

MEETING NOTES

Rice Library Building Committee Meeting

May 7, 2019

7:00 PM

Kittery Community Center

Notes by: Tim Brochu

Attendees:

PRESENT	Ryan Kanteres	Scott Simons Architects
PRESENT	Seth Wilschutz	Scott Simons Architects
PRESENT	Jim Anderson	Committee Chair
PRESENT	Kendra Amaral	Town Manager
ABSENT	Lee Perkins	Library Director
PRESENT	Charles Denault	Town Councilor
PRESENT	Jeffrey Pelletier	Town Councilor
PRESENT	Brenda Fox-Howard	Finance Director
ABSENT	George Dow	Committee Member
PRESENT	Jennifer Brewer	Committee Member
PRESENT	Tim Brochu	Committee Member
PRESENT	Margaret Meyers	Committee Member
PRESENT	Doug Greene	Committee Member
PRESENT	David Batchelder	Committee Member
PRESENT	Katie Lyons	Rice Library Circulation Supervisor

Historic Preservation Report

SSA presented a summary of the 100-page draft Historic Preservation Plan they have received from Scattergood Design. Ryan noted that it's unusual for a building of this age and use to have as many of its historical features intact and in as good condition as they are in.

- **Character-Defining Features** – Significant views, materials, and architectural features
- **Preservation Philosophy** – The following preservation treatments are recommended for certain areas of the building:
 - **Preservation** - The act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Preservation areas can be modified to restore them to their historical condition.
 - **Rehabilitation** - “the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.”
 - **Adaptation** – Areas that are less historically significant, and may be modified without compromising historical significance
- **Preservation treatments:**
 - The Toilet Room in the Reading Room is not historically significant.
 - The round desk in the Reading Room should be maintained but could be replaced in kind
- **Existing conditions and repair** - 11 categories of components that may require repair were discussed:
 - Site
 - Roofing and Drainage
 - Masonry - 5% of mortar to be repointed (not including chimneys)

- Metals – Exterior iron handrails
- Windows - Windows are unique, require repair work
- Doors & transoms - Some revarnishing
- Flooring - Marble floor in the entrance is original, other flooring is not
- Walls and Ceilings - Some plaster repair (cracks)
- Finish Woodworking - Some revarnishing
- Fireplace Surrounds - In good condition
- Lighting – Some are not historical and could potentially be removed
- **Status of recommendations** – Jim asked to clarify if recommendations in the report are a mandate. Ryan noted that there is not a regulatory requirement, but following the recommendations would allow the building to maintain its status on the historic register.
- **Design Implementation** – Seth noted that the final report will describe how the proposed design will implement the preservation recommendations.

4/24 Community Meeting

Public feedback from the 4/24 Community Meeting was discussed. SSA has shared public comments with the Committee and noted that they continue to receive emailed comments.

- **Summary of breakout group discussions:**
 - Seth's group:
 - Support for socialization spaces
 - Strong interest in sustainable priorities
 - Interest in a contemporary / modern addition (with some exceptions)
 - General preference for the North scheme
 - Ryan's group:
 - Conversation about parking
 - Slight preference for southern scheme
 - Most said either scheme could work
 - Impression that North has more indoor/outdoor connections
 - Southern scheme has a more direct connection to the Foreside
 - Be considerate of abutters
 - Sara / Scott's group:
 - Focus on technology
 - Defined space for senior citizens
 - Indoor/outdoor connections
 - Questioned the need for community meeting spaces since these are available at the Community Center - Greta (library staff) said that the Library has enough programs to utilize this space, and said that the Community Center has a full schedule and events there require additional staff to set up and facilitate.
 - (See SSA's presentation slide for additional topics discussed at the Community Meeting)
- **Public Participation:**
 - People seemed pleased about the timing of this forum appreciated getting an understanding of where the project is at.
 - Jen noted that some responses may have been based on people wrapping their heads around it.
 - David noted that it took a while for participants to get their heads around the concept of massing.
 - Doug noted that the basis for design and how it's evolved was well detailed and answered people's questions.

- Jen observed that the group was largely older citizens, so the committee should continue to keep other demographics in mind.
- Katie noted that a lot of the participants were regular users of the Library.
- Kendra noted that there were lot of new faces, not just the usual group of involved citizens
- **Parking:**
 - Parking was a big topic of discussion at the Community Meeting.
 - What is the redevelopment of this site going to do to parking in the Foreside? What can realistically be accomplished?
- **Playspace:**
 - Doug suggested planning space on the site for an interactive playspace (maybe in the future). He referenced the Hoyt Sullivan playground in Somerville MA as an example that incorporates natural elements - <http://www.earthscapeplay.com/project/hoyt-sullivan-park-tower-playground/>

Design Scheme Selection

SSA presented revised designs for both the North and South Schemes. Ryan noted that SSA's goal is to have a well-resolved Schematic Design for display at the Kittery Block Party. The Committee discussed attempting to select either the South or the North Scheme in the next meeting. (Some program notes discussed below may apply to both schemes)

- **North Scheme**
 - Community Room is downstairs
 - Meeting spaces - Each space should handle 20 - combine 3 spaces to seat more people
 - Storytime for 30 people, bigger groups downstairs
 - Southeast Meeting Room – Ryan asked what the Committee thought about this space.
 - Jen suggested an angled exterior wall to better orient it to views of the Foreside
 - Tim noted that a south facing meeting / reading space is good, and it could allow space for expansion of bookshelves if needed in the future.
 - Cafe / coffee service:
 - Peggy noted that there could be a Keurig, with washable cups
 - Tim noted that there was opposition in the Community Meeting to providing a Cafe with coffee and food service, but we may want to consider a packaged snack counter / Keurig similar to the Kittery Community Center
 - David suggested providing a sink
 - Jim noted that the Portsmouth Library has a small snack space which might be appropriate
 - Ryan noted that the landscape could become the anchor to the Foreside in the North Scheme, as opposed to the building in the South Scheme.
 - Charles suggested adding a dormer to the roof of the addition to reflect the roof massing of the Rice Building. Ryan noted that they are hesitant to copy elements, but will study the scale and look of the roof and use of materials.
- **South Scheme**
 - The Ground Floor is similar to the North Scheme
 - Tightened floor plan to north, more proportional to existing building. Some space moved behind the building.
 - Storytime:
 - Katie noted that there are often 50-60 people in storytime (30 kids + caregivers)
 - Peggy suggested comparing proposed Storytime space to the Taylor Building.

- Kendra noted that the interior spaces in the South Scheme feel disconnected from the Rice Building spaces.
- Reference Desk:
 - Katie noted that they would not use it as reference desk
 - The existing Rice entrance may not be a major point for people to access, but people will keep using that entrance
 - Ryan suggested flipping the reference space to other side of the stair. This frees up the tower space, facing south and the Foreside, for public use
 - Seth noted that there is little usable wall space in on the other side of the stairs.
- Kendra asked if the fanned stacks need to remain for historical significance. Ryan noted that this is still under investigation.
- Book drop off – A parking pull-off on Wentworth Street is proposed.
- **North / South Scheme Pros & Cons**
 - SSA summarized pros and cons of the North and South Schemes (see slide)
 - Jim noted that he prefers the South Scheme for its connection to the Foreside, but noted that some people in the Community Meeting who wanted the library to "anchor" the Foreside preferred the North Scheme.
 - Tim noted that the South Scheme orients the entrance to the Foreside, while the North Scheme entrance may not be as visible from the Foreside. The South Scheme fills in a gap in the patterning of buildings from the Foreside up Wentworth Street. The North scheme presents the Rice Building as a jewel on the hill, which some people preferred in the Community Meeting. The South Scheme glass entry with visibility of the Rice façade may address concerns about the addition concealing the original building.
 - Ryan noted that the North Scheme interior flow works better (per Kendra's comments). SSA will study the South Scheme to improve the internal flow.
 - David noted that in the North Scheme you see more of the face of the existing Rice Building. In the South Scheme the scale of the addition is working well. In the South Scheme there is General Collection space in the Basement, but the North Scheme does not have this and could be closed off when not in use.
 - Ryan noted that there is not a significant site cost difference between one scheme or the other.
 - Doug noted that the North Scheme has a lot of advantages in terms of interior flow and indoor/outdoor connections to the site

Design and Materials

- **Material selections**
 - Ryan noted that SSA is anticipating using mid-price materials. We can't afford much brick or stone.
 - Jeff noted that we should consider whether we want the Foreside to shift towards more modern design, or preserve traditional styles
 - Jim asked if there would be glass at the intersection with the existing building or a solid material. Ryan noted that it could be curtainwall framing at the brick, or there could be a metal return like in the North Scheme
 - Jen noted that arches are prominent on the Rice Building and could be part of the design.
 - Doug asked if the roof of the addition could be open to interior spaces. Ryan noted that there will be some mechanical equipment but it may be possible at some portions of the roof.

Project Budget

SSA presented a preliminary project budget, which can apply to either the North or South Schemes.

- **Project Costs:**
 - The Construction Cost is currently budgeted at \$3,996,250 including a 10% design contingency.
 - Seth noted that 11,000 SF at \$275/SF for the new addition is achievable.
 - Ryan noted that they would prefer it to be 10,500 SF at \$285/SF +/-.
 - Soft costs (furnishings, fees, services, administrative costs) are budgeted at \$1,030,400.
 - Ryan noted that the original FF&E (furniture, fixtures, and equipment) budget was low. SSA has budgeted an allowance of \$315,000 for FF&E.
 - Ryan noted that the Clerk of the Works fee was high in the original budget. SS&A reduced this to \$50,000. Jim noted that the original budget was based on a full time Owner's Rep / Clerk, and that this had been part of negotiation to reduce SSA's Construction Administration fees.
 - An Owner's Contingency of \$225,250 is included.
 - Total project cost is budgeted at \$5,251,900
 - The budget notes that 5% cost inflation per year should be anticipated (add \$325,000 to the project budget for a 2021 construction start = \$5,576,900 project cost with inflation)
 - Kendra noted that \$5 million is all we can afford
- **Operational Costs:**
 - Jeff asked which option would cost more to operate?
 - Ryan noted that SSA will review operational costs for each option with Lee

Next Steps

- **5/8** – SSA to upload the draft historical preservation report
- **5/20** – SSA to provide a draft of presentation material for the 5/22 meeting
- **5/22 Building Committee Meeting** - Decide on a preferred scheme
- **5/24** – “Drop dead” date for selection of a preferred scheme
- **6/5 Building Committee Meeting** – Review draft presentation materials for the Block Party
- **6/15 Kittery Block Party** – Kendra noted that it will be very busy and difficult to make a presentation. The goal should be to show people images to get them excited about the project.
- **June / July Second Community Meeting** – to be scheduled for after the Block Party
- **July Town Council Meeting** – Presentation to Town Council

Next Meeting: 6:00 PM Wednesday 5/22/19 at Kittery Town Hall Council Chambers