

Weymouth Historical Commission & Fogg Library Reuse Committee Joint Meeting
March 3rd, 2009 - 7 PM
Jones Room, Tufts Library

Present:

Fogg Library Advisory Committee (FLAC): Bill Kehlbeck/Chairman, John Cunningham, Anthony Bongarzone, Eileen Dumont, Chris Hardie, Joanne Lamothe/Library Director

Weymouth Historical Commission (W H C): Ed Walker, Steve Puleo, Mary Dorey, Joan Rotondo & DPCD staff representative to the WHC

Also Present: Jim Clarke, Director of Planning and Community Development
McKinnell McKinnell & Taylor: D. James McKinnell, Jr. President and Gale Tractenberg

Call to Order

FLRC Chairman Bill Kehlbeck called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. He began the meeting by requesting that Committee, Commission members and staff people introduce themselves - as well as the representatives from McKinnell McKinnell & Taylor.

Role of the Reuse Committee

Next Mr. Kehlbeck took a moment to explain the role of the Fogg Library Reuse Advisory Committee. The members were put into a Task Force for ideas on the future of the Fogg Library. Part of their responsibilities include the restoration of the exterior of the building. They will also try to come up with some money producing ideas regarding the future use of the building.

At this point Jim Clarke explained that representatives from McKinnell McKinnell and Taylor were present to address what they have discovered when making an on-site investigation of the building, including the needed repair work. Tonight they would be discussing site issues and funding, etc.

Fogg Library Repairs:

Building investigation

Repair and renovation plans

MHC review procedures

Jim McKinnell was the next speaker. He informed members that his company is based in Norwell, also noting he has done a number of projects for the Town in the past - and has over 30 years experience. Regarding this project, his firm was hired in the Fall of 2007. At that time they identified different exterior areas in need of repair, including replacement of the slate roof, repointing and masonry repairs. During their investigation they found more work than originally anticipated. He noted that the prior consultant did the initial work, but since that the building has incurred further disrepair due to weather conditions. He explained that the primary damage came about due to water penetration, which has also affected the inside of the library; i. e., downspouts in the wall.

After their investigation of the building, Mr. McKinnell informed the Town of their findings. He had stood on the balcony of the library and was surprised to discover that he was easily able to remove the stone off the face of the building. He then passed around a sample of the stone. The next step called for assessing all the damage to the building. He then took a moment to explain, from his professional point of view, how the damage came about.

Mr. Kehlbeck added that climate changes also contributed to the deterioration.

Mr. McKinnell told those present that the stone on the driveway side of the building easily fell off the face of the building. He spoke about working with Monaco Construction in the past, adding they recently performed similar work on the Northampton Library. He then invited them to meet him at the site and after that meeting they submitted a proposal for the work with assistance from McKinnell's construction engineer. He also wanted to point out that two (2) big gable ends are in worse condition (north and south). They also identified sounding areas, the depth of the damage and the condition of reinforcement. Additionally they took photos, did an interior investigation - and removed the plaster (the photos of their findings were passed around to the members). He then reported that they found the inside to be in sound/solid condition.

At this point Mr. McKinnell described the manner in which the interior wall was constructed. He said that his primary concern was the gable end walls, which were experiencing advanced deterioration and displacement. He informed members that the building has been leaking for a very long time, adding you could see the evidence in the galvanized pans. He explained that their scope is to go over the entire façade of the building. He noted that below the water table the deterioration is less advanced - noting that approximately 70% of the stone would have to come down. Present plans are to repair the stone and reset it, then do the pointing work - but first they would need to set the masonry anchors, giving some water coverage.

Mr. McKinnell next defined the water table, adding that the area below the water table is like new - which he felt was good news. They also identified areas where they would remove more stone. Further they are identifying the quantities involved, adding they would be measuring for the actual stone. He cautioned members that their estimate would be on the high side to eliminate the need for change orders. They will also need repairs regarding the framing the roof, which he noted was an "A" frame. He explained that the "A" frame is flattening out from the weight of the roof. He said that the stone initially weighed about 30 tons, but now the stones only weigh about half of that (10-15 tons).

Ms. Tractenberg passed around two samples of slate - one was a piece that had fallen to the ground (1/8" thick) and the other was the replacement slate (1/4" slate).

Mr. McKinnell then spoke about the plan for repair. Their plans call for requiring the contractor to remove the slope. Next would come the installation of a temporary roof, black EDPM/rubber that is relatively inexpensive - but also he wanted to let members know it was unattractive but again it would not be permanent. He further explained that there is a lot of work with parapet walls.

Ms. Tractenberg wanted members to understand that the roof work was very complicated as it intersects with the masonry wall.

Mr. McKinnell explained that the Town was interested in doing one or the other, but the two are so tied he said it could not be handled in that manner.

Mr. Cunningham asked if they were going to bring it back to the "A" roof.

Mr. McKinnell replied 'yes', then proceeded in describing the steps involved in restoring the roof:

- 1) strip the roof
- 2) construct the temporary roof
- 3) start masonry repairs
- 4) have the contractor jack-up the ridge of the roof (he noted that the long corner stones had been pushed right out, adding that everything has been expanded out)

Mr. Kehlbeck wanted to confirm that after this work takes place this type of deterioration would not occur again and Mr. McKinnell agreed.

Ms. Tractenberg interjected that there would also be a new ridge beam.

Mr. McKinnell explained that the purlons would be encased. He noted that the Massachusetts Historical Commission came down to the library 2-3 weeks ago and met with them for a few hours. While there they informed them, in keeping with the requirements of a historical building on the National Register, that the exterior must remain the same but that the attic work could be handled differently and could look new. He noted that at this point he was not too concerned with the framing work.

Ms. Tractenberg then spoke about the nature of flashing. She explained that all areas are not seen. Further other exterior areas would be similar; i. e., copper and slate. She wanted to emphasize that they would not be changing the character of the building.

Mr. McKinnell next spoke about the stonework, stating that all of the stones that they remove would be catalogued and returned to the same place from which it was taken. He said they had a meeting a few weeks ago and spoke about the funding, and at that time it was noted that some funding (a couple of \$100,000) wouldn't be available until the end of June. An important factor that needs to be kept in mind is that they need to work within a 'weather window' in reference to the masonry. They need to be cognizant of the temperate weather. He wanted to point out that they need to be ready to go out to bid by the end of March, anticipating that the bid process would take a couple of weeks. He continued to recap the bid process noting that:

- it would take 2 weeks for the roofer and mason to file their bids
- they would need to verify the low bidder, qualifications/experience (qualifications call for 5 years minimum experience)
- they would need 2 more weeks for the general contractor to prepare the bids
for a **Total of 1 month**

At this point Mr. Bongarzone recapped the bid process based on his experience, commenting that he believed it would take more like (6) weeks.

Mr. McKinnell wanted to clarify that it was 2 weeks for the sub-bidder.

Mr. Bongarzone interjected that 2 weeks would not be enough time, adding they would get many more bidders than expected due to the economy.

Mr. Hardie asked about a timeline.

Mr. McKinnell expected it would take several weeks. He said they were going out to bid end of March/early April so they were looking at a June start date. He expected the work to be completed by mid-November. He wanted to point out that it was a complex building even though it was small. He reiterated that they did a thorough investigation and they would push the mason. Currently they are short some funding - and they are required to finish the slate roof. He said they might have to put the slate roof out to bid again due to financial constraints.

Mr. Bongarzone asked if the funds were guaranteed and Mr. Clarke replied "yes, noting that the money has been set aside and approved". He wanted to clarify that they were not 'short' of funds, clarifying that the last phase of funding doesn't become available until the Town Council approves it. He understood the desire to start work early.

Mr. Hardie wanted to caution members to expect calls from the residents when they see the rubber roof go up. He suggested they might want to get the word out in advance.

Mr. Walker asked about the library's downspout and asked if they were going to be reinstalled at their original location.

Mr. McKinnell responded 'yes' although he had some concerns because they were not simple to remove, explaining that they are located behind paneling stacks. He explained that the roof gutters come inside the building, noting that is the way buildings were constructed in the past. He informed the members that there were leaks there, which brought about the problems with the connection. He then explained how they worked. Further in evaluating the removal, he felt they could pull off the sheathing. They looked at alternatives. He said they might possibly run the PVC down inside the pipe.

Mr. Kehlbeck thought that was a good idea.

Mr. McKinnell said he would be speaking with Bruce Valicenti, Plumber (who does work for the Town) about it.

Mr. Bongarzone suggested he first check with the plumbing bid - because it was his understanding that they might not be able use PVC pipe.

Mr. Walker asked about the condition of the copper gutters and Mr. McKinnell said they were being replaced; adding that anything on the exterior which is visible will be replaced with the same material.

Ms. Dorey asked if the way the roof fits into the wall was unique and Mr. McKinnell told her he's seen other buildings constructed that way in the past, although it is not a common practice.

Ms. Tractenberg commented that it was reminiscent of the manner a church is built as well as other buildings of that day.

Mr. McKinnell held up a sample of a copper snow guard. He said they spoke with the Mass. Historical Commission about using them and they responded that it worked for them. He also told members that they would see tubular pipe rails in some places.

Mr. Cunningham asked if they found it worked well and Mr. McKinnell said it did, adding you see them more often in Vermont - where they have been used for years.

Mr. Puleo asked Mr. McKinnell if at this point he was confident they would find no more surprises.

Ms. Tractenberg replied that she thought they would be okay, but that they still wanted to carry the 10% Contingency Fee. She assured members that they have examined the library the best they could - far more extensive than is usual. She explained that renovation work couldn't be second-guessed, especially when a building is over 110 years old.

Mr. McKinnell said they have extra money if they need it. He also wanted to point out that at this point the quantities of stone to be removed is not known, but they have given their best estimate.

Mr. Bongarzone asked again about their estimate of stone and Mr. McKinnell acknowledged that it was a little on the high side, but then noted that the estimated number was derived over a year ago and there has been more deterioration since.

Mr. McKinnell went on to reiterate that there are more stones needed above the water table (70% more) and less under the water table (less 70%).

Mr. Bongarzone asked 'you have not exceeded?' - and Mr. McKinnell replied, "I don't see how we could do that".

Ms. Tractenberg interjected that they know the square footage and they have been identified in the drawing - referring to #1 and #2 type construction. From there they will keep track.

Mr. Clarke commented that they know a lot more now, based on the extensive investigative work done by Gale Tractenberg and Jim McKinnell - which includes the metal tiers.

Mr. Bongarzone asked if they could let the water out through the weep holes and Mr. McKinnell told him that the space between the mortar and brick was not air space.

Mr. McKinnell said the good thing is that the solid masonry wall is still solid. He explained that the space between the wall and brick would be filled. He also noted that the building leaks from the top down and it is important that they stop this as soon as possible. He explained that because the library was built in 1897 they used different building materials including the mortar. At that time the mortar was composed of lime, which is very soft, not like what is used today. He then explained about the new, improved mortar they would be using (which is no longer Portland cement).

Ms. Tractenberg explained that granite is particularly hard and doesn't allow moisture migration, which caused the problem.

Mr. Walker said he understood they found the original set of plans for the library and Ms. Tractenberg acknowledged this was true, adding there were 13 drawings. She described them as not having much detail, but noted that their elevations were the same as those on their plan. She also wanted to note that the plans did not include the materials/composition of the building.

Mr. McKinnell found it interesting that the architect and mason back at that time were related.

Ms. Dumont asked about the roof ironwork.

Mr. McKinnell told her that the original skylight has been removed, adding there was nothing on the plans about this. Further, above a copper finial there appeared to be iron rods. Plans are to replace them in kind. He added that it was difficult to assess copper until it's down on the ground, recommending to members if you don't reuse it you will want to keep it.

Mr. Walker informed him that it was removed in the 70's and they have pictures in postcards that show it.

Mr. McKinnell said at this point they don't expect to replace it.

Mr. Walker then asked about the future of replacing the skylights and Mr. McKinnell replied 'anything's possible', adding he expected there was a reason they were removed in the first place. Presently he doesn't have the details that would enable him to replace them.

Site Issues and Columbian Square Improvements

Ms. Dorey asked about interior repair work.

Mr. McKinnell replied that there was a limited amount of funding available for the interior, referring to the area where the downspouts are located.

Ms. Tractenberg said the work would be a 'sub finish', but she felt it could be done properly in the future.

Mr. Clarke pointed out - that's why the plans say "Phase I". Right now they are waiting on the response/recommendations from the Fogg Reuse Committee. Ms. Tractenberg said they did a 'ballpark' estimate for repairs, so they have some idea of the cost. Additionally, they met with the Mass. Historical Commission, who have been to the site. Plans for rehabilitation of the Fogg Library will be submitted to the MHC for review.

Mr. McKinnell added that the name of the person he met with from the MHC was Paul Holtz.

Ms. Tractenberg commented that she believed the MHC would be very interested in any plans for interior work, especially the library area.

Mr. Clarke stated that they have an agreement with the MHC regarding any work proposed for the library; reason being, they have used money from them in the 80's to help fund repairs - adding it is a covenant.

Mr. Cunningham asked if that meant the manner in which the library is reused would be restricted and Mr. Clarke replied 'yes'.

Mr. Cunningham asked "how would we get around without pulling out the stacks?" - which was restricted by the MHC.

Mr. Kehlbeck commented that the Reuse Committee didn't know about the covenant.

Mr. Cunningham interjected; we thought the Reuse Committee could recommend any use.

Mr. Walker noted that in the 80's they had the light fixtures recast, adding there are pictures available of the interior with the stacks - if anyone wanted to look at them.

Mr. Bongarzone asked if the restriction was noted in the covenant and Mr. Clarke replied 'yes'.

Ms. Tractenberg wanted to note that this information was also in the report.

Mr. Kehlbeck responded that he never saw that notation in the report.

Mr. McKinnell said they only pursued speaking with the MHC in regard to the exterior of the building.

Mr. Bongarzone said he did see that the exterior could be used for parking.

Ms. Tractenberg noted that in speaking with Paul Holtz/MHC he told her that he would be concerned with any interior work that might be proposed.

Mr. Clarke told members that they shouldn't overreact to that comment at this point, cautioning them to just appreciate the historical aspects of the building. He said they would get copies of the covenant to the members.

Mr. McKinnell said he would also get the telephone number of Paul Holtz/MHC to Bill Kehlbeck - and he would plan to meet with them to find out what must stay and what can go.

Mr. Kehlbeck said at this point they have a number of thoughts about the building, so that it could sustain itself. Possible future use could be:

- a library,
- an archive
- medical building

quickly adding the Reuse Committee had thought they had free reign with the manner in which it was to be used. Tonight he has learned some very important information that needs to be addressed, adding that it really came as a surprise.

Mr. Walker informed them that back in the 80's, when Chester Kevitt headed up the Historical Commission everything was identified/duplicated - and entered into the Mass. Historical Register.

Mr. Cunningham commented that it shouldn't be a surprise that it's a historical building - and they need to keep that in mind. They also should make sure the Historical Commission is kept apprised as they progress in the process.

Mr. Puleo stressed that he wouldn't want to see the building gutted and that would be personally distasteful to him, referring to its value and its designation as a national historic building.

Mr. Clarke agreed that this was all-important information for the thought process. He then distributed pictures of a landscaping plan of the exterior of the building created by his staff, stating that they would probably lose a lot of the overgrown shrubs. The drawing showed a conceptual idea of what could be done. He noted that the corner of the property was more of a focal area, including the walkway to the library. He also referred to the area set aside for some parking. He said the area encompassed just under 5,000 sq. ft. that was reusable. A breakdown of the area was as follows: 1,600 sq. ft. Basement - 2,250 sq. ft., 1st floor (the foot print) and 1,100 sq. ft., 2nd floor.

Ms. Tractenberg commented that the building was not as big as they thought but actually small in many ways.

Mr. Clarke said they were now addressing the parking requirements.

Mr. Kehlbeck, in using the formula for parking spaces by the town, noted they would need more spaces per square footage for a medical building.

Mr. Clarke acknowledged this, adding they would probably need to look at increasing the parking. Further he wanted to point out that in all (4) of Weymouth's villages the proposed structures were permitted to include in their parking requirements the use of street parking as well as municipal parking. This would allow them to cut back on the required parking spaces on site.

Mr. Hardie questioned the parking formula.

Mr. Bongarzone replied that it depends on the square footage.

Mr. Hardie asked about 20 parking spaces, reiterating that they could take into account parking on the street as well as municipal parking. He emphasized that they first must make sure they know the count - and that would include the required spaces per ADA (American Disabilities Act).

Mr. Clarke said that the bottom line is there is not a lot of parking.

Mr. Bongarzone then asked if they could do something with the beam.

Funding and Schedule

Mr. Clarke noted that there is a Construction Steering Committee that would be overseeing this work. Membership is comprised of himself, Jim Wilson/CFO, Joanne Lamothe, and Jeff Richards/Director Building Dept. He explained that if bids come in low they would process them early on.

Mr. Bongarzone pointed out that the present economy deficit has affected the number of bids on a project, which are much higher now because so many are looking for work. Additionally, he noted, the construction costs should be down. He also wanted to point that all bidders need to be certified.

Ms. Tractenberg interjected that in some instances you could get bad references on a bidder.

Mr. Bongarzone added that even so it is a very thorough process.

Mr. Walker expected that the MHC would come out to do site inspections as the project progresses.

Mr. McKinnell agreed.

Mr. Walker wanted to note that the 2nd floor could not be open to the public because there is only one entrance.

Mr. Kehlbeck then took a moment to thank Mr. McKinnell and Ms. Tractenberg for their thorough presentation. He then asked the Historical Commission members what they saw as the future use of the building.

Ms. Rotondo said she could see it used as a town meeting place, or its first museum.

When Mr. Kehlbeck asked if she thought they would charge admission, she replied 'yes'.

Ms. Dumont asked what would be in the museum and Ms. Rotondo told her there were historical documents, statues, etc. that could be used/displayed. One example was the rail that was on the library roof.

Mr. Cunningham asked how the building would be maintained, and who would pay for the heating, repairs, etc.

Ms. Dorey replied that donations might be a funding source, and then Ms. Rotondo asked about the possibility of a grant.

Ms. Dorey also wanted to note that there were many more historical artifacts housed in Town Hall.

Mr. Puleo commented that Weymouth does a terrible job in maintaining its historical artifacts, pointing out it is the 2nd oldest town in the Commonwealth. He cited the communities of Lexington and Quincy as good examples - referring to the work done at the Thomas Crane Public Library where the city did a tremendous job integrating the old building with the new. He asked "how do we preserve Weymouth's history?" Are we big enough to do it?

Mr. Walker asked about using it as a research center. He then referred to this meeting site (Tufts Library) - commenting that possibly some day this Library/Museum might have to move - asking, "where will it go?"

Ms. Lamothe then spoke, commenting that this museum is disgraceful; i. e., "just look at the carpet in here".

Mr. Hardie wanted to know more about the artifacts the WHC members had been speaking about and Ms. Rotondo referred to the Homestead House.

Ms. Rotondo then referred to geological books, adding that she knows of a person in the town who wants to photo every historical building. Further with regard to historical artifacts, she said items could be found in the military room. Additionally there were scales, a sleigh, and sewing machines too.

Members were told that they were just discovered behind Olden's Pharmacy in South Weymouth that it used to be a barbershop. The owner's wife gave them a picture of the South Weymouth Air Base taken many years ago with planes, blimps, etc.

Mr. Puleo added that there are also many historical documents, including the Dr. Freefield (??) Collection, Abigail Adams father's lectures (who was a minister) - which were endangered of being lost. He felt a contributing factor might be because there is no actual center to Weymouth, commenting it lost its gathering place where items of this nature could be displayed.

Mr. Hardie felt that the Air Base Reuse Plans should generate some options. If it's a movie studio, they could capitalize on the tourism aspect. Possibly introduce a Weymouth Trolley.

Ms. Dorey referred to the enhancement of the Columbian Square area with the sign "Welcome To Weymouth" - What we Were, Are and Hope to be.

Mr. Kehlbeck asked the Historical Commission members to be sensitive to the charge of the Reuse Committee. He agreed that it was a beautiful building, but they need to keep in mind who will pay for the costs of operating it, which is part of their charge/goals. He said that he personally and emotionally likes their ideas - but again he asked, who will they pay the bills?

Mr. Walker asked if it would remain a library for the time being and Mr. Kehlbeck replied 'I don't know'.

Mr. Cunningham suggested that possibly the library could have a corner of the building.

Mr. Walker wanted to point out that the building was built to serve as a library and this was specified by Mr. Fogg for the people of South Weymouth.

Ms. Lamothe commented that one should look at the definition of a library today and that the Tufts library is a 1965 building, is historical and it's failing miserably and rapidly. We don't have enough electrical outlets, the roof is gone, the toilets fail - so that is part of the equation as well.

Mr. Clarke invited both groups to meet again in the future as part of the ongoing process.

Mr. Kehlbeck invited a designee of the Historical Commission to take a walk through the Fogg Library with him and Paul Holtz in the future.

Other Business

There was no additional business.

Adjournment

Mr. Hardie moved to adjourn the Joint Meeting at 8:45 PM.

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED

Ted Clarke, Chairman, WHC

Date

Respectfully submitted, Susan DeChristoforo

Recording Secretary