

Town of Middlebury
Ilsley Library Renovation Expansion Working Group
Minutes of Meeting
December 23, 2021

Present:

Selectboard Members Dan Brown and Lindsay Fuentes-George
Ilsley Library Board of Trustees Joe McVeigh and Amy Mincher (via Zoom)
Library Director Dana Hart
Town Staff Working Group Liaison Judith Harris

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Joe McVeigh.

Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as presented.

Approval of 12/16/21 Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

Discussion of Design Advisory Team Composition and Reporting

The group reviewed the changes made to the charge from the last meeting. There was consensus that the changes were acceptable and in keeping with the language discussed at the previous meeting.

Joe directed the group to the list of questions developed on December 13. The group picked back up with the three remaining questions: the composition of the Design Advisory Team; the best way to ensure communication between the groups; and the reporting structure for all of these groups.

The group discussed the proposed drawings of organizational approaches for the Design Advisory Team and related/supporting groups. The debate was generally focused on whether or not there should be an Executive Committee that oversees a Design Advisory Team, and Funding Team, and a Communications Team, or, alternatively, if the Executive Committee and Design Advisory Team could collapse into one committee. Judith stressed the importance of including individuals with expertise in funding and community engagement from the outset; as long as that is done appropriately, the group name and organization is mostly semantic. Joe voiced concerns about the amount of time involved in volunteering for one of these committees. Ultimately it was decided that there would be redundancy in having a separate Executive Committee and Design Advisory Committee. The group agreed by consensus that there would be one group, which serves as the Design Advisory Committee, and delegates work to the Funding and Community Engagement subcommittees.

Joe asked if the charge is broad enough; he pointed out that it currently focuses on the design, but doesn't charge the group with 'getting the building built.' Dan pointed out that the design isn't worth much if it doesn't come with a funding plan. Joe reflected on 'what went wrong last time,' asked if the charge should go beyond just the design. Dana agreed that charging this group with developing a plan and ensuring its execution would broaden the scope and place responsibility. Lindsay wondered if perhaps the funding and design should be in the charge for this group, and once that is complete perhaps another group would take on construction

48 management; or perhaps that would be an opportune time for some people to cycle off the committee and
49 other people to cycle on.

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51 The group discussed the importance of different funding strategies, ranging from private fundraising, grant
52 applications, partnerships, and bonding. The group also discussed the importance of community engagement,
53 both from a community input and a marketing/PR standpoint. It was agreed that both funding and community
54 engagement should be a part of the Design Advisory Team's charge.

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56 Dana proposed adding a sentence to the beginning of the charge. It was agreed by consensus to add the
57 sentence "Coordinate funding strategies and community engagement to bring the project to fruition." Amy
58 commented that she liked this language because it makes it clear that the group's work isn't finished until there
59 is success. There was discussion about the possibility of individuals cycling on and off the Design Advisory Group
60 as the project progresses and needs change.

61 Joe proposed that the name "Design Advisory Group" might be a bit weak, now that the charge has been
62 expanded and the group is essentially going to be an executive committee overseeing two subcommittees.
63 Judith explained this was why she used the name "IPL 100 Working Group" in her drawing, because it
64 encompasses all these functions. There was general consensus that the name of the committee, previously
65 known as the Design Advisory Team, would be named "IPL 100 Project Team."

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67 The conversation shifted to the reporting structure. Dan expressed a lack of clarity about how the library trustees
68 and Selectboard currently work together. Joe explained that, according to Vermont Library Law, the trustees are
69 responsible for 1) hiring and supervising a library director 2) setting library policy and 3) developing the library
70 budget. By contract, the Selectboard 1) approves the overall library budget and 2) is responsible for the library
71 building. The physical building and the collections belong to the Town of Middlebury. The library staff are
72 employees of the Town of Middlebury. The trustees and Selectboard need to work together to ensure the
73 library's success. Dana noted that in Middlebury this works very well; the trustees and the select board
74 communicate well and are oriented towards the same goals for the library, as evidenced by the formation of the
75 Library Renovation/Expansion Working Group.

76

77 Dan asked if the proposed IPL 100 Project Group was going to report to the select board. Several possibilities
78 were discussed, for example having the group report to both the select board and the trustees, or perhaps
79 having the group report to the select board but run proposals through the trustees first (in this instance, the
80 trustees would function similarly to the Infrastructure Committee). It was ultimately decided that this would
81 slow things down, and that the trustees would be so involved in the project (through representation on the IPLA
82 Project Team, Funding Team, and Community Engagement Teams) that they wouldn't need to formally approve
83 things. There was general consensus that the IPL 100 Project Group should report to the select board, and the
84 Funding Team and Community Engagement Team are subcommittees of the IPL 100 Project Group.

85

86 There was some discussion of whether or not the library director would be on all three committees. The
87 possibility was raised that perhaps Dana would not be on all the teams, but would sit in on many of the
88 meetings, to ensure continuity across all the efforts. In terms of communication, it was decided by consensus
89 that communication would ideally be ensured by 1) the chairs of the Funding and Community Engagement
90 Teams will also serve on the IPL Project Team 2) that the library director would attend as many meetings of each
91 group as possible and 3) that the Funding and Community Engagement Teams will provide reports to the IPL
92 Project Team.

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94 The focus shifted to developing a proposed composition for the IPL 100 Project Team. Joe suggested having
95 someone with funding expertise and community engagement expertise. He also wondered if the group wanted

96 someone with library management/design expertise. Judith wondered if the number as it currently stood (eight
97 members) was ideal. Dana wondered if an even number was not ideal for voting purposes. Dana also wondered
98 if it was appropriate for her to be a voting member as a town employee. It was ultimately agreed that Dana and
99 Judith, as town employees, would not be voting members.

100

101 It was agreed that the recommended composition would be: two select board members; two library trustees;
102 one funding specialist; one community engagement specialist; and one library specialist. Dana and Judith will be
103 non voting members. Judith pointed out that this didn't include an architect specialist or a community member-
104 at-large. There was general consensus that the IPL 100 Project Group could bring in various additional specialists
105 (for example, architects) on an as-needed basis. Amy also pointed out that the Friends of the Library would need
106 to be brought in at some point, to give input to the design.

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108 Next Steps

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110 The group will not meet in December 30th. The group decided to discuss Item D (recommendations to keep in
111 mind) on January 6th, and then do a final review and edit of the report on January 13th. It was determined that
112 mid-January was a feasible end point for the Working Group. Joe asked for feedback on what to share with the
113 Selectboard during his report on the 28th of December and there was brief discussion of the 'highlights' of what
114 the Working Group has discussed/learned so far.

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116 The meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

117 Respectfully submitted,

118 Dana Hart

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