

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

August 4, 2015

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a Study Session at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 4th day of August, 2015, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray, and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Allison, Castleberry, Heiple, Holman, Lang, Miller, Williams, and Mayor Pro Tem Jungman

ABSENT: Mayor Rosenthal

Item 1, being:

PRESENTATION FROM MCKINNEY PARTNERSHIP ARCHITECTS REGARDING PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS FOR THE SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER.

Mr. Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, said McKinney Partnership Architects prepared a space study in 2008 for the Municipal Complex that included review of the City office space and the current library building. Based on that study, an election was held in 2008, and voters authorized the renovation of the current library building to include a Senior Citizens Center; however, the renovation was contingent upon a successful vote for a new central library which failed.

Mr. Foster said the Norman Forward Initiative includes a new Senior Citizens Center and McKinney Partnership Architects, partnering with Lifespan Design Studio, L.L.C., updated the 2008 Study to again include the entire Municipal Complex and current library building. He said tonight's meeting will focus on the Senior Citizens Center portion of the updated study. An update on the Municipal Complex office space will be presented in a future meeting.

Mr. Rick McKinney, McKinney Partnership Architects (McKinney), said McKinney takes this project very seriously and knows it is not just important to senior citizens, but to the entire community. He said McKinney has not been able to provide any solid information up to this point, but was able to put together a preliminary concept for Council's review. He said McKinney welcomes any input from Council and the public, especially the senior citizens.

Mr. McKinney said the current Senior Citizen Center's building is 8,000 square feet and McKinney's 2008 proposal increased that to 12,000 square feet (as a placeholder) for the proposed new location. McKinney realizes it is 2015, and 12,000 square feet is not enough area so they performed a program study and the proposed square footage has been increased to 20,600 square feet. He said the current library has perceived issues, i.e., just another old building to stick seniors into (current Senior Center is in first library built in Norman); inadequate parking; inadequate access; not adjacent to proposed new central library; inadequate interior space; shared toilets with City Staff; and no centrally located kitchen for meal services that currently provide 600 meals per day.

Mr. McKinney highlighted the proposed conceptual design for the current library site that includes the following:

- ✓ Single level facility - 20,600 square feet
- ✓ No steps, no ramps - inside and out
- ✓ Ease of parking access with covered entry and wide sidewalks to spaces
- ✓ Reconfigured dedicated parking and elimination of cross traffic at entry
- ✓ Close access to park and downtown restaurants/activities
- ✓ Interior will be totally demolished with complete new interior build out
- ✓ Newly completed mechanical system, roof, insulation, and lighting in place
- ✓ All new plumbing will be installed with multiple dedicated facilities
- ✓ Meal site kitchen with minimal odors, noise, and delivery traffic

Proposed design concept for the current library site, continued:

- ✓ Two private exterior courtyards with views, seating, gardening, and water features
- ✓ Immediate access to cars and Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (CART) service
- ✓ Shared large room(s) for occasional functions, parties, dances
- ✓ Estimated building cost of \$3,640,000 less 2008 approved bond funds
- ✓ The location is very quiet and sound isolated from adjacent City offices

Proposed exterior design concept includes the following:

- ✓ New exterior aesthetics to clearly define the Senior Center
- ✓ Fully accessible facility and parking
- ✓ Parking entry drives located to the north to eliminate cross traffic main entry
- ✓ Well illuminated and landscaped parking
- ✓ Covered entry drop off leads to a conditioned vestibule
- ✓ Convenient exterior and interior seating for waiting
- ✓ East and west secure landscaped courtyards with seating, tables, and water features
- ✓ Expanded glass for views, light, and access
- ✓ Design includes interior safe space for severe weather

Proposed interior design concept includes the following:

- ✓ Single level facility addresses the major current complaint
- ✓ Multiple restroom locations with enhanced features
- ✓ Wide spaces and corridors are well lit, accessible, and have sky lit seating area
- ✓ Lobby, dining, games, and art space have expanded views to the exterior
- ✓ Clear-span assembly space for dances, parties, gatherings, or meetings
- ✓ Durable attractive finishes appropriate for each use and activity
- ✓ Variety of seating and gathering spaces throughout for 2 to 50
- ✓ Acoustics, lighting, accessibility, and function are all fully integrated

Ms. Ellen Gallow, Lifespan Design Studio, L.L.C., said senior center design revolves around people and activities. The first step was to review input the City gathered last fall, holding public meetings, and speaking with the Senior Citizens Center Supervisor about the activities currently being done as well as things seniors want to be able to do but cannot because of the limitations imposed by the current facility. She said an Architectural Program for Fit Study was prepared for each space in the proposed facility, which will be custom designed for its function so some spaces will be large, some smaller, some will accommodate technology and other infrastructures and some will have different storage requirements, etc. The Study looked at whether or not the structure could accommodate all of these different functions without expanding the footprint or adding another story to the building. The building also had to be easily navigated and make operational sense and she believes the proposed design will be both functional and operational with few changes.

Mr. Doug Gallow, Lifespan Design Studio, L.L.C., said once the Architectural Program was developed the next step was to create a graphic representation. The proposed design concept is a universal design meaning spaces will accommodate anyone using the space without being impaired by the space itself. He said the spaces are put together in a way that works functionally for a senior center from the user standpoint, but more importantly it works for the Staff who will be operating the facility. If the facility does not function well then everyone will be compromised in the use of the building.

There are no curbs in the parking lot because one-third of older adults are incapable of stepping up and down a curb. There will be a covered drop off area with a deep, wide vestibule, which will allow people to come and go, even in wheelchairs and scooters, at their own pace without disrupting pedestrian traffic flow through the building. Senior center Staff offices are placed strategically to allow Staff to have eyes on the parking lot at all times and those entering the building. He said safety is important and safety perceived is equally as important.

Mr. Gallow said the lobby area will be a large open place where people can gather, sit, and talk, whereas the current senior center does not have this type of space. He said there will be a game room; club room; pool tables; poker tables; banquet assembly room for 120 persons that could be used for other uses; a café (grab and go foods/drinks); catering pantry adjacent to the banquet room; personal services room such as tax preparation help; dining room; restrooms with ease of access similar to airport restrooms meaning no doors, which can be heavy and difficult to open; conference room; class room/technology room (the entire building will set up for WIFI); exercise studio; fitness studio; lounge; ceramics/pottery studio; art/handcrafts; kitchen with adjacent dining room; safe room; and two outdoor courtyards.

Mr. McKinney said this design is very preliminary and if the City decides to move forward with the project the interior spaces can be adjusted to accommodate needs as the project progresses. McKinney believes this building is an excellent use for the senior center and the goal is to collectively find a solution for seniors' needs.

Council Comments

Councilmember Lang said the floor plans depict a door between the classroom/technology room into Staff offices and asked the thought process behind that. He also asked if the "safe space" will be Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) rated and Mr. McKinney said that is the intention, but that would ultimately be up to Council. Mr. McKinney said a door was put in between the office space and classroom/technology room with the idea that the office space could be a shared technical training space, if needed.

Councilmember Williams asked the full occupancy of the building and Mr. McKinney said approximately 200 people, but it really depends on the use and McKinney has not calculated occupancy as they were mainly looking at function and need at this point.

Councilmember Miller asked if furnishings, exercise equipment, technology equipment, etc., will be part of the budget for the renovations. Mr. McKinney said "soft costs" such as furniture, fixtures, equipment, etc., is estimated to be \$500,000, but not included in the renovation estimate.

Mayor Pro Tem Jungman asked how many parking spaces the facility would need, where they are on the design, and how the City can ensure these spaces are used exclusively by seniors. Mr. McKinney said McKinney envisions dedicating and placing signage for two-thirds of the existing parking lot, approximately 80 spaces, for senior parking only. Mayor Pro Tem Jungman asked how McKinney determined 80 spaces would be an adequate parking and Mr. Gallow said by senior center design standards, the proposed parking far exceeds what is required by zoning and based on square footage, 80 to 100 spaces is recommended. He said the existing senior center has very few parking spaces and seniors are having to park along the street. If the parking needs exceed what is defined and dedicated on the site, more parking spaces can be dedicated since parking for the proposed central library would not be needed if this comes to fruition. Mayor Pro Tem Jungman said the City uses the parking lot for Staff parking as well as public parking so how will the City manage competition for City Staff, seniors, and businesses that park in the existing parking spaces and Mr. Gallow said if the City dedicates parking to the senior center they will need to enforce it.

Council Comments, continued:

Mayor Pro Tem Jungman asked about the adequacy of the drop-off lane and the potential for busses needing to access that and Mr. McKinney said, if needed, the design can be adjusted to accommodate busses. Mayor Pro Tem Jungman asked if other senior center designs have bus access and Mr. McKinney said it depends on the center and the transit system in the City. He said the biggest problem he has seen is large tour buses picking up seniors for day trips or even week long trips and the seniors leaving their cars in the lot for the time they are away and to alleviate that issue, other cities made arrangements with private and commercial property owners for use of their lots.

Mayor Pro Tem Jungman said senior citizens have expressed a need for covered parking to protect their vehicles from the elements and asked if the proposed design includes a covered parking option. Mr. McKinney said that has not been considered at this point, because McKinney's concern was designing a single level parking lot with a single level building, but covered parking could be added to the design.

Councilmember Holman said the City has been discussing regulations for residential carports and asked if those discussions would be affected by covered parking being provided at the proposed senior center and Mr. McKinney said aesthetics would be a concern because residents work hard to attach and match their carports to their homes to meet carport requirements.

Councilmember Heiple asked that the presentation tonight to be placed on the City's website and Facebook page so the community can see what is being proposed, which exceeds his expectations. He said there are seniors attending tonight that still want a stand-alone facility. He said a stand-alone facility is not off the table, but it is a conversation that continues to be a viable option. He said the ultimate goal is to end up with the best bang for the buck for the seniors and the public as a whole. Mr. McKinney reminded everyone that this design is pre-schematic and is not the final design and there needs to be input from the general public, senior citizens, City Staff, so there are a lot of options still needing to be discussed.

Councilmember Lang asked how much money the City would need to get to this same point on a stand-alone facility, concept wise, and Mr. McKinney said an estimated \$20,000 could be carried forward towards further design study for a stand-alone facility. Mr. Gallow said the architectural program that exists is a good foundation for discussion no matter where the building is located and one of the important aspects of looking at other sites is the reality of traffic flow for the senior using the facility.

Councilmember Castleberry said none of the projects in the Norman Forward initiative have been designed so having this much to work with on the senior center is far beyond the other projects. He said Norman Forward is more of a financing package to build the projects with design and details being worked out as projects develop.

Councilmember Heiple asked Mr. Jeff Bryant, City Attorney, what language is included in the ballot language that would accommodate a renovated center or a stand-alone option and Mr. Bryant said Staff is reworking the ordinance to clarify that there are options for the senior center. Councilmember Holman asked if the City has an option for a stand-alone facility, would they still be able to fulfill obligations from the 2008 proposition that passed and Mr. Bryant said the draft language focuses more on rehabilitating the existing facility, but feedback from Councilmembers has made it clear they want options for renovating the existing library or looking at options, which might be a stand-alone facility in the vicinity of Andrews Park or the proposed central library. He said the ordinance language will be clear about those options. Councilmember Holman did not want to give up the 2008 funding obligations approved by the public, which included relocating offices within the Municipal Complex so if the City can meet those obligations and have an avenue for a stand-alone senior center facility, he would support that. Mr. Bryant said Staff is working closely with Bond Counsel as to the flexibility with other improvements of the Municipal Complex even if the ultimate decision is to relocate the senior center in a stand-alone facility.

Public Comments

Mr. Art Briephol said he is very interested in the project and asked how long renovations of the existing library would take and Mr. McKinney said final design, bid, and build-out for the proposed central library would take approximately two and one-half to three years. Once that was complete the renovation for the senior center could begin which would take approximately 10 to 12 months for a total of approximately four years.

Ms. Joy Hampton, The Norman Transcript, said many businesses park in the east parking lot across the street from the library and asked where those businesses would park if the building is renovated for a senior center. Also, will there be enough space for City offices if the senior center is 20,000 square feet instead of the 12,000 square feet proposed in 2008? Mr. McKinney said there will be enough parking for businesses as Staff parking will be distributed to parking areas throughout the Municipal Complex and there is enough space for the proposed City offices since the building is 51,000 square feet and only 20,000 square feet is being used for the senior center.

Ms. Donna Johnson said she has a lot of questions and concerns and asked where the most effective place to submit those would be. Mayor Pro Tem Jungman told Ms. Johnson to submit comments and questions to the City Clerk's Office. Ms. Johnson asked if the facility would have a sound system. Mr. McKinney said the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires large activity spaces to have a hearing loop, which is a wireless sound system that directly accesses hearing aids. McKinney recommends that all the activity spaces have hearing loop, which goes beyond the ADA requirements.

Ms. Nicky Wilson asked if Municipal Court would move or stay where it is and Mr. McKinney said Municipal Court would move into Building A along with the Finance Department, Building C will house the Utilities, Human Resources, and Information Technology Departments, and Building B would house the Police Department. The Public Works, Engineering, and Planning Departments would move into the existing library with the senior center. He said moving these offices will leave enough space for future growth of City needs.

Ms. Barbara Wiseman said if it is four years before the renovated senior center is ready, will something be done about the lack of parking at the current senior center. Mr. Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, said there is not simple answer to that as options are limited, but Staff has been trying to locate additional parking places. Mayor Pro Tem Jungman said the City is still looking for a solution and if they find one they will jump on it.

Mr. Harold Heiple said if Council is concerned about the possibility that Norman Forward might get shot down if a free standing senior center facility is not authorized, what are the alternatives because if the City puts Staff Offices and the senior center into one building, it will be a zoo.

Mr. Jim Pappas asked where the meeting next Tuesday will be held and will there be enough seating? Mayor Pro Tem Jungman said the meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers and Council will be considering the ballot language authorizing the sales tax that would fund all the Norman Forward projects including the senior center.

Ms. Bette Maffucci said senior citizens thought tonight's meeting was going to be about the senior center location, not design of the building. Mayor Pro Tem Jungman said the location of the site will not be decided at next week's Council meeting. Council and Staff will continue to consider the merits of the current library site as well as alternate proposals and the ballot language will allow flexibility for a decision to be made in the future.

Ms. Sherry Briephol asked if the other 30,000 square feet of the library building could be used for something other than City offices until such a time that it is needed. She is also concerned about the drop-off area not being adequate as she believes it needs to consist of two lanes not one. Mayor Pro Tem Jungman asked Mr. McKinney if the site can accommodate more drop-off space and covered awning and Mr. McKinney said yes, it can be wider to accommodate multiple vehicles.

Public Comments, continued:

Ms. Susan Miller would like to be able to compare the length of time it would take from start to finish of a stand-alone facility versus the renovated existing library. Mr. McKinney said it is hard to design a building without a site, but it could take up to four and one-half years or more depending on the time it takes to find the land, negotiate the land, buy the land, rezone the land, plat the land, design the building, bid the project, etc.

Ms. Nina Flannery asked if energy technology has been considered such as solar energy and Mr. McKinney said the heat and air system recently installed in the building improved the efficiency of the building greatly. He said solar can be added at a later date, but could not be used for the entire building.

Ms. Kathy Anderson wants to understand the timeline and asked if Council is voting on Norman Forward projects next week without knowing specifics and Councilmember Castleberry said Council will voting on whether or not to put Norman Forward to a vote of the people. He said Council knows what the projects are, but the final costs and design will not take place until the proposal has passed and the public approves.

Ms. Anderson asked if a stand-alone senior center will be voted on and Mr. Bryant said the current language Council will be considering next week does include a senior center facility, but is not specific on whether it will be free standing. The current language focuses on the library renovation as the senior center facility. He has been asked by Council to develop language that allows an option for Council to consider, at some point in the future if Norman Forward passes, to look at not only the renovation of the current library, but to look at other options which would include a free standing facility. The vote Council will be considering next week is whether or not to submit to the voters the proposition of having a 15 year, one-half percent sales tax to be assessed on all sales that happen in the Norman jurisdiction over that time period. The money generated by that tax will be used for all the projects listed in the ballot language including a senior center and will give the City flexibility to look at what is feasible, what is functional, and what is fundable.

Items submitted for the record

1. Memorandum dated July 31, 2015, from Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, to Steve Lewis, City Manager, with Norman Senior Center Architectural Program for Program Fit Study Program vs. Designed Square Footage Comparison, Site Plan, and Floor Plan
2. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Proposed Norman Senior Citizens Center," dated August 4, 2015

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The meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

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ATTEST:



City Clerk



Mayor

