came out on top with some of their senior members from Simsbury. The President of the Theater Guild suggested dropping the off-putting "Senior" label; "Community Center" encompasses everyone and accommodates events for children, exercise, and a potential auditorium; audience members suggested senior sections could be designated. Chairman Ostop noted that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) makes the naming decision and should receive that input. Chairman Ostop clarified that currently the Committee is considering adding onto the PAC with potential for flexible space usage.

Tony Guanino, Director at Belden Forest Court, on Firetown Road has 44 independent living units; they do trips to the senior center and he noted the complaint of seniors on a monthly basis having to be on a wait list for the dining room, which is frustrating. Chairman Ostop indicated the Committee is aware of the proper sizing issue and will present it to the architect.

Chairman Ostop reiterated the need for questions the public would like to ask the architect. After looking at old plans for the PAC, Cheryl Cook suggested a more aesthetic, seamless design incorporating area environmental assets, e.g. walking areas, windows to view wildlife, in addition to the playground and dog park. Chairman Ostop responded that an architect would be selected who has experience designing community centers, and has worked within flood plains and downtown areas, etc. Mary Lou suggested giving the architect the opportunity to recommend another location on the PAC site for a more imaginative structure and that the senior

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center not be subject to being part of the PAC; the PAC interests may be served by a different type of building. Chairman Ostop indicated while it does not need to be attached to the existing PAC, the Committee is charged with reviewing this specific site for the senior center location. Jeff Shea clarified that the PAC stage is owned by the Town, but is managed by a 501.3c and the architect should be allowed to develop various concepts for the Senior Center at the site.

Arlene Sapilli, a member of the Aging and Disabilities Commission, asked if PAC had use of the facility whose needs supersede the other, e.g. if Willy Nelson came would the community be thrown out during the event. Lisa Heavner responded that the BOS is exploring having a separate independent-standing Senior Center at the PAC site and evaluating whether it can be done and wetlands testing is being done to see if it works with the environment; a nationally recognized expert program consultant is being brought in to evaluate current and future programs in order to determine space requirements. Ms. Heavner indicated new information and facts will be incorporated and the path adjusted accordingly to meet the needs of seniors; currently, they would like to see if it is compatible with the PAC. Ms. Sapilli felt that many studies have been done. Chairman Ostop reviewed that many years ago the Public Building Committee was established to look into a Senior Center with 6-7 potential sites studied, including Andy's Market, Stratton Brook and Bushy Hill Road, and across from Holloways. It was brought back to Eno, but renovation costs were too high, a parking deck was not a solution, and they did not want to add onto the historic building; this all led to the current BOS focus on the PAC site.

An audience member noted that all architects have portfolios and their experience, history, and their delivery record should be considered; as well as a potential operating agreement between the Senior Center and PAC with schedules. Chairman Ostop indicated that at the June 18th meeting at the Library five architects will be interviewed and the public is invited to hear their presentations; 3 opportunities will be provided for public participation. Chairman Ostop briefly reviewed the RFP questions, including: senior center experience. staff, types of engineers, environmental and wetlands sensitivity in terms of design, etc. It is planned that the architect will have open meetings with as much additional public and PAC input as possible; Town Staff has a great deal of work to do.

Diane Phillips asked about a deadline for the wetlands and environmental reports. Chairman Ostop anticipated it would be completed within a couple of weeks and precede architectural design. Mr. Shea added that the wetlands information would not be interpreted until the design professional is on board.

Dick Bible asked if the June 18th meeting is open to the public in its entirety and whether there will be opportunity for input. Chairman Ostop indicated they are gathering questions from the public in advance to be asked by the Committee; if a few minutes are left following presentations, it may be possible for the public to ask additional questions. Mr. Shea reviewed the current plan is for the architects to appear alphabetically, with each providing a 20-minute presentation, 10 minutes of questions, and a 15-minute setup gap between presentations.

90 The Theater Guild President asked for more RFP details. Chairman Ostop quickly reviewed the
91 details, including: project description, site, intent, demographic space needs, estimated costs,
92 environmentally sensitive wetlands and FEMA floodplain location, review of various existing
93 documents, building codes, etc.; at the interview they are asked to present a firm profile, i.e. size
94 of firm, key individuals, administration, proposed consultants, experience related to
95 senior/community center work in the past 7 years, contact info, budget info, bid results and final
96 costs, passive data, including adherence to project schedules, number of change orders,
97 regulatory approvals, etc. Chairman Ostop indicated the selection process would include:
98 relevant project experience, site project development, experience with government agencies and
99 ability to comply, construction process experience, and demonstrated leadership and skills of the
100 proposed team. The purpose of today's meeting is for the Committee to gather additional public
101 input and questions. Chairman Ostop noted the Program Manager coming on board in the next
102 week will begin studying building usage with input from the first part of the study by mid-July
103 and will begin working with the architect by August; it is anticipated there will be opportunity
104 for input from the public to the Program Manager. Sheryl Cook noted that the recent telephone
105 survey included specific Senior Center program needs, e.g. would you attend exercise classes at
106 the Senior Center or a dinner; the survey final results should provide relevant demographic
107 information.

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109 Mary Lou brought up the question of how the Senior Center would affect Eno. Chairman Ostop
110 indicated many residents do not want to see any changes to Eno; however, the Simsbury
111 Regional Probate Court could be moved back to Eno, there could be space for Chamber of
112 Commerce, the Main Street Partnership, and additional space for DAR; SCTV could well use all
113 downstairs space; the old courtroom and 3rd floor rooms could be used as a public meeting
114 rooms; and the facility could accommodate many community activities. Regarding restrictions
115 on changing Eno, the Connecticut Historic Association will allow/disallow various changes.
116 Ms. Cook added that the front facade and some exterior windows cannot be changed, but some
117 areas could be made ADA accessible. Mr. Shea indicated they are considering a limited study
118 to improve Eno's handicapped access to the lower level at a minimum. Ms. Heavner reviewed
119 that the analysis is being done to evaluate program needs, and to gain an architect's input
120 regarding site location, with an overall goal of ensuring public input. The Theatre Guild
121 President noted they hold monthly board meetings at Eno, and they rehearse and perform in the
122 auditorium, which is a lovely spot and they would hate to see that space lost in planning for the
123 future. Chairman Ostop indicated such concerns are part of the whole study and invited public
124 attendance at the 6/18/2015 open meeting; and following selection of the architect in
125 July/August, there will be an open meeting with the architect.

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127 Chairman Ostop adjourned the public session at 4:50 p.m.

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129 A quorum was not present to take up the remainder of the Agenda, and the meeting was
130 adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

SUBJECT TO VOTE OF APPROVAL

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