

Citizen Advisory Committee

Notes

June 25, 2018

6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Member Attendees:

Alexander, Gerry	Bowerman, Whitney	Carmody, Molly
Clarkson, Virgil	Crawford, Monica	Foster, Dean
Freeman-Manzaneres, Ann	Mah, Doug	Platt, Dave
Reynolds, Christy	Spence, Scott	Sprouffske, Jonathan
Stewart, Shauna	Rick Thomas – County	Ramiro Chavez – County
Meghan Porter – County		

Introductions and Welcome

- Introductions of members present
- Ramiro provided the overview of the purpose of the County Courthouse and Civic Center project
 - Objective is to bring an added value to the community – focus on the return on investment to the citizens
 - Key elements of success is engaging the citizens
 - Soft schedule is for a ballot measure in August 2019
 - Two options for funding:
 - **General obligation bond** – Difficulty is getting 60% of the vote but there would be no fiscal cap.
 - **Levy lid lift** – A simple majority vote and maximum ask is of \$1.80 per \$1000 worth
 - 2017 legislative change of payout from nine years to 25 years
 - \$1.80 cap affects not just Thurston County but also the junior taxing districts
 - Going to the full \$1.80 would not allow flexibility of the economy
 - To be conservative and responsible, the ask the County is looking at is a \$200 mil bond, or \$1.60 lid lift
- Question: Being on this committee, does that mean that we are on board with the fact that we need a courthouse and it has to be in a specific place or should we be open-minded?
 - This committee will be providing feedback on the sites, the project, and the communications aspects. Encouraged to be open-minded and objective. It is all about the discussion.
 - Some members said they are open-minded about the project but do have opinions, and plan to provide their opinions.

- Ramiro noted that after this meeting, he will not be present. It will be the committee's initiative to meet, move forward, etc.
 - Rick will be the County liaison to the committee
- Concern about the word advocacy in the title.
 - **DECISION:** Update the name of the committee to the Citizen Advisory Committee
- Question: What is the make-up of this committee?
 - County and City of Olympia leadership offered names for the committee to try and reflect the makeup of the County.
 - Members include citizens, businesses, and organizations. It is a pretty good representation.

Background of Project – Presented by Rick

- **1978** Original Occupancy of Hilltop Campus
- **2015** Feasibility Study by HOK / RSA
 - Space Planning – Projections through 2045
 - 320KSF => 160 KSF Courthouse & 160 KSF Administration & 1,000 parking space
 - Potential Courthouse Stacking / Blocking Diagrams: Six (6) Options
 - Hilltop Existing Campus
 - Hilltop New Campus
 - Urban Blocks – Consolidated – Downtown
 - Urban Blocks – Infill – Downtown
 - Urban Campus – Near Downtown
 - Suburban Campus – Westside
- **2017 - 2018** Site Selection Process (within Olympia City Limits)
 - Established Criteria
 - Worked with Assessor's office & others to establish an initial list of 11 sites
 - Shortlisted to three (3) sites
- **2017 – 2018** BoCC & City of Olympia monthly meetings
 - Established working relationship
- **2018** Comprehensive Feasibility Study of the shortlisted 3 sites
 - Single site selected by December 2018
- **2019** Soft schedule for August Ballot Measure

Background Discussion

- Question: Of the 1,000 suggested parking stalls, how many for staff and how many for citizens/visitors?
 - Approximately 50% for staff, 50% for services
- Feasibility studies on the three sites won't be complete until mid-December but there will be check-in points along the way.
- Question: The biggest component of the current site is the jail, what is in there now?
 - Nothing. The feasibility study will show how we can use that space if there is reconstruction of this campus

- Question: How flexible is the committee in terms of the current sites? Participant feels the box for this committee is getting smaller. How will the committee partner in decision making?
 - Needed to have parameters in place. We can't start with a blank canvas because that may lead the County on an unaffordable route which would stop the project from moving forward.
- Question: Didn't hear anything discussion of public-private partnering. Is this something the committee can discuss?
 - Public-private partnership may be a good option and is not off the table.
 - This committee may want to look at partnering and advising on what can add value to the community. Are there public amenities we are currently missing? What will make this more appealing to the citizens?
 - There is flexibility to ask questions around partnerships, vision, etc.
 - The feasibility study needs to include the component of what can make this a viable project, including partnering opportunities.
- Concern: Doesn't like the sites that have been selected and suggested the committee go back through the process.
 - Going back through the selection process is not a viable option. Leadership has spent a long time selecting the sites and it wouldn't be fruitful to go back through that process.
 - Comment: The current courthouse site has to be part of this analysis. It doesn't make sense to not include this site and not show a comparison with other sites.
 - For the Plum Street site, is there a potential for partnership with Olympia?
 - Every site has an opportunity to partner with Olympia. The County has not received an official partnership offer for any of the sites but the City is at the table in the discussion.
 - Comment: The three options are each unique and provide the best selection – current site, teardown and rebuild of new site, green/undeveloped site.
- Question: How will the public learn about this process, the decisions, give input, etc.?
 - As part of the communications plan, there are multiple opportunities for engagement. This includes: Open houses, a web presence, surveys, etc...
- Discussion: Did the previous space needs study only look out 25 years? If so, we will be back asking for more in 20 years and the voters will not appreciate that. The space needs need to be looked at further.
 - The facility spacing needs has been looked out to 40 years, not 25.
 - More of a return on investment.
- Comment: There will always be unhappiness about the site. There will not be one site that everyone will agree on.
- Question: Are the sites within the current code or did you look to expand the zoning for more sites?
 - Zoning was not considered in the final selection because there was other critical criteria that went into the selection.
 - We did look at a site outside of the UGA

- Consensus: The committee would like a technical overview of all of the sites.
 - On agenda for the next meeting
- Question: Why the August 2019 election?
 - County leadership worked with the Thurston County Auditor to determine the best time to introduce this measure. Based on her expertise, she suggested August 2019.

Objectives

- Completed a quick review of the objectives because they were already presented to each member during initial contact.
- Small change to the goal: The goal was updated to remove the suggestion to move the project to a successful vote by the citizens. The committees focus is on getting to the most efficient project/site to provide the most added value to the citizens.

Next Steps:

- Consensus: The committee did not feel comfortable voting on a chairperson the first night.
 - **Assignment:** Send a short bio to Meghan to send out to the committee to be prepared for nominations and a vote at the next meeting.
- Rick will be prepared to provide a full technical overview of each of the 12 considered sites at the next meeting. Technical documents will be sent prior to the meeting so members have time to review.
- Question: Did we consider an ad-hoc committee?
 - Discussion: Some members think it might be a good idea to help with transparency.
 - Concern that it may appear that the committee members were hand-picked by the Commissioners if they are the appointing authority.
 - Suggestion to have the Commissioners publicly recognize that the members are advising them on the project.
 - **Assignment:** Ramiro will bring to the Commissioners for consideration.
- Request from the committee to get a timeline of all the meetings that this project is discussed, including the executive group, this committee, briefings, etc.
 - **Assignment:** Rick will supply a meeting timeline.
- **Assignment:** Meghan to send out Doodle Poll for next meeting

Agenda Meeting Agenda:

- Technical overview of all sites considered - Rick
- Select a chairperson - Committee
- Review objectives or work on developing a charter – Committee/Chairperson