

Buildings and Facilities Task Force
Monday, February 6, 2023 - 9:00 am

Steve McNally - Chairman

Supervisor Holzer called this task force to order at 9:00 am with the following in attendance: Stephanie DeZalia, Derek Doty, Shaun Gilliland, Roy Holzer, Jim Monty, Matt Stanley, Ike Tyler, Meg Wood, Mark Wright, Jim Dougan, and Mike Mascarenas. Noel Merrihew was absent. Steve McNally had been previously excused.

Also present: Anna Reynolds, Andrew Stanley, Dina Garvey, Nancy Page, and Elizabeth Lee.

HOLZER: Alright, we're going to call this meeting to order. Mr. McNally's absent today, so I get the honor of keeping Doty in line and Jim Dougan in line, but we have a presentation today and Anna would you like to start it off?

REYNOLDS: Sure, so Andrew and I with Mike and Jim have been preparing this presentation to go over the process and the steps for the agricultural and youth center design plan and the grant funding that is tied to it and the time limit that we have and we need to meet in order to use the grant funds that were allocated.

STANLEY, ANDREW: Just a general overview of the proposed layout and Anna's going to get into the environmental application that will kind of tie into the estimate schedule and we'll talk about what we need to do with architectural engineering and finish with the cost estimate.

It's just an overview of the whole property, the fairgrounds. One the right hand side, the green, that's the area of the existing Cornell Building where the proposed new building's going to be. Zoomed in, you see Sisco Street from the bottom of the screen and then the Cornell Building, kind of squeezed in there, between some existing buildings with a proposed parking area along Sisco Street.

The view there, if you're standing on the track, looking towards Sisco Street.

The view from Sisco Street, looking back towards the track.

So, based on the area here, we're taking that parking along Sisco Street is really a good idea, easy access. I don't think in that, we take the area with the red X there, move it over to the other side, next to the existing Cornell, probably better utilization of the parking area and still have all that grassy area, too. Similar to this.

DOUGAN: Yeah, yeah, that thought process just to jump in, came from our last meeting and even the other design from the Hall Design Group and that little parking area that is seen here, seemed like a better space than using up that green space. Those are really comments that we felt came out of this last, you know, the last time we met as a facilities committee.

HOLZER: Okay, just for my own clarification. This is the existing building and this is the proposed building?

DOUGAN: Nope, nope, nope that was from, the was a design from the Hall Design Group, alternate; okay?

MASCARENAS: What we're essentially looking at, Roy. Is there's two different plans and you're seeing a combination of what we felt came out of last month's meeting on what was the preferred options of this group. So, Andrew's showing you that that parking lot's not going to be there, the large one.

DOUGAN: The big X.

MASCARENAS: And what we're going to do is utilize the parking that was brought in on the other design. I know it's a little confusing.

STANLEY, ANDREW: It's like a little bit of hybrid, as far as concepts.

GILLILLAND: And this is Sisco Street on the bottom; right? So, where that proposed parking is, already is used as parking there, during events. It's just parking on the ground instead of parking on asphalt.

HOLZER: So, basically if I'm entering the fairgrounds, I'm coming this way, right now?

DOUGAN: Nope

STANLEY, ANDREW: No, the entrance to the State Road is over on this side over here. Where we would go, this is the existing Cornell Building.

DOUGAN: Point to the back gate. Point to the Sisco Street gate, Andrew.

STANLEY: The Sisco Street Gate is here.

HOLZER: It confused me, because it said 2-story residence.

STANLEY: Yeah, I think it's probably because it's a tax map.

HOLZER: Okay

STANLEY, ANDREW: Anyways, so that's kind of the hybrid idea.

REYNOLDS: So, this was due to the allocation from Stefanik and the Congress allocation that was given that was nearly a million dollars the first step would be the environmental review of the proposed project of the new structure. So, the first would be involving the agencies with letters of

correspondence with the details of the proposed projects. So, square footage, area of impact, so I just listed the involved agencies, right there. You've got the National Historic Preservation, SHPPO, the Tribal Council, US Fish and Wildlife Service, APA, DEC, those have done environmental review records with us before with the CDBG programs. It's similar progress.

MASCARENAS: So, yeah, anytime you get federal funding, just so everybody knows it pushes a NEPA review; which is a higher-level environmental review process, which takes some additional time.

HOLZER: How long does it usually take to get their response back after the 30-day period?

REYNOLDS: Well, yeah, they're required to respond within 30 days.

HOLZER: Oh, the agencies are?

REYNOLDS: Correct

HOLZER: Okay, okay

REYNOLDS: So, usually a non-response is their comment. They do not have a comment on this project, because they didn't respond. So, then I would take all those correspondence, if there are comments, we have to address them, and then when it's all said and done, we would put together a report with a narrative, maps, all the correspondence and submit it to Rural Development for final signoff.

HOLZER: So, as part of this process is there a Public Hearing we need to do?

REYNOLDS: Yes, that is included in the application phase.

HOLZER: Okay

DOTY: Anna, does the application extend the life of the grant, so we have a little bit of breathing room? Because my impression is that time is running out.

REYNOLDS: Yeah, the application is a part of the life cycle of the grant. So, we've got the allocation, but we still have to apply to get that funding. So, the environmental report is required. That's a part of the application. We have to have a preliminary architectural report, it's one of the checklist items, construction budget, so we do need have to know what the cost is going to be, required forms, that's typical and then, yes, a public hearing is required and you have to put all the information in the application packet.

MASCARENAS: Right, so, to kind of answer your question, too, Derek, keep in mind, I don't know if this presentation, I don't think this presentation touches on it. Anna's speaking to the requirements for Rural Development. She's not speaking to the ARPA requirements. So, that's

more of where time is of the essence. My guess is that, while RD has been on our case to get this full application completed and in. My guess is when we actually get a physical contract it will extend the life of the grant, but the life of ARPA will not be as long as that. So, this presentation is really about trying to keep us on track. It's really about trying to show us a decisions making process moving forward that we have to meet in terms of getting this done.

DOTY: So, the end of '24 is our ARPA deadline.

MASCARENAS: Exactly

DOTY: For spending down?

MASCARENAS: Yes

DOTY: Yes

MASCARENAS: Committed, so if I can have these things under contact.

DOTY: Then we're safe.

MASCARENAS: Then I think we'll be okay.

DOTY: okay

HOLZER: The ARPA money we already have?

MASCARENAS: We already, but that's where our timeline's a little tighter in terms of that expense.

GILLILLAND: So, we're at a binary decision process here. Delays and it goes to zero. So, we've got to move forward.

DOTY: Okay

REYNOLDS: That makes sense, it's good question.

STANLEY, ANDREW: So, that leads into this. This picture shows the most disturbed area, which Anna will need to move forward with the application phase or the environmental review.

DOUGAN: So, there's a couple of decisions today. So, and when we get to the schedule Anna and Andrew will show you what one of the key decisions to stay on that schedule by the end of 2024 ARPA funds is to start the environmental phase. So, if we can agree that that is the disturbed location, the kind of the area that has been highlighted there. That is one of the pieces that Anna will need in an environmental, in the first step of an environmental submission. So, we kind of showed before that that big parking lot had the X; we were going to get rid of that. That's why it's

not included in the disturbed area. Instead, the disturbed area is over there in front of the existing building where we're going to have parking there and then those, the two sheds and then the two appendages off of the 4H cow barn are going to be removed. Those are the three red dots there. If we can agree on that, that is one piece that Anna needs for environmental.

HOLZER: So, is she going to need a resolution to that affect from this committee?

MASCARENAS: I think an agreement, so what we're saying is, we're not saying this is the final building design. What we're saying is, we're not going to disturb an area larger than 18,000 square foot, just so you know that. It has nothing to do the final design, this is where it's going to be and we're not going to be disturbing any area any larger than that. It will allow her to start her process and get that ball moving, just so everybody understands that.

HOLZER: I'm fine with it. Is there any other committee members that have concerns before we move on?

DOTY: 18,000 meets all your setbacks on a new building or you're not under setbacks?

DOUGAN: No, I think we're fine there with the way that things are built, obviously we'll, actually it's a county facility, so therefore, we, as far as building code are concerned, it's reviewed by our own Health and Safety Officer, but we'll obviously need to submit to Westport, but I think our setbacks and things are find here, based on the other building that is right up close to Sisco Street. One of the next things, unless Andrew takes us back to the old slide, will also be the character of the building; okay? For example, the other structures on-site, you can go back to those couple, the other buildings on-site are the white horizontal clapboard look, with a red roof with cupulas and spires. I think some of that needs to also be in what Anna says what we're going to do there and I don't even know that's a question. I think everybody here as generally said that all along that we want it to look consistent with all the other buildings, but it needs to be part of her submission. So, those are, in a way, almost the two big general questions that we need answered so you can do an initial environmental submittal; right, Anna?

REYNOLDS: Yes

STANLEY, MATT: Does it hurt to go bigger, just in case you need that space?

DOUGAN: We could make the space a little bit bigger if people would like, but we think overall and we'll get to that when we get to construction budget, that already, Elizabeth and Cornell have said that they may be some places that we can make things a little bit smaller from what their initial request for space was and so we think that the building...

STANLEY, MATT: I'm not talking about the building; I'm talking about the space for the environmental review. If we made that space bigger, would it impact, in case you needed to, not to go back later to say, hey, we need a little more area?

REYNOLDS: Yeah, I don't want to underestimate, but I think this was done with an over-estimation profile. Like this will be the max amount of space we need and then as we go into design, they're going to look at the configuration of the building.

STANLEY, MATT: I mean, I guess just looking at where the cattle barn is, like if there was something that were to disturb the cattle barn and need to actually work around the cattle barn that's not included in that proposed area of work.

MASCARENAS: Correct

STANLEY, MATT: So, would it hurt to actually include around that cattle barn in case there's something that is impacted, so you don't have to back through the environmental review. So, bump that up to 25,000 square feet or whatever.

REYNOLDS: I'm wondering if that, I am free speaking right now, like it's not included in the grant program. Like this is purely for construction of the building. So, maybe any other disturbance of the outside structure shouldn't be touched with this phase of the project. So, there might be impact with the construction phase, like trucks or the small buildings, but that's not, I don't think I should be doing the environmental on that.

DOUGAN: Yeah, I think Matt, your question is, and that philosophy is always a good philosophy to go a little bit bigger. I think the 4H cattle barn is going to be considered historical in nature. So, I would rather not have it be in the disturbed area, other than the two appendages that we're taking off. I think it's a good question and I always use that technique, but you know we really have no intent of disturbing that and I think it's better that we tell SHPPO that we don't, other than those two appendages. Is my opinion on it. We want them to come back with no significant impact and so I think we're better off showing that area as not disturbed and even describing that parking area that we're always used it for parking in past.

So, Roy, started kind of questioning on both the disturbed area in included with the disturbed area for environmental purposes if we could just say, we agree with the disturbed area and we agree that it's going to have the character or horizontal clapboard, white with a red roof with spires and cupolas to match the character of the other things, because Anna's going to need to be able to describe that in her submission. If we agree with those things, if the Committee agrees with those things, then that's one of the questions we need to answer today, so hopefully we can immediately, she can start filling out a bunch of paperwork.

PAGE: Jim, can I just say something. I think it's important, also, perhaps that you say that it's not going to compete with the character of the existing historic structure, in other words, if there's too many spires and copulas, even though we showed one, you know on the design Mark Hall gave us, that you probably want something simpler, somewhat simpler than that. So, you might want to say that you're respecting, you know, the historic quality of the existing building and not competing.

DOUGAN: Okay

PAGE: Something along those lines.

DOUGAN: I like those words, thank you. Yeah, I like those words. Anna, write those words down.

REYNILDS: I already cheated.

DOUGAN: By all means, but yeah, thank you. I agree, I agree.

DEZALIA: Is the bottom going to remain parking, also? By Sisco?

DOUGAN: No

DEZALIA: Is that parking, the grey?

DOUGAN: No

DEZALIA: What is that?

DOUGAN: That is a new parking lot. It's been used as parking, but it's a grass area, right now, but it's going to be a new official parking lot.

DEZALIA: Okay, so there's going to parking there, the new building, and then parking out front?

DOUGAN: That's correct.

TYLER: And there's parking along Sisco Street, as well.

DEZALIA: Okay

HOLZER: Any other comments before we move on? Okay, I guess we're in agreement.

REYNOLDS: Okay

STANLEY, ANDREW: Just basically a clip from the overall schedule, just to show how far out the environmental phase and application reaches out.

REYNOLDS: So, the first line, the environmental phase. We can begin that as soon as we have a little more detail. Footprint application phase happens simultaneous. You saw the little list earlier. The solicitation for architectural engineer, again the preliminary architectural engineering report has to be included with that process. So, that's why those go down as dependences. So, the hiring the architect and preparing those schematics is a part of the phase.

HOLZER: So, do me a favor; make sure all the Supervisors get a copy of this proposed schedule, in case we're questioned from the public.

REYNOLDS: Okay

HOLZER: And we kind of answer them.

MASCARENAS: And it's important to understand that this schedule is a duration schedule.

HOLZER: Yeah

MASCARENAS: Because if we miss any one month, it's going to push us back a month or two, every time we falter to make a decision.

HOLZER: Right

MASCARENAS: It's coming at the cost of time.

STANLEY, ANDREW: And this is just the estimated overall schedule. So, we're looking at basically a 22-month process, which would basically be the end of 2024. So, that shows the importance of why we got to stay on track with it. We miss something and it's going to throw us off.

MASCARENAS: What that schedule also shows is really a parallel process, across the board, on a lot of these items. Typically, you would do some of these things once something is totally complete, in terms of environmental review or application, but in order to even meet the timeframe, Anna's going to be working with Andrew on things on a parallel process so we can try and meet this timeframe as quickly as possible. While we're grateful for the money we got, R&D is one of the most cumbersome programs to work through I did it during ERA, a lot of years ago and it's certainly cumbersome, makes DOS look simple.

STANLEY, ANDREW: Let's move to technical engineer, so a key component of the process is procurement of an architectural engineer. We aren't able to finish the application process without some mag designs. The way this is set up, we need to procure an architectural engineer so that we can get those schematic designs, so that the application phase can be complete. So, that's something that we need to make a decision on for RFP on that, soon.

HOLZER: So, is that what you were saying we need to move on, today?

MASCARENAS: Yeah, I think if we can get permission from the Board to go out to RFP for architectural design, we can get that back sooner. If we don't make that decision, today, it sits another month until our next Full Board Meeting.

HOLZER: Okay, I can see what we can do.

MASCARENAS: It doesn't mean that we're approving an architect. It simply means that you're approving the ability to go out to RFP.

STANLEY, ANDREW: Yup, start building the scope. Then moving to the estimated project cost. So, this was the estimate that was given to us from CPL, based off of the 11,425 square feet came in about \$6.2 - \$6.3 million. So, it's pretty steep there. Mostly I would say, mostly, because of the current condition of the market. Materials are pretty volatile right now, they're all over the places. We kind of checked their math a little bit, this is a chart that shows PPI, so the producers price index. From 2017 to current, why 2017? That's when we did the nutrition building, so similar site, similar scope, I guess, we went from about \$2.6, so somewhere in the \$3 range to 20%, 4th quarter of 2022.

DOUGAN: For the Nutrition Building, we knew what that cost us, here in Essex County and we know that our architectural firm that did the conceptual design and did that cost estimate is from Albany, so we wanted our own double check. So, that Nutrition Building cost us around \$457.00 to \$460.00 and square foot when we built that in 2017. So, just as a double check of where he was.

HOLZER: SO, what was the total cost of the Nutrition Center?

DOUGAN: \$1.63, I think it was.

HOLZER: So, is \$6 million a realistic number? That seems like a lot.

DOUGAN: We think it's high, but it's also. We also think the building is, there's already been some discussion, from our proposed tenants that some of that is bigger than they might really need. So, I think as part of the RFQ process with an engineer, we look at those needs and we make sure that it's an efficient use of the space. I really think that although CPL put some stuff together for use, fairly quickly, it's just boxes and squares. Efficiency isn't thought out, it's not really all taken into account. So, I think the \$6 million is a lot, in part because of the square footage. They also have a lot of contingencies in that estimates, the last few columns are all contingencies; which I appreciate. You know we're trying to figure where this is going. You have another slide that is on where we think the PPI is going.

STANLEY, ANDREW: Yeah, so you know, this one's just basically off from PPI from 2017 to now, there's fits right on, just based on inflation rates and PPI.

LEE: Can I make a comment? I do, it does seem like a very high estimate I know that there are a lot of trade-offs that everybody will be talking about in terms of modifying that amount of money. My highest priority is actually the safety of the staff and I know that sometimes it's cheaper to buy materials or use processes that are cheaper and an example I'll give you is blown-in insulation. I have just been seeing in the public health space a lot of pushback on blown-in insulation, because it's cheaper, but it off gases and the health, so I'm thinking of the health of the staff and so another

area that there's, it might be more expensive to use other kinds of insulation, but long-term the health of the staff is really important and the people that work there. Another one is, carpeting. I would rather have bare floors and rugs than expensive carpeting that actually is off gassing and I know how it anyone of you have seen any of that information from other building, I would be glad to share with you what I have heard or what I know. I am not a builder, I am not in the construction business, but I would rather have less space and employee safe building and I am just going to put it out there, because I don't really know much more.

DOUGAN: Fair enough, fair enough. The Nutrition Building, the entire walls were made out of ICF, it's an R200 and it doesn't have that, some of those same concerns. But, we'll definitely and we value your input in that, Elizabeth.

STANLEY, ANDREW: This is just showing the current, the PPI current. As I said before, I think their estimate was taken based off the numbers and we're heading down, pretty hard, right now. It kind of goes along with the inflation forecast. So, this reaches out to the end of 2024. The forecast is showing that we're basically going to bottom out, somewhere around 2.5% to 3%, somewhere in that area. So, that tells us, we should be somewhere back in the neighbor of \$4.60 square foot, as with the Nutrition Building, which you know if we go with the proposed square footage, brings you about \$5.2 million and you know if you decrease the square footage, somewhere in the 800 square footage, brings us the range of where we wanted, at \$3.6.

DOTY: Jim, is there anything appreciable in in-kind services, like site prep and infrastructure additives?

REYNOLDS: No

GILLILLAND: Can't do that.

DOTY: Kind of, bound to put it all out?

GILLILLAND: You know the whole prevailing wage, all that stuff and this is federal money.

DOTY: I mean I think of sewer hookups and water lines. I mean we could come up with \$300,000.00-\$400,000.00 of work ourselves, just bound.

GILLILLAND: You're walking a minefield.

DOUGAN: Yeah, I would agree with Shaun and I will tell you that this program from RD, we'll look at it really closely, as we move forward, but I think Shaun's probably got it right, but we'll look at it really closely. This is, this program, we believe is their building facilities program through Rural Development; which is from the Department of Agriculture. A lot of us that have dealt with Rural Development in the past, it's all been in there. Their water and sewer, which is a slightly different program, so we'll look at it really closely, but it is tough to do force account work with federal dollars and with this agency.

DOTY: Understandable, I just didn't know.

DOUGAN: We would definitely look at that, you know, can we do some of this ourselves, but it might be tough.

STANLEY, ANDREW: That's pretty much all I have.

DOUGAN: You know, again, to stay on that schedule, each month we're going to try and bring some questions to this committee. So, we've generally answered our environmental and our architect here, that we're going to go out to RFP for that, then we've, I think identified the questions for today to keep us moving within that duration schedule that Andrew and Anna had put together. I think that's really where I'm at, you know we, if Elizabeth or Soil and Water have other thoughts on really looking at the space, we might be able to get a jump start in talking with them, between now and when we hire that architect. That would be the only other thing that I might suggest.

MASCARENAS: Just on a side note, I think by my committee meeting, I'll be prepared to present to the Board the ARPA plan. I'm really close. This project is in there and what I've got in addition to the million is \$2.5 set aside for it, so that \$3.5 number and when we start looking at the plan, it's hard to understand what I'm talking about without seeing what else is in the plan and what you're giving up, but I think that \$3.5 number is probably about where we need to be in terms of not giving up the opportunity to get some of those other things accomplished with money that we'll never again.

MONTY: Correct me if I'm wrong, this is just construction of the new building. It has nothing to do with the cost of rehabbing anything with the old building, am I correct?

HOLZER: Not as of yet, but we're going, you know from a logistics standpoint, we should in the next few meetings, at least have an outline of things that we're willing to do. So, when the public's looking at this, they realize we're not abandoning.

MONTY: A beautiful new building and we got the other sitting there, makes no sense.

MASCARENAS: What's killing us right now and Shaun and I, it's not from lack of trying, have been trying to shake that contract loose.

HOLZER: You're talking about the DASNY money?

GILLILLAND: It's still in the budget.

MASCARENAS: It's hard to come up with a schedule, when we can't even...

MONTY: Can't we get some of that extra \$92.5 million that they gave ORDA?

HOLZER: Well, first of all the DASNY money we got to spend before we get.

GILLILLAND: We can't spend any money on it until we get the contract and it's still in budget review and it's been in the budget review since?

REYNOLDS: 2021m probably, at least.

MASCARENAS: It's been a long time.

GILLILLAND: But, it's \$550,000.00 total in there, which if we can get this moving, down the road and you know it gets its own momentum, then we can start taking a look at scoping the \$500,000.00.

HOLZER: And just to put it out there, whether we get the DASNY money or not, I'm committed to doing something over at that building.

TYLER: Well, personally, I think something needs to be done there sooner rather than later; we can't wait a couple of years. The roof is the main thing that we need to fix in that building.

PAGE: Something that we talked about last meeting was having, potentially having the same architect make recommendations for the existing building, as well as a design for the new one so they work in tandem and from a review point of view it might be a real asset to be able to find out that you have plans for, specific plans for renovating the existing building, so you don't have a dilapidated building sitting next to plans for a new building.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, I wouldn't want to include that as part of the current RFP, only because I don't want to confuse the two projects and jeopardize the funding. I don't disagree with you. I think on a future RFP, we could assign points to an architect that has experience, but in terms of this RFP, I think, we can't confuse the two, where all the sudden now we're saying we're doing that building and it's a whole separate environmental review process and all those things.

DOUGAN: I would agree. I would agree with that, but it's a point well taken. We could, we definitely, when we put the RFQ, RFP out, you know we will address the fact that it has to fit with and not compete, to use your words, if the other buildings that are here and that maybe even have some qualifications for historical experience, historical building experience.

PAGE: Well, you should definitely have that in the RFP.

DOUGAN: Well, it is a new building, but we want it to fit within the historical character. So, that's why you put it in the current proposed new building. We should, so that we could potentially use that consultant, we'll just have a requirement for something historical.

GILLILLAND: And one thing about the \$500,000.00, \$550,000.00, I guess, because it's two grants, but they are geared toward structural and mechanical. It is not a SHPPO grant for historical

renovation or preservation. So, there's no reason that we can't continue to get SHPPO, because they sent emails about how much they support that project.

HOLZER: Any other comments before we wrap this up.

PAGE: Just a follow-up on what Jim was staying. I think also we talked about the fact you need really a firm, that it should be part of RFP that has experience going through this kind of review, because it's going to be a tricky one. Where you have all these different agencies that are looking at this, it's in two historic districts, it's a sensitive location, so you really want somebody with experience to do the project.

DOUGAN: Sure, yeah, that makes sense. We'll put that as part of qualifications.

MASCARENAS: A lot of our projects we started doing that on, simply because it's really hard to work with a contractor that doesn't know the requirements of the program that you're working into. It can be really a headache, so I think that we learned that a few years back and we try to have people apply that have experience with different grant cycles and grant programs, so that it's not pulling teeth to get information out of individuals. These two guys, there's nobody better at it. Just so everybody knows, they're going to be coming to our meetings moving forward. They're going to be driving this process. Andrew's going to be leading on, does everybody know Andrew? That's Andrew Stanley, everybody. You don't see Andrew a lot, but know that all the things that are getting built in Essex County, he's got his hand in, typically. Everybody knows Anna and the great work that their department does, so I think we've got a really good team and hopefully they keep us on the right track on what we need to continue to do to stay focused.

HOLZER: We've done, we've adjourned.

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS BUILDING AND FACILITIES, IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 9:38 AM

Respectively Submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy Clerk
Board of Supervisors