

Senior Center Building Committee Meeting Minutes  
October 23, 2023

In Attendance: Duane Mosier, Bobbi Grant, Rita Vail, Gary Weiner, Carol Keeney, Don Collins, Mike Fedora, Cliff Bombard, John Matthews, John Flynn (ex-officio), Becky Moriarty (ex-officio)

Guests: Mike Doran

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:01 AM.

Minutes from 10/16/23. Gary motioned to approve with amendments. Rita seconded. All in favor. Minutes approved with changes as follows: Add Doug Gallow to guest list and remove Ellen's name from paragraph that starts with "edm studio".

Note: Becky to add the ZOOM link posting to the agenda that is posted on the website, currently it is on the posting that goes to the Town Clerk's office.

Review architects following interviews.

The Chair requested that each committee member share their thoughts on the interviews from the last meeting and state which firm they are in favor of moving forward with.

CLERK NOTE: for the purpose of these minutes edmSTUDIO will be referred to as "edm" and Architectural Insights will be referred to as "AI".

Cliff's preference is for edm. Nice presentation, someone on site all the time, a lot more senior center experience than the others, they have already been here for a project, have a better sense as to what we are about.

Carol agrees with Cliff. Carol had a difficult time comparing the monetary quotes. Thought edm gave a better presentation, more dynamic, more engaged, liked what they said. During the interview Carol asked one of the members of the AI presentation team to repeat herself because Carol was unable to hear what she said, and Carol didn't feel she spoke any louder the second time. Carol doesn't want someone who is difficult to deal with. Carol had a "warmer fuzzier" feeling with edm. Carol needs clarification regarding the estimates.

Don: comes down heavy on experience. Edm has excellent experience. AI had limited experience especially when it comes to senior centers. Fees seem to indicate that AI is quite small. Going with experience, seniors centers are unique in that they have special requirements. Don in favor of edm.

Rita: has pros and cons for each. Liked the people from both. Tim gave a good presentation. Rita was pleased to hear Doug's comment about hours of operations. Edm did not answer one of Gary's question well. Chris hedged when the question was asked about expanding to the south. Cost is significantly greater with edm proposal. Concerned about travel costs and mileage. Estimated extra expenses are \$3,000 with edm and AI is \$500.

AI does not have senior center experience, but they do have municipal experience. Rita likes the fact that Bob would be the principal. Sandra (from Robert Hall with AI) made points to look at what is in place first. Rita thinks expenses would be far less and they can get to us more easily. Talked about costs. Rita is for AI.

John Matthews liked AI. They are small, don't have the experience, can reach out and get a hold of them. The problem is that they don't have the experience and that will cost somewhere. Feels with edm that Ellen from LifeSpan Design is a Gerontologist and was a senior center director and knows the ins and outs. John feels it might be more expensive at the outset but will be more cost effective in the long run. Edm has more experience with senior centers. The project will need a strong Clerk of the Works if and when the project gets approved to ensure that you will get what you pay for. John's vote is for edm.

Gary's concerns with AI is that they lack senior center knowledge. Looking at it from a learning curve prospective there are three points to consider. Number 1 is to understand what has been done in the last year. Number two is the physical building and learning about the building. Walk through. Lack of maintenance. Number three and most importantly, the programs at the senior center. Usage and programs will dictate reallocation of space and additional space. Gary feels that this puts edm ahead of AI with the background they have. Becky would have to spend time educating AI where she might not have to with edm. Gary chooses edm.

Bobbi: were both edm and AI here for the walk through? Yes. Bobbi referenced the Wilbraham Gardens: AI list GOW on their project list and Bobbi wonders if that is Gardens of Wilbraham? Bobbi has a feeling that edm expects us to choose them because they were here in the past. As a group there were a lot more questions asked of edm vs. AI during the interview process. Bobbi referenced the thank you notes that were sent by both firms. Thought AI's thank you note came in sooner. Bobbi is on the fence with her decision. Bobbi thought edm carried on about a few things that had already been repeated. Leaning towards AI with their experience at the Gardens of Wilbraham and have had some experience with some senior projects. Bobbi had a good feeling about AI.

Mike: both companies are qualified. Concern about number of centers that each firm has done. We aren't asking them to build a new senior center, we are only asking for more room. Mike doesn't feel this is a very big job and it doesn't warrant an expensive design team. Mike thinks AI is perfectly suited for this project. Has worked with Berkshire Design and Robert Hall.

Duane feels that Chris from edm is going to require a lot of care. Duane feels the renovation is very important and thinks AI has more experience on renovations and working with individuals. AI also said they would do a more extensive exploration of the mechanicals. Duane thinks edm struggled with the price quote and AI came back with one number. AI's project manager would also be the architect in charge. Duane's opinion is AI and partly has to do with the money. Duane thinks both companies will perform similarly, but the cost is important. Votes for AI

Rita: During the interview Rita asked a question about the Ludlow senior center and how edm was involved. Edm said they didn't have anything to do with Ludlow, but it is in their packet as showing they were involved. After looking further, it was determined that SLR, a landscape design company, was involved with the Ludlow project, not edm.

Duane mentioned that for the last 12 years Duane has been involved at the high school maintenance department and discussed some of the processes used at the school.

Duane asked if the vote should go to the BOS as noted. The committee would make a recommendation to the BOS. The BOS would then be able to prepare the contract and send letters to the selected vendor and the non-selected vendor.

Don asked if Catlin should also receive a letter? The group consensus is that a letter should be sent to them as well.

Vote

Mike: AI

Bobbio: AI

Gary: edm

John: edm

Rita: AI

Don: edm

Carol: edm

Cliff: edm

Duane: AI

Motion: John Matthews made a motion that the Chair should notify the selectmen of the results of the vote of the SCBC and to formally recommend EDM as the senior center design consultant. The vote was 5 in favor of edm and 4 in favor of Architectural Insights.

Second: Gary Weiner.

All in favor. None opposed.

John Flynn: Tonight, at the Advisory Hearing who will represent the Senior Center Building Committee? Don will represent the committee.

Duane: discussion of letters and advising of the applicants about the decision. This is the BOS responsibility. Letters will not go out until next Tuesday after the STM.

The Chair will request the Selectmen to have three letters ready for the night of the town meeting. The letter to edm from the BOS/town administrator needs to request they attend the 11/6 meeting of the SCBC.

There will not be any discussion with any of the companies prior to the special town meeting.

Don asked what should be stated at the hearing tonight. Discussion. The BOS would be the authority to announce who received the vote, not the SCBC.

Gary asked if the town procurement officer can be asked to start drafting a contract? Duane referenced a draft letter he sent out in email that it does ask the BOS to draft a contract.

Gary: New Business: Well and Septic. Prior to this meeting, Gary asked Becky if he could contact the water operator for the building. After some research it was determined that the police station is exceeding the gallonage required per day due to the sprinkler system. This could impact what happens with expansion. Certain gallonage from the senior center well and septic doesn't come close to the limit. Water supply: DEP might say no to expansion if the problem is not remedied. The Committee would request that the BOS investigate the overages at the police station.

2,250 gallons is the limit and the police station in the summer is at 4,500 gallons per day because of the sprinklers.

DEP did not want the police station to be tied into the senior center well, but it would have been very costly, so the two buildings share the same water supply.

BOS will need to address the issue with the police chief.

John Flynn will take it back to the BOS as official notice to investigate. If the sprinkler system is removed, Gary is confident that there would be enough gallons to move forward with an addition.

Public Comment: Mike Doran is hoping that more architectural drawings will be recommended and requested from edm during the process.

John Flynn: spoke of a historical instance when someone on a different town committee spoke out against a committee decision at a town meeting. John is asking that everyone on the board move forward on a united front.

Rita feels that within the group it is very important to air what our thoughts are.

John M: It is important that the opinions and points get reinforced with edm.

John Flynn: commented that he respects all opinions of the group. The town has been working with AI for over four years on a town project and they were very responsive.

Old Business: Rita handed out the building needs list/square footage for people to look at before the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:57AM motion to approve. Gary seconded. All in favor.

Next meeting:

November 6 at 11:00

November 20 at 11:00

Respectfully Submitted for the Secretary: Rebecca C. Moriarty, Executive Director (Ex-Officio)

ZOOM recording not available for this meeting due to a technical problem with the sound recording.