

1 Town of Middlebury
2 IIsley Library Renovation Expansion Working Group
3 Minutes of Meeting
4 January 13, 2022
5

6 Present:

7 Selectboard Members Dan Brown, with Lindsey Fuentes-George joining via ZOOM
8 IIsley Library Board of Trustees Joe McVeigh and Amy Mincher
9 Library Director Dana Hart
10 Town Staff Working Group Liaison Judith Harris
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12 The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Joe McVeigh
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14 Adoption of Agenda
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16 The agenda was adopted with the addition of a discussion on the Town Meeting survey question
17 regarding the Library, and the estimated cost of the new HVAC system proposed for the Library and how
18 the system relates to the future plans for expansion/renovation.
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20 Approval of 1/6/22 Minutes
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22 The minutes were approved as presented.
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24 Proposed New HVAC System for the Library
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26 Hart said a little over a week ago she'd met with Director of Public Works Planning Dan Werner and the
27 engineer of the HVAC system to look at the final design, and at that time they learned that the cost of
28 just over \$1 million estimate was much higher than had been anticipated. The increase in cost is largely
29 due to the difficulty obtaining parts and the labor shortage. She said even though the Library could
30 continue to operate while the system is being installed, it would be incredibly difficult. She said if they
31 had to relocate during the installation, the cost would go way beyond the estimated \$1 million. She said
32 the issues now are the higher price of the system and the timing of having it ready to install during the
33 summer construction season, as well as the ability to locate space to rent and move the collection in 3
34 months.
35

36 Hart said she updated the Library Board of Trustees about this at their meeting this past Monday, and
37 this morning she and Werner updated the Infrastructure Committee, so it is proposed that we do not
38 proceed with a bond vote at Town Meeting and to hold off until this fall when there might be more
39 information on the direction this renovation project is moving in. She said the hope is that this could be
40 timed so the library operations would only need to relocate once for both the renovation/expansion and
41 the new HVAC system.
42

43 Fuentes-George asked if this meant they would need to use the existing heating system through next
44 winter as well, and Hart said it does, but it was possible that if this fall it looked like it was going to be 5
45 or 6 years of fund raising and design for the renovations and expansion, then they might look at
46 installing the new HVAC system in the 1924 building and the 1977 addition and switch the system in the
47 1988 addition over from oil to natural gas. She said if it is decided to renovate the entire existing

48 structure with both additions, then they would have to reevaluate and do each project separately. She
49 said they're hoping to have an answer by this fall, but in any event it won't happen this summer.

50
51 Brown said the cost of the new HVAC system really got the Selectboard's attention, and they were
52 reluctant to do a bond vote for a system when we're talking about a renovation. He said despite the fact
53 the system could be moved, there is still the labor and installation costs involved, so he's very glad to
54 hear this has been postponed. Hart said when this was originally discussed the cost was about half of
55 what it is now, and at that point it made sense to move ahead and have a reliable heating system now,
56 and while she's not excited about going another winter with the existing system, it's really the best way
57 to move forward.

58
59 McVeigh said the Library Board had not fully understood the disruption the installation of these heat
60 pumps would cause to the library operations for 3 months. Brown said it also isn't wise to ask the voters
61 for a \$1 million now and then go back to them again for \$6 or 7 million in a few years, but it will be key
62 to why we need a new library. Hart said they can limp along a little bit longer, but their existing systems
63 are really at the end of their lives, but everyone seems comfortable that this decision is the way to go.

64
65 Fuentes-George said since they're going to have to limp along with this system, it might be a good idea
66 to boost the budget needed this year to keep the existing system running. Harris suggested having the
67 existing system inspected a little more frequently to be sure everything is working properly. Hart said a
68 few years ago they spent about \$8,000 to replace parts and do work on the boiler to keep it going, so
69 now they can look into what else can be done to extend the life.

70
71 Town Meeting Survey

72
73 McVeigh said Hart had received a draft of the Town Meeting survey from Town Manager Kathleen
74 Ramsay, and one portion of the survey asks respondents to "Indicate the extent you agree or disagree to
75 the following statements" and one of the questions is "Locate Ilsley Library in a new location if the
76 current site is too limited and expensive to renovate". Fuentes-George said this survey is not officially
77 created by the Town, but by former Selectboard member Laura Asermily and she thought Asermily felt
78 that if this is the direction the project might be going, this was one way to let people know and to get
79 the ball rolling.

80
81 Hart said this might be a good way to ask some questions of the community, but Brown warned you
82 have to be careful what you ask because you might not like the answer. He said he's been surprised by
83 the number of people he's spoken to who would actually like to see the Library move to a new site.

84
85 Fuentes-George thought it was a good place to list some possible services that might be offered in a new
86 library and ask people if they would utilize them, so it's putting this project on their radar, but not
87 providing an answer we don't want to hear right now.

88
89 It was decided that they would be interested in having a question on the survey, with input on what the
90 question is and how it's worded.

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94

95 Draft Report and Charge

96

97 McVeigh said Harris had pointed out that on Page 3 under 2. (Findings of the 2014-2017 Library Building
98 Committee) c. (Major Challenges) facing the library, that Item 1. says the 1988 and 1977 additions would
99 need to be removed to fix the drainage issue. Further, Item c.2. says ~~and~~ that space for library
100 expansion is limited due to the Town Offices, Main Street and Marquis Theater, and parking lot. He said
101 Harris wondered if we really want to say this, since the architect and Committee weren't saying it was
102 impossible due to these issues, it might just be more expensive. Harris said anyone reading these items
103 might think that the current Committee has found this to be true and that these conclusions "still hold
104 water".

105

106 They discussed how to reword this to make it sound that the drainage issue would be difficult and more
107 expensive, but not impossible to deal with these limitations and they also reworded the building
108 expansion limitations.

109

110 The statement regarding the HVAC system was now inaccurate, so it was agreed to change it to read
111 "The Library heating system is at the end of its life and adds urgency to the timeline of this project, as
112 does the total lack of ventilation." (Item B.1.f. of the Report)

113

114 When looking at the Charge, (Item 5 – Meeting Frequency) McVeigh wondered if they needed to
115 address how often the Project Team should meet (it currently reads "at least semi-monthly"). It was
116 decided by the group to at least eliminate the sentence that reads "Subgroups may meet more
117 frequently". Hart said in talking with Werner regarding the HVAC system, he indicated that if we plan to
118 move ahead with the HVAC system before the expansion project it would be helpful if they knew by this
119 September if the library would be staying on-site and if the 1988 addition would be removed.

120

121 Harris suggested (regarding Item 8. Next steps following recommended design) adding that along with
122 the presentation of the proposed design, that they also include projected costs that would be needed to
123 analyze funding source options and in creating an implementation strategy. A suggested text revision by
124 Harris was accepted by the group.

125

126 In regard to Section 9 - Site and Location, they discussed how to address exploring other options beyond
127 the existing Main Street site. Harris recommends the use of a matrix that shows the advantages and
128 disadvantages of each site looked at to not only help narrow down the best site, but to justify why that
129 site is chosen. The wording of the section was edited to reflect the need for the Ilsley 100 Project Team
130 to look at other site options.

131

132 Hart will work on finalizing the edits on the Report and the Charge for approval by the Ilsley Library
133 Renovation Expansion Working Group and then submission to the Selectboard to consider at their
134 January 25th meeting.

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136 The meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

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138 Respectfully submitted,
139 Beth Dow