



Meeting Date: July 21, 2009
 Issue Date: August 1, 2009

**Wicomico Library
 Wicomico County, MD**

**Meeting Minutes
 Library Joint Task Force Meeting #2**

ATTENDANCE

Vicki Greene	WPL - Deputy Director	410-749-3612x12	vgreene@wicomico.org
Marvin Long	WPL - Board Member	410-742-1385	marvlong@comcast.net
Tom Hehman	WPL - Director	410-749-3612x13	tomh@wicomico.org
Valerie Murphy	WPL - Board Member	410-548-9417	vmurphy@comcast.net
Leslie Russo	WPL – Board Member	410-749-3900	lhrusso@otwayrusso.com
Louise Smith	Salisbury City Council	410-860-1717	LsmithNkey@aol.com
Terry Cohen	Salisbury City Council	410-845-0296	terry@terrycohen.com
Jack Lennox	Salisbury / Wicomico Planning	410-548-4860	jlennox@wicomicocounty.org
Ed Heatwole	Wicomico Public Works	410-548-4810	ehatwole@wicomicocounty.org
Brad Gillis	WPL Board – SUN	410-543-2440	bradley.gillis@sun.com
Karen Reddersen	City of Salisbury	410-548-3190	kreddereson@ci.salisbury.md.us
John Pick	City of Salisbury	410-548-3100	jpick@ci.salisbury.md.us
Donnie Drewer	State Highway Administration	410-677-4000	ddrewer@sha.state.md.us
Jim Ireton	Mayor City of Salisbury	(attended part of meeting but did not sign in)	
Melanie Hennigan	Grimm + Parker Architects (G+P)	301-523-0007	mhennigan@gparch.com
Jason Palkewicz	McCrone	(did not attend)	jpalkewicz@mccrone-inc.com

DISTRIBUTION

All attendees. Tom to distribute as needed to other Stakeholders.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

This was the second meeting of the Joint Task Force comprised of Library, City, and County representatives charged with gathering information in order to respond to issues and questions raised at the June 1 City Council work session where the Library requested the acquisition of City Parking Lot #10. This was the final meeting of this Task Force. A report on the findings of this Task Force is scheduled for August 3rd, 2009 to the City Council.

INTRODUCTIONS & GENERAL OVERVIEW:

Tom Hehman opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, conducting introductions, and explaining the purpose and charge of this Task Force as per the original memo developed and issued to all members on June 1st:

“Charge: The Joint Task Force’s charge is to gather information and respond to the issues and questions raised by Council members at the June 1 meeting, and report back to Council at a work session no later than August in order to facilitate the Council’s decision on the Library’s request to acquire Parking Lot #10.”

Tom explained the great opportunity everyone had to give input because “we are all literally sitting at the table.” Tom explained the agenda and outline for the meeting that was posted on the large easel. It read:

AGENDA

- 4:00 pm Welcome & Introductions
Brief Review
- 4:10 pm Gather Information
 - City Priorities – Yellow Cards
 - Library Priorities – Purple Cards
 - Shared Priorities – Green Cards
 - Read Answers
- 4:45 pm Advantages & Disadvantages
 - Lot 1 / Historic Downtown Site
 - Lot 10 / Route 13 – Downtown Gateway Site
 - Existing Library Site - Downtown
- Wrap Up & Around the Room

Tom turned over the meeting to Melanie Hennigan of Grimm + Parker to review the Power Point presented at Task Force Meeting #1 for those who were not present at Meeting #1. Melanie also reviewed the updated study performed for parking lot #1 showing the overall Lot #1 (not two separate lots) and with parking on site and on the same side of the street as the library. Melanie reviewed Meeting #1's slide show which recapped the need for a new library, the purpose for a new site selection, the original study of 10 different sites, then five sites, and finally it recapped the study as pared down to the final three downtown sites – Parking Lot 1, Parking Lot 10, and the existing Library site . The slide show included the major criteria for locating a new library including the “retail theory location.”

MEETING MINUTES:

1. Traffic Impact: Marv explained that he had asked Donnie Drewer of State Highways to look at both Parking Lots 1 and 10 for how City traffic might be impacted by locating a new regional Library on either site and to join the Task Force for today's meeting. Tom asked Mr. Drewer to weigh in on the traffic impact of the library on either lot 1 or lot 10. Mr. Drewer reported that City traffic patterns would not be adversely affected by a new, regional library on either parking lot #10 or parking lot #1. He stated that current road ways, traffic directions, and traffic signals would easily accommodate the traffic that would come to either Parking Lot due to the library being located there. He also pointed out that the traffic signals that allow for folks downtown to leave downtown and get onto Rte.13 are the same ones library customers would use.

2. SHA Access: Regarding Lot 10 specifically, he pointed out that on Route 13, southbound traffic can easily turn into Church or Calvert Streets and access the library site from side streets. He agreed with Grimm+Parker that a curb cut would not be desired or allowed directly off of Route 13. Instead, the library site would be accessed by one or more of the surrounding side streets – Calvert, Church, or Polar Hill Avenue. Northbound traffic on route 13 would turn left one block before Calvert Street – onto Main Street, in order to access the library site. It was pointed out that this was very good for the Urban Salisbury plan that will revitalize the streetscape of Main Street from the western most side of Main Street to the east where it intersects Route 13. Mr. Drewer further pointed out the advantages of Lot 10 having a public bus stop, making Lot 10 very accessible by public transportation and pedestrians.

3. Parking Lot Revenue: Karen Redderson reported on the revenue that the City receives from parking on each of the Lots. Parking Lot 1 (a pay for parking lot with some City permits) has a gross annual income of \$90,000 with City expenses running between \$10,000 to \$30,000 annually, producing an average net stream of \$70,000 annually to the City. Parking Lot 10, which has approximately 72 metered spaces for the public and about 194 other spaces (City permits, handicap, shore transit) produces a revenue stream of about \$30,000 annually (after expenses).

4. Group Task: Identify/list the City's unique opportunities + priorities regarding locating a new library downtown, identify/list the Library's unique opportunities + priorities regarding locating a new library downtown, and identify/list the shared opportunities + priorities regarding locating a new library downtown. The stated goal of this exercise was to understand the differing points of views held by members of the task force. At this point in the meeting, Melanie asked the participants to “wear different hats and imagine evaluating each site from the City's unique perspective, from the Library's unique perspective, and from a Win-Win shared perspective.” Each meeting participant was given three colored index cards – and their answers were to be written on the colored card corresponding to the question asked.

1. What are the Shared Opportunities + Priorities for the City and the Library? – Green Cards

- a. Successful Library
- b. Convenient / Central Location and greater access
- c. If on lot 10, then gateway to downtown and high visibility for library
- d. Revitalizing downtown
- e. Minimize disruption of services
- f. Architectural Statement of the importance of learning.
- g. Access to services that people need in the place that they need them
- h. A completed project.
- i. Upgrading to a 21st century model
- j. Revitalization – helps in public and private fund raising; mixed-use
- k. City & County create a new face and destination for downtown.
- l. It will bring people to downtown and library growth will help.
- m. Provide a regional attraction for City and County.
- n. Economic development
- o. Creative re-purposing of existing library building
- p. Although a county facility, it will be identified as a city facility.
- q. Opportunity to serve city and county residents
- r. May generate / catalyze small businesses.
 - i. Deli
- s. Location will stimulate downtown and its surroundings.
- t. Opportunity to re-establish the image of the city in the 21st century.
- u. Reinforce the sense of historical place.
- v. Meet citizens' needs.
 - i. City
 - ii. County
 - iii. Citizens'
- w. Meet shared parking needs
 - i. Of library
 - ii. Of other businesses
- x. Have the greatest impact on Salisbury and developing a new library and synergy – County & City
- y. Although it is Wicomico County's Library it will also be identify with City.
- z. Increasing space of facility
- aa. Improving climate control of facility
- bb. Accessibility
- cc. Community Center

2. What are the Opportunities + Priorities for the City? – Yellow Cards

- a. Stimulate downtown
- b. Preserve historic downtown
- c. Attract people to downtown
- d. Create a sense of place and destination
- e. Connection to other facilities
- f. Becomes a Beacon to the City
- g. Obtain a Fair Value for City's Assets
- h. Pedestrian Connectivity
- i. Generation of Civic excitement and enthusiasm because of where it is and what it is.
- j. Need to focus on good land use priorities (Community and Institutional uses downtown) for now and future generations.)
- k. Keeping library downtown
- l. Not losing parking and revenue
- m. Building that is visually pleasing and makes a statement
- n. Celebrate Salisbury
- o. Facilitate traffic flow
- p. Facility that compliments historical architecture.
- q. Select a location with greatest economic impact and greatest value.
- r. Site location that would add to the accessibility of the library.
- s. Tie to urban Salisbury theme "Downtown Experience".
- t. Utilization of water front property.
- u. What will generate greatest excitement for citizens?
- v. Least disruption of streets, parking, parking revenue, and etc. – minimize impact.
- w. Encourage revitalization as it serves as an anchor of a public and private partnership.

3. What are the Opportunities + Priorities for the Library? – Purple Cards

- a. Convenient for patrons
- b. Improve accessibility and no crossing streets from parking
- c. Creating a 21st century library
- d. Sufficient room to accommodate future growth.
- e. Increase circulation
- f. Visibility
- g. Improve climate control for people and books
- h. Establish relationship with new users
- i. Building serves all demands and programs.
- j. Serve the county and city population now and in the future.
- k. Reach out to teens and 'tweens
 - i. The library is a cool place
 - ii. Reach that new generation
- l. Be relevant
- m. Serve the greatest number of citizens by being highly visible and highly accessible.
- n. Central Location
- o. Flexibility and design for future expansion
- p. Literacy
- q. New partnerships – such as "Pac 14" public access channel could be co-located here
- r. Performing Arts Venue
 - i. There is not a center – in downtown (50 – 200)
- s. Fund raising opportunities and economies of scale come with partnership

- t. Education, education, education is the foundation for our community and our democracy – through all phases life.
- u. Citizen and donor support for project
- v. Increase space
- w. Make the most of a lifetime opportunity
- x. Increase the number of people coming to the library
- y. Provide State-Of-The-Art Services

5. Property Appraisals: Karen Redderson reported on the appraisals of both parking lots and their commercial value to the City. Parking Lot 1 was appraised at a value of \$1,541,500 for a total acreage of 3.51 acres. Parking Lot #10 was appraised at a value of \$ 1,317,500 for a total acreage of 2.86 acres. Jack pointed out that the true value of both of these lots is considerably different than their “market cost” value to the City. Brad pointed out that the actual value of these two parcels was different than their appraised value – and that their real value was what the market place would decide. This appraisal simply captured what happened in the past; you do not know the value until you go to the market.

- z. Lot 10 – 375’ x 350’ = \$ 1,325,000
- aa. Lot 1 – 300’ x 360’ = \$1,550,000
- bb. Melanie pointed out that for all practical purposes, the appraised value of the two sites was so close in value, that the cost of either one was essentially equivalent from a site evaluation perspective – that a \$200,000 price difference is negligible in the total cost of a \$31 million project.

Other Comments from the meeting:

Urban Salisbury’s plan is a Main street streetscape, stretching from Mill Street to Rt. 13, and conceptually from the Marina to the Ward Museum on College Ave.

The Mayor expressed concern that only lot 10 was being considered. It was pointed out that he came in late after the other 10 sites and 5 sites were presented and that all 3 sites were being looked at. However, the Joint Task Force was established to inform the City on the Library’s request to acquire Lot 10, not to serve as a site selection committee. The Mayor spoke about the connection he felt to the history of Downtown and his memories of Salisbury from his childhood.

Melanie explained to the Mayor that as many as 21 sites had been initially considered by the Library Board, and that was narrowed from 21 to 10 sites, then from 10 to 5, then from 5 to 3 sites – as considered by this Task Force. Melanie also pointed out that it is historically the role of the Library Board to actually select sites for a new library, after getting input from stakeholders, which has been an on-going process. However, this charge of this Task Force was not to select the site for the Library, it was to respond to the City Council President’s request to get more information on the site selection process.

Leslie reminded everyone that we need to focus on the future, not just on nostalgia. She pointed out the need to capture the attention and the imagination of contemporary generations who were not alive to experience Salisbury’s past and who need to be inspired about an optimistic view of the future for the City. We should build new memories at the new library on a new site.

Marv reiterated that the Library was considering a downtown location because the City had requested that the Library remain downtown. Marv pointed out that since the Library is a County facility, it does not need to stay downtown. The library would like to remain downtown if a satisfactory agreement can be reached.

Jack expressed his first choice is for parking lot 1 because it will reinforce redevelopment in Historic Downtown. Jack

believes that the Library should stay in downtown, rather than move out of downtown. Jack pointed out that both parking lot 1 and parking lot 10 are in the Downtown.

Final Closing Comments:

- Ed thought that the Task Force was going to select or recommend a site. Melanie explained that this was not the Charge of the Task Force and that the Task Force was charged with gathering information to present to the City Council.
- Marv explained that the Library Board wanted Lot #10 because it had so many more advantages to it from the Library's perspective, but that the Board was open to Lot #1.
- Brad reiterated that time is of the essence and that synergy and momentum are important to this process.
- Brad said the Library needs to be Downtown and that he prefers lot #1.
- Jack requested that the City be put in position to act in the affirmative, i.e. to say "yes" and not to say "no."
- Louise Smith, City Council President, expressed her sincere gratitude and appreciation for all of the hard work and research that had been occurring regarding where to put the Library. She felt that the process to date has been very informative and she appreciated hearing everyone's point of view. She said how the information is presented the City Council is very important. She would like "pros and cons" to add up and clearly point in a direction to the final conclusion and recommendation.
- Leslie said everyone here tonight has operated good faith. We need to take this opportunity to look to the future and to create a Beacon of Hope and education, to be forward looking and not too caught up in nostalgia. Lot 10 offers the most promising view of the future and it creates a gateway and beacon to the Downtown – in a way not paralleled by the Lot 1 site, which is buried deeper into the heart of the City and has no way to make its presence known to those passing by on Route 13 and Route 50.
- Valerie stated that Lot 10 creates more opportunities for the Region as a whole – including opening up that side of the City. Valerie hopes that this process is going to mean something.
- Vicki was surprised by the comments made by the Mayor at the beginning of the meeting.
- Louise wants to go on record saying that this has been an arduous task for all on the Task Force and she says "Thanks to All of You" who served on the Task Force.
- Melanie reiterated that the process requires continuous participation to be effective and that all of the parties involved have the best chance of understanding each other when they are present, when they participate, and when they are open to learning about each other's points of views.
- Tom – "I used to dream of seeing the library rise out of the ground at lot 1. The more that I have learned about lot #10, the more I look at it and talk to people in the County, the more I realize that Lot 10 is the best site for the Library in the City and possibly in the entire County."
- Tom- "We do not want to miss the opportunity to grab and catch people travelling down Rte.13. Lot 10 will be an opportunity to create a Beacon and a Gateway to the City."

Tom asked an important question: if the library does not go on Parking Lot #10, what building type or project would or could go there? Is there a better use for Lot 10 than a public building like a library? Would any commercial project advertise the City as successfully as a Library would? Would any commercial project give back more to the City than a Library would?

At about 7:45 pm, the meeting drew to a close due to time limitations and everyone was thanked for giving their time and energy to such an important task.

Next Steps:

1. Melanie asked that folks write down their opinions about the "pros and cons" parking lot 1 and parking lot 10 and send them to her – since we did not get to that part of the meeting due to time limitations.
2. Melanie will put together the meeting minutes of the two meetings of the Task Force and provide them to

- the City Council for their use.
3. The City Council will meet on Monday August 3rd to review the meeting minutes of the Task Force and other research documents provided.
 4. The Library Board will meet to discuss internally what their next steps will be.

If your understanding of the items in this meeting is different from that listed above, please do not hesitate to call within 24 hours of receiving meeting minutes.

**Author: Melanie Hennigan
MH/mh**