

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
RED BANK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MARCH 23, 2021
5:00 P.M.**

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Chairman Huber requested the minutes reflect that, in compliance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231 (Open Public Meetings Act), notice of this meeting has been provided by notifying the Asbury Park Press, the Two River Times and the Star Ledger and by placing a notice on the bulletin board and filing same with the Borough Clerk.

*Meeting held via video/telephone conference due to Governor's Executive Order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Beebe, Huber, Massey, Wouters, Councilwoman Triggiano and Councilwoman Horgan

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Menna, Borough Administrator Shehady, Borough Clerk Borghi, Attorney Gordon, Consultant DeRoberts and Community Development Director Ebanks.

ABSENT: Commission Reynolds-Lewis (joined at 5:08 pm)

MINUTES & REPORTS

MINUTES

Regular Meeting minutes of 2/23/2021

Commissioner Beebe offered a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Wouters.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Wouters, Triggiano and Horgan.

NAYS: None.

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Report of Executive Director & Consultant

Presentation by DMR Architects—Administrator Shehady introduced Pradeep Kapoor of DMR Architects. He said Mr. Kapoor would be going over the conceptual drawings for the various site locations and the order of magnitude costs. He said he wanted to caution the Commissioners that this would be raw data and said it would not be fair or wise to compare them. He said they were being provided as an update to help move the process along. He said the estimates were being provided to the Financial Advisor who would be completing his draft financial analysis because there were other costs associated with various projects.

Mr. Kapoor said he would be presenting five different plans and would then provide the direct magnitude costs. He reviewed the first concept which was for updating the existing Senior Center at the 80 Shrewsbury Avenue location to bring it up to code with no other major revisions.

Mr. Kapoor reviewed the second concept plan to improve the existing Senior Center with modifications to make it function better including changing the layout and expanding classroom areas with folding partitions to make the rooms more flexible.

Director Shehady clarified that Option 1 would be just to get the building back up and running and said the modifications in Option 2 were being proposed in response to the needs analysis done after meetings with the Senior Center Director and staff.

Commissioner Reynolds-Lewis joined at 5:10 pm.

Mr. Kapoor offered more details on the various concepts for the Shrewsbury Avenue location. He reviewed the third option which was also for the Shrewsbury Avenue site but to include space for a Recreation Center. He said the existing building would be demolished and a new building constructed. He acknowledged that parking at the site was tight and reviewed expanded parking on the lower level along with a lobby. He said the Senior Center would be on the second floor and the third floor would be a scaled down version of a Rec Center that would not include a gymnasium. He continued to review details of the combined facility including an outdoor terrace.

Commissioner Beebe asked about the condition of a retaining wall that Mr. Kapoor had mentioned.

Mr. Kapoor said they had not done the structural analysis yet. He said his proposal was just based on concept studies. He continued to review details from the proposal for each floor.

Commissioner Huber asked about the intended use for the multi-purpose room.

Director Shehady said it was intended for activities and use by community groups. He said it could be used to expand Recreation offerings.

Commissioner Huber asked where the community groups met currently since the Borough did have this type of space to offer.

Director Shehady said they fend for themselves and said they try to make arrangements with schools or churches. He said some of the programs the Recreation Department wants to run just can't run because of the lack of space.

Councilwoman Horgan asked if there was an elevator proposed for the building.

Mr. Kapoor said there was and indicated it on the rendering. He said any public building with more than one floor was required to provide an elevator under the code. He said the second option would meet the desired program space with the exception of the Rec Center that had wanted to provide basketball.

Director Shehady clarified that the basketball court was not a required element for this proposal. He said it was a required element for proposals at the Count Basie site because they would be taking away the existing outdoor court.

Mr. Kapoor confirmed that the basketball court was the only program that would not be included in this proposal.

Director Shehady said there was never an intent to put a basketball court anywhere other than Count Basie because that would have taken away the existing court.

A discussion followed regarding parking on the site.

Mr. Kapoor reviewed Option 4 which was a combined Rec Center and Senior Center at Count Basie Field. He reviewed details including the fact that it would be single story facility and would include a gymnasium.

Director Shehady noted that it was all conceptual and allowed for adequate separation and security between the different operations. He noted that there would be separate restrooms in the Senior Center area so they would not have to go into the Red Center area. He also noted that the existing maintenance shed would be incorporated into the building which allowed that area to be repurposed into locker rooms.

Commissioner Huber asked Mr. Shehady to review what types of additional programming would be possible in a new facility that could not be done in existing space.

Commissioner Reynolds-Lewis questioned if programming would change and said that was not up to the Agency. She said it would be up to the Senior Center to use the space however they saw fit.

Mr. Kapoor said the Community Room in the proposed facility was larger than what they had currently.

Commissioner Reynolds-Lewis asked for specifics about the bathrooms.

Commissioner Beebe asked Director Shehady to comment on the advantages/staffing costs of an indoor basketball court.

Mr. Shehady went over the various costs that were being reviewed in consideration with one building versus two buildings. He again noted that the drawing was conceptual and said modifications could be made. He said the intent was to provide a community center for residents that they did not currently have. He reviewed the various possible uses. He said there was also an opportunity for revenue by renting out the space.

Mr. Kapoor reviewed Option 5 which was for a Recreation Center only.

Commissioner Massey asked if the area being discussed was on the Borough's Recreational Open Space Inventory (ROSI).

Director Shehady said he would look the information up and get back to her.

Mr. Kapoor continued review and noted it would also include a basketball court since they were taking over the outdoor area that currently served as a basketball court. He reviewed the plan in detail.

Councilwoman Horgan asked for more information on the storage areas.

Councilwoman Triggiano asked for more information on the locker room area of the previous option. A discussion on locker rooms in general continued.

Mr. Kapoor reviewed to cost estimates of the various options in detail.

Director Shehady noted the some of the options may have different factor to be considered such as possible public/private partnerships and bonding considerations. He said the information had been given to the Agency's Financial Advisory and said he would be providing a report.

Commissioner Huber asked for more information on the order of magnitude.

Mr. Kapoor reviewed other Rec Centers his firm had worked on and said the costs per square foot were similar. He reviewed how they determined the numbers.

A discussion followed on the various options regarding square footage, costs and usage.

RESOLUTIONS

Commissioner Huber said he thought they had agreed at the last meeting to do the work listed in resolutions.

Director Shehady said that was correct and said the resolutions would memorialize the verbal action taken at the last meeting. He said the resolutions would include certain language required under public contracts law.

Resolution 21-02: A Resolution of the Red Bank Redevelopment Agency Authorizing the Award of Professional Services Contract for Conceptual Design Services for the Borough's Municipal Operations at a New Facility

Commissioner Wouters made the motion to approve the resolution, Commissioner Beebe seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters, Triggiano and Horgan.

NAYS: None.

There being seven ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Resolution 21-03: A Resolution of the Red Bank Redevelopment Agency Authorizing the Award of Three Professional Services Contracts for Conceptual Design Services

Commissioner Wouters made the motion to approve the resolution, Commissioner Beebe seconded.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters, Triggiano and Horgan.

NAYS: None.

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Huber asked if there was any other business before they moved to public comment.

Consultant DeRoberts said the Agency members would be discussing the Financial Impact Analysis and said it would be revised to include the information that had just been presented.

Director Shehady said he wanted to note, before they opened public comment, that the options presented were purely conceptual at this point. He said it was another step in the process that the Commissioners needed for their review in order to make a recommendation to the Council. He asked Chairman Huber if he would want to discuss sub-committees before they opened public comment.

Mr. Huber said the Agency was at the point where the work was increasing and agreed that it was time to assign sub-committees. He said they would be discussing in Executive Session the need to form a sub-committee to find a successor for the Executive Director position. He noted they had already formed a sub-committee to deal with a request from the Denholtz developer. He said as more requests came up, they would likely form more subcommittees. He asked Director Shehady if there was anything they needed to do now.

Mr. Shehady said, when they completed the Financial Analysis, they would should form a sub-committee to review.

Commissioner Huber asked for thoughts on the suggestion.

Commissioner Beebe said it sounded like an excellent idea and said he would be happy to participate.

Commissioners Wouters and Reynolds-Lewis also volunteered.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ben Forest—16 Locust Avenue—thanked the Commissioners for their work. He reviewed his opinion of the various options and said he liked the first two options best. He reviewed the reason he did not care for the Count Basie options. He said one of the great things about the current location was the location. He also expressed concerns about the costs. He said he did like the idea of a Recreational space.

Stephen Hecht—135 Branch Avenue—said he appreciated being able to see the options. He asked how many existing basketballs courts were in the Borough.

Director Shehady said he would check a map to determine the answer.

Mr. Hecht said the largest portion of the Rec only building was for a basketball court and said he understood that they would be taking the outdoor court and they felt compelled to replace it. He said some of the Community Center activities mentioned by Mr. Shehady off the top of his head could be duplicated by other facilities such as the Boys & Girls Club or the YMCA. He said he did not think a single basketball court and activities such as homework and tutoring would make for the best option. He again asked about the number of basketball courts.

Director Shehady said he would email him the information.

Councilwoman Triggiano said she would like to comment as a parent. She said she felt there was a difference between programs at the YMCA that came at a cost while Rec programs were funded through her taxes. She reviewed other desirable activities that could be held in a community center. She said she realized that an indoor basketball court had more uses than an outdoor court and reviewed various sports/activities that could go on at an indoor court. She said it would open up a variety of programs that the Borough couldn't currently provide.

Cindy Burnham—71 Wallace Street—said the Senior Center had originally been built as a Community Center/Senior Center and had been used as both. She also said she thought it was a “crime” to take away outdoor basketball courts. She said there were four at the Count Basie Field location and two at Eastside Park. She said there were also two courts at Montgomery Terrace. She said the Count Basie property was on the ROSI and was also the recipient of Green Acres funding. She claimed she had a letter that stated the Borough could not building a new Committee Center on the property. She asked how they could propose building a new building on the site if it was not allowed by Green Acres. She asked that someone answer her question.

Director Shehady said he did not wish to answer Ms. Burnham's question or get into a back and forth with her. He asked the Chairman to allow her to continue her comments within her allotted five minutes.

Ms. Burnham again referred to a letter she said stated the Borough could not build on Count Basie and asked how the building could be built and pressed for an answer.

Mr. Shehady asked her to finish her comments.

Ms. Burnham asked who had advised the Borough to rip out the ceilings and pipes in the existing building. She asked if they had gotten a permit and if tax dollars had been used to do it. She said she would like to see verification from an Engineer stating that it had to be done.

Commissioner Beebe asked about the question regarding Green Acres funding and asked if the Agency could get some definitive information on that.

Director Shehady said he would get that information. He said Ms. Burnham had a track record of incorrectly citing “facts” and letters from various sources. He said she had done it on a number of occasions. He said he would not get into a back and forth on her allegation or citations of facts.

Consultant DeRoberts noted that the Agency's engineering firm had done a site analysis evaluation for potential sites. He said he was fairly confident that they would have flagged the property if there was a problem but said they would reconfirm.

Dan Riordan—20 Irving Place—asked about the sub-committee that was being formed and if the public would have access to their meetings or if there would be minutes.

Attorney Gordon said it was contemplated that sub-committees would meet in small group settings and report back to the full agency. He said that would be where the results of the committee's investigation would be subject to public comment and scrutiny. He said the individual sub-committee meetings were not public meetings.

Mr. Riordan also asked about the timeline and said he understood that the Commissioners would be reviewing finances at the next meeting. He asked if they would finalize their recommendation to the Council at the next meeting.

Commissioner Huber said he was not sure of the timing but said that would be his hope. He said it was a month away so they would have to see how things came together.

Councilwoman Triggiano asked that they take time after the public comment to clarify the timeline and the participation of the public in the recommendation process.

Commissioner Huber said they were trying to balance the ability to get as much work as they could get done quickly and offer full transparency. He said he felt if they received a good report from the sub-committee and the public had the opportunity to ask questions that they did not need to go into details. He said he felt that would be the balance.

Margie Lane—52 Tower Hill Avenue—expressed her opinion on that various options and questioned the option that showed parking in front of the river at the current location. She expressed concern about the loss of the view of the river. She asked about sound proofing at the existing property. She expressed concern about the view at a facility located at Count Basie Field and also about the loss of the current basketball

court. She said she frequent sees people using the court at night and said they would not be able to access an indoor court at night. She also expressed concern about accessibility to bathrooms.

Commissioner Huber asked Mr. Kapoor to address the concerns about the bathrooms.

Mr. Kapoor said there was the ability to add more bathrooms and said the Code required them to meet ADA requirements

Tiffany Harris—1 Cedar Crossing—expressed her opinion on the various options. She said she believe the Senior Center and Rec Center should be separate facilities. She said she was opposed to taking away the outdoor basketball courts and agreed that they were used heavily at night. She spoke to the benefit of added bathrooms. She thanked the Commissioner for all of the work they were doing.

Nancy Blackwood—34 Chestnut Street—thanked the Commissioners for their hard work. She said she like the fact that they had taken the time to explore all of the options.

Phil Blackwood—34 Chestnut Street—also thanked the Commissioner for their work. He thanked them for reaching out to the staff at the Senior Center to hear their views about their needs. He said he would like to make sure that whatever was done would fulfill the needs they had expressed.

William Poku—90 Bank Street—he said he thought Cindy Burnham should be taken seriously and said he thought she should get a response to her questions. He asked if the sub-committees being formed would form other sub-committees and, if so, would the public know about it.

Commissioner Huber confirmed that no lower sub-committees would be formed.

Mr. Poku stressed the need for transparency and for answering questions that were directed to the Commissioners. He spoke in favor of leaving the Senior Center at the existing location.

Commissioner Huber thank Mr. Poku for his comments and said the Commissioners tried to answer the questions on the spot as best as they could. He said he was not familiar with the Green Acres issue but said they would look into it. He said sometimes they needed to take their time, do their homework and follow up later on.

Craig Dolan—John Street—said he was a parent and active member of the community. He said he understood that many events were subsidized by community partners. He said he was a big supporter of change. He agreed there would be an issue with removing the outdoor basketball courts as they were heavily used. He claimed the baseball fields were underused and suggested one could be used for an outdoor basketball court. He said he was concerned about the option for the existing Senior Center that called for parking on the river. He said he was a supporter of the Senior Center but said he would be in favor of giving them something more. He also expressed concern about parking at Count Basie Field which he said would need to be addressed with anything put there. He also asked about funding contributions from Red Bank Catholic.

Commissioner Beebe asked Mr. Dolan about his comment saying the baseball fields were underutilized.

Mr. Dolan said two of the fields were back to back and presented a safety hazard if they were being used at the same time. He said the third field was not used nearly as much as the other two.

Administrator Shehady clarified that Red Bank Catholic/St. James Catholic Church did contribute approximately \$130,000 per year to the Borough for the use of its facilities. He also noted that, anytime improvements were made, that agreement and cost sharing would be renegotiated. He said that was separate from other groups that paid the Borough on an individual basis for the use of facilities.

No one else appearing, Commissioner Beebe made a motion to close the Public Comment, seconded by Councilwoman Triggiano.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters, Triggiano and Horgan

NAYS: None

There being seven ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Councilwoman Triggiano asked for a clarification on the timeline for the sub-committee.

Attorney Gordon said the purpose of a sub-committee that did not constitute a quorum and took no formal action was so that, when the full Agency had the report/recommendations from the sub-committee, they could then vet it through the public process at a public meeting. He said it was his understanding that the sub-committees would meet in advance of the next meeting and bring the options back before the Agency for formal action. He said it was the most efficient way to solve major issues.

Commissioner Huber said the sub-committee should meet as soon as they could to report at the next meeting. He reviewed the process.

Mayor Menna said it was his understanding that the sub-committee would be reviewing the options and form an opinion on the pros and cons of each.

Attorney Gordon said there should also be some input from the financial analysis that would be part of that sub-committees report to the Agency.

A discussion followed on the cost analysis.

Director Shehady reviewed the financial impact analysis and the various financial options that could be used on the project. He reviewed the process they had gone through so far to identify needs and potential locations. He said they would be reviewing the first iteration of the Financial Impact Report when they went into Executive Session. He cautioned anyone making promises of timelines and reviewed the work that was to be done by the sub-committee and the fact that they may require more information in their process.

Consultant DeRoberts noted the amount of work that had been done to get to this point. He said the next step was to look at how the Borough taxpayers were going to pay for it and what the impact would be.

Councilwoman Triggiano said she felt it was necessary to clarify for the public the committee's role.

Commissioner Beebe asked if there would be any merit in having an Option 5A. He said he had been listening to the comments regarding an aversion to closing the outdoor basketball court and suggested modifications.

Director Shehady said it was an excellent point to explore. He said the point of the conceptual drawing was to give them an idea of costs. He said excluding the basketball court would bring the cost down and asked Mr. Kapoor to give a range on the estimated savings rather than going through the process of creating a new drawing. He stressed that these were not actual design plans and noted that everyone had been concerned about bathrooms, etc. He said it was conceptual to help determine costs. He asked Mr. Kapoor to weigh in.

Mr. Kapoor said he could review alternate concepts.

Councilwoman Triggiano excused herself from the meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Beebe offered a motion to adjourn to Executive Discussion to discuss Personnel (Executive Director) and Contract Negotiations, seconded by Commissioner Wouters.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters and Horgan.

NAYS: None.

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

RESUME REGULAR BUSINESS

Councilwoman Horgan made a motion to resume Regular Business, seconded by Commissioner Wouters.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters and Horgan

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Reynolds-Lewis made a motion to adjourns, seconded by Commissioner Beebe.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters and Horgan

NAYS: None

There being six ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Borghi