



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH LIBRARY LECTURE HALL DESIGN COMMITTEE MINUTES

**100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Coast Room (Bay 2D)
Monday, March 2, 2020 1:00 PM**

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Jill Johnson-Tucker called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Jill Johnson-Tucker, Vice Chair Janet Ray, Council Member Diane Dixon
(arrived late), Karen Clark, Matthew Witte

Absent: None.

III. NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

None.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. *Approval of Minutes*

A motion was made by Vice Chair Ray, and was seconded by Committee Member Clark to approve the *Draft Minutes of the February 3, 2020, Library Lecture Hall Design Committee Meeting, as corrected.*

The motion carried unanimously with the following vote:

AYES: Chair Jill Johnson-Tucker, Vice Chair Janet Ray,
Karen Clark, Matthew Witte

NOES: None

ABSENT: Council Member Diane Dixon

ABSTAIN: None.

VI. CURRENT BUSINESS

1. *Robert Coffee and the architectural team to the Library Lecture Hall Design Committee- presentation and discussion of possible interior layouts*

Mr. Coffee stated the goal was to discuss positives and negatives and identify two schemes to move forward.

He stated the variations are centered around the arrival sequence, the relationship with the outdoor space, the seating arrangements, and some architectural elements such as the size of the building.

Mr. Coffee stated the takeaway from the previous meeting was that the courtyard would be a public space. The parking count was also discussed and the drop off location to set off the entry sequence. Mr. Coffee stated one hundred seventy-two parking spaces are required and he outlined the spaces that would be gained and lost to meet the one hundred seventy-two 172 spaces. He clarified no additional handicap spaces are required. He pointed to the blue outline provided to discuss the entry from the drop off and the lobby. Mr. Coffee noted the courtyard will become more important.

Committee Member Dixon asked if the light-yellow portion is supposed to have a cover over it.

Mr. Coffee explained the light-yellow space is meant to be transparent lobby space. He explained where the glass would be and that a part of the space would air-conditioned space and other would be space opened to the sky.

Committee Member Witte asked why the space was not pushed further towards Avocado Avenue.

Chair Johnson-Tucker confirmed this is an early scheme.

Mr. Coffee also pointed out the perforated wall and the clear window with a view as you walk in. He pointed out the transition between the courtyard and the lobby and how they have tried to provide a feeling of identity and arrival. Mr. Coffee explained the transparency through the glass would become more important to blur the lines between outdoor and indoor.

Mr. Coffee reminded the Committee that it had previously described seating arrangements and had determined what they like and what they did not like. He noted Scheme C was the most favorable and that there was some interest in the thrust stage. He presented a new model where the first five or six rows would have a six-inch riser which would then transition to a double riser. He discussed the arrival space and asked the Committee to consider it and which way they would like to walk in.

Mr. Coffee showed the building area and asked the Committee to consider what is underground such as electrical lines, storm drain, sanitary sewer and water. He noted building would impact those. He presented a memo outlining the costs associated with those issues as well as the changes to the parking lot.

Mr. Coffee showed scheme one and noted the square footage does not include the courtyard. He showed where there would be glass and open space. Mr. Coffee noted the restrooms.

Committee Member Dixon asked whether they would have to leave the lobby to get to the restroom.

Mr. Coffee explained how access would work and showed how the women's restroom would have a longer aisle to accommodate a line.

Committee Member Dixon asked about the possibility of having unisex bathrooms to help women.

Mr. Coffee stated single occupancy restrooms are more accommodating to unisex but it wouldn't save space.

Council Member Dixon asked whether stalls could go straight to the ceiling.

Mr. Coffee explained changing the bathroom stalls would not affect square footage significantly. He went through the space and discussed handicap seating. He explained most of the schemes have the same size rooms in the back. He continued to discuss seating.

Committee Member Witte asked to look at the site plan and stated this is information that would have to be processed as a group because the building cannot be bigger. He reminded Mr. Coffee the goal from the beginning was to have 275 to 300 seats and it would not be accepted to have that in the building.

Mr. Coffee stated all the schemes are at 270 or more.

Committee Member Witte opined the priority is that the space is not less than 275 seats. He also stated the outdoor space is important and asked whether the desired access would be sacrificed for the desired outdoor space.

Mr. Coffee continued to explain the plans and go through the various schemes and layouts of the outdoor space and the entrance and the indoor space such as the gallery and seating areas, and other rooms. He discussed the layouts of the lobby level. The interesting architectural possibilities offered by each scheme, the arrangement of rows and the various storage rooms.

Committee Member Dixon noted Scheme 3 was positive given the wall faces the west and sunsets and provides a bookend to the Council Chambers.

Mr. Coffee continued to discuss the scheme and noted the repetition. He stated the architectural group discussed some of these options but could not work around the issues. He noted he likes the different degrees of opaqueness and walking directly into the building.

Mr. Coffee then explained the next two schemes move the outdoor plaza. He asked whether the original plaza (bamboo court) could be traded for a new plaza. He explained how the proposed scheme moves the plaza and changes the layout of the parking to set up a purer lobby to outdoor space. He discussed the entrance for staff.

Chair Johnson-Tucker noted this scheme was interesting and asked how it would be accessed. She posed the question of whether it would be useful.

The Committee discussed it would be useful for other groups. Council Member Dixon asked whether the restrooms could be used by the public.

Mr. Coffee stated that was never what was envisioned.

Chair Johnson-Tucker noted her concerns with opening the restroom to all. She noted her concerns that a hidden bathroom could be misused.

Committee Member Witte noted locks could be used and asked what other control mechanisms are used today.

Mr. Coffee continued to discuss the various schemes. He noted the last scheme creates a large, huge plaza and noted the cost associated is substantial. He noted the last scheme makes the building look like part of the library.

Committee Member Dixon asked whether it is elevated or flat.

Mr. Coffee stated it is flat. He continued to discuss the plan of the scheme with the various rooms.

Committee Member Witte asked whether he had the ability to put all five schemes next to each other. He told Mr. Coffee he did a good job of incorporating all the needs. He noted his concern with the storm drain line.

Mr. Coffee noted where the manhole is and opined it is an issue but nothing you could not overcome at some cost to the project.

Committee Member Witte spoke about the cost of moving the line and whether other aspects would have to be compromised. He noted he would focus on the first three schemes.

The Committee agreed the first three schemes would be best.

Chair Johnson-Tucker noted the agreement with the Irvine Company to not exceed 10,000 square feet. She questioned whether there is a need to have some spaces, such as the office spaces.

Mr. Coffee affirmed he is trying to meet the goals of the Committee, including having a building that is architecturally beautiful.

Chair Johnson-Tucker asked whether restrooms could be sacrificed.

Mr. Coffee noted this would have to be discussed with the Building Department because the use will be increased.

Meg Linton noted restrooms would be needed. She also noted patrons are older and they would not be able to rush down the stairs to use the restrooms in the other buildings. She also stated the lifts that only take one person down at a time would be difficult to use for people who use walkers. She asked for the Committee to consider staffing issues and the staff who would be monitored.

Mr. Jeff Miller noted there is a code requirement to have a certain number of trained staff depending on seat count.

Committee Member Dixon asked whether the conference rooms in the library can be used instead of the greenroom.

Meg Linton opined the room is needed.

Committee Member Witte outlined some of the space that is required and how needed it is to attempt to reduce square footage.

Mr. Coffee pointed out the lift on Scheme 3 and the ramp.

Vice Chair Ray asked whether an area would be used for flexible seating.

Committee Member Witte noted he liked this scheme.

Mr. John Von Szeliski noted his concerns with hidden corners. He spoke about the need to maintain a social unit through the seating arrangements.

Committee Member Witte again noted he liked this scheme.

Chair Johnson-Tucker asked whether there was a slide showing the entry way.

Committee Member Dixon asked whether the area that goes from light yellow to yellow was a wall.

Mr. Coffee explained it was similar to the San Diego Library wall that is a filter for the light coming to the space as an interesting backdrop.

Chair Johnson-Tucker asked whether some of the rooms in the back could be pushed to the side to create a larger funnel.

Mr. Coffee noted there are reasons to keep it.

Vice Chair Ray said this feels like an extension of the library.

Committee Member Witte noted this plaza is considerably larger.

Committee Member Dixon asked whether the area with the four palm trees could be moved.

Mr. Coffee stated that area is very dramatic and should be kept.

He then outlined the first two schemes. He outlined the entrance to the first scheme and the corridors.

Mr. Miller explained the first scheme does not require stairs or lifts to get into the building.

Mr. Coffee walked through how that is accomplished.

Mr. Miller noted all five schemes have an aisle that's the same level as the stage.

Committee Member Witte asked why such a deep space is needed.

Mr. Von Szeliski spoke about the curvature of the stage and how it impacts the chamber music and a full-depth program. He noted some performances of eight or ten people dancing would require such a deep stage. He noted the option of side-stage walls is important so performers to enter from either side of the stage.

Chair Johnson-Tucker noted it might not be worthwhile to give up other space for a stage that isn't used as often for dancing as it is for lectures.

Committee Member Dixon also noted dance is a minimal part of what would be anticipated that the space should not be sacrificed. But she noted she likes the intimacy of the stage going into the audience even for lectures.

The Committee discussed the nutcracker could be kept in the Friends' Room. They discussed the lift required for the AV Room for someone to work there.

Committee Member Witte noted he does not see the space getting smaller.

Vice Chair Ray asked Mr. Coffee to give a brief synopsis of the distinguishing characteristics of scheme one and two.

Mr. Coffee explained the differences in the way patrons enter where in scheme one, patrons are entering at the top and requires a lift whereas scheme two, patrons enter to the middle of the space and either go up or down and no lift is required.

The Committee discussed why the 10,000 square feet isn't enough compared to the seating capacity. They discussed that the seating capacity is 296 and 5,000 square feet. The Committee also discussed the chairs that could be used and whether the chairs in the Council Chambers would be acceptable.

Committee Member Dixon asked whether 10,000 square feet could be completed with current \$7 to \$8 million-dollar budget.

Mr. Coffee noted that is the goal.

Mr. Von Szeliski stated the Committee would have to decide whether they want certain things like a backstage bathroom.

Mr. Coffee suggested the following concept would save a lot of area. He noted if the lobby wasn't present and the restrooms were outdoors under a cover.

Chair Johnson-Tucker stated that would work fine and it is similar to what is used in the Friend's Room.

Meg Linton noted a separate building for the bathrooms is not a problem.

Ultimately, Mr. Coffee noted under all the schemes, minimizing the lobby and entrance space would keep the building size under 10,000 square feet. He reminded the cost will be hinging on what it costs to move utilities and to deal with parking. Once the soft costs are taken care of, they can address construction costs.

Chair Johnson-Tucker asked them which ones the architectural group likes best.

Mr. Coffee stated they like the first three.

Mr. Von Szeliski noted they are all schemes that are still being developed. He noted the lecture hall itself is the heart of the building and some of the critical ancillary spaces.

Chair Johnson-Tucker noted schemes four and five are the ones with the larger courtyard and it had been discussed the courtyard should be integrated.

Mr. Coffee noted the courtyard should include a sense of privacy from the parking lot.

Mr. Von Szeliski asked whether a ticket office would be needed and an information center.

Meg Linton stated most of the events are general seating and they could set up a place to check people in.

The Committee then discussed the need for a ticket office.

Chair Johnson-Tucker opened the floor for public comment.

Ms. Debra Allen, the president of the Harbor View Hills Association, noted neighbors are concerned about the lighting issue. She explained how the lights in the parking lot were retroactively changed due to these issues. She noted the presentation included reconfiguration of the parking space and asked the Committee consider the neighbors. She also noted some concern with a perforated wall and the headlights in the evening. Ms. Allen reminded the Committee the value of their homes is dependent on views of Newport Beach.

Mr. Jim Mosher asked how steep pedestrian access is from Avocado Avenue in the first three schemes.

Mr. Coffee stated it would have to be kept at 5 percent or 8.3 percent to keep it ADA accessible with a handrail.

2. Continued discussion of project schedule, programming and concepts

Committee Member Witte requested direction regarding the next discussion.

Chair Johnson Tucker stated schemes one through three would be discussed

Mr. Coffee stated they would discuss primarily scheme one to keep in mind square footage.

The Committee then discussed the necessity of the lobby.

Committee Member Dixon commented on whether it would save money or space.

Vice Chair Ray noted some events do use the lobby but the outdoor space could be used for gathering after the events.

Committee Member Witte stated he does not understand the difference between courtyard and outdoor space. He opined the space to congregating is critical to the building. He spoke of the need for certain spaces such as a space to congregate when the library is closed. He opined the location of the bathrooms is important but not determinative.

Chair Johnson-Tucker asked again whether a lobby is needed.

Vice Chair Ray noted most of the events do not require congregation outside.

Meg Linton agreed patrons speak to the speaker in the room but there is not a large need to congregate outside of the main room.

Committee Member Witte noted he would like flexibility regarding the use of the space so the use can change in the future.

The Committee then discussed the lighting issue.

Chair Johnson-Tucker asked Ms. Allen to determine where the lighting issue presents itself. She stated she would speak to Ms. Allen.

Mr. Mosher noted Mr. Coffee was concerned about the zoning code with moving the restrooms but that zoning code requirements can be waived.

VII. MATTERS WHICH COMMITTEE MEMBERS WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION, ACTION OR REPORT (NON-DISCUSSION ITEM)

None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Johnson-Tucker adjourned the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

APPROVED BY:

Chair Jill Johnson-Tucker