

**CITY HALL COMPLEX MASTER PLAN TASK FORCE
CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH**

July 11, 2012

The City Hall Complex Master Plan Task Force Meeting of the City of Rehoboth Beach was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Chairman Sam Cooper on Wednesday, July 11, 2012 in the Commissioners Room in City Hall, 229 Rehoboth Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Sam Cooper, Greg Ferrese, Stan Mills, Jim Ellison, Jim Horthy, Keith Banks,
Dawn Lynch, Pat Coluzzi

Absent: Ken Simpler

Audience: Bill Sargent, Ryan Mavity of Cape Gazette

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the June 19, 2012 City Hall Complex Master Plan Task Force Meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. These minutes were not approved at this meeting.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION with the City's consultant of concept plans for the City Hall Complex that were developed based on a program created from interviews with affected City departments.

Mike Wigley of Davis Bowen & Friedel (DBF) and Rick DiSabatino of EDis were in attendance at the meeting.

Mike Wigley distributed an analysis of Building 306 for the Task Force to review. Cost estimating was also provided with four different variations which can be mixed and matched. This will provide a clearer idea of the different directions to go and information in helping the Task Force make its decision. The analysis of Building 306 evaluated the area of the building and how much area is available for the different departments. The gross area of Building 306 is 5,012GSF (gross square feet). The net area for Building & Licensing is 2,786NSF (net square feet) which includes the basement, IT Department is 781nsf, City Secretary is 160nsf and Mechanical Equipment is 326NSF for a total 4,053NSF. The available net area excluding the Mechanical Room is 3,727NSF. A summary was provided of the various departments, programmed net square footage, whether a department can effectively be located independently from City Hall and if a department's NSF can be accommodated by Building 306. The eligible departments could be Building & Grounds, Alderman Court, IT, Building & Licensing and Main Street. In regard to the considerations, the effective use of the building is essentially 2,605NSF of first floor area. The 1,132NSF of basement area is suitable storage, file and workroom space. Considering its location, locating Building & Grounds and/or Tech Services may not be the highest and best use of the building. IT and Building & Licensing currently operate out of the building and the building's size is adequate; but operationally, a fully integrated municipal complex would favor the relocation of these departments. While there are some benefits to integrating the Alderman Court and Main Street offices within the City Hall Complex, they could likely operate independently and could utilize the available first floor area of Building 306. The basement could be utilized by all departments where remote storage would not be a problem. The real estate value of the property may suggest municipal uses would not be the highest and best use of the building. An appraisal is recommended. Results may lead to leasing or selling alternatives. An inquiry has been made with a real estate company in the area, and it has agreed to look at comparables and provide an idea of the value of the property. Existing and recommended storage have been looked at for the programming document which does not assume that storage would be converted into any digital format. It does assume paper copies. If there would be a true commitment to a digital format, it would save quite a bit of storage space. There are offsite digital storage capabilities. In terms of this exercise, Mike suggested that the Task Force should assume that the storage would be paper storage because that space can always be converted to offices, etc.

Sam Cooper said that the Alderman Court needs to be separated from the Police Department so it does not give the appearance that they are one department, but still be close enough in case there is a problem. Jim Horthy has checked with M&T Bank regarding its Rehoboth Avenue property. M&T Bank is evaluating everything it has; and as of now, it will be keeping the Rehoboth Avenue branch of the bank. Additional parking may possibly be leased from the bank's parking area, if needed.

Mike distributed budget estimates of four scenarios for the Task Force to review. In each scenario, a line item was added for the sale of Building 306 property. The first budget estimate consisted of the figures which had

previously been distributed to the Task Force, along with the line item for the sale of Building 306. The second budget estimate assumed that Building 306 will remain as offices of some sort. Rick DiSabatino noted that the square footage had been added for renovations and the square footage had been reduced for the new addition. The cost per square foot was reduced for the Building 306 renovations along with the reduction for the new addition. There was also a reduction in the phasing costs because of the utilization of Building 306. The third budget estimate assumed the sale of Building 306 and new Parking Meter/Main Street building for all concepts. This estimate provided costs for temporary facilities, demolition and new addition. The fourth budget estimate assumed the sale of Building 306 and additions for Parking Meter/Main Street for all four concepts.

Sam noted that an inquiry had been made about having a stand-alone building in the east parking lot for the Police Department. This might be something the Task Force may want to consider. It was suggested that there should be discussion with regard to Concepts B, C and D to close one of the driveways. If there was agreement that this would be a problem, then those concepts would essentially be eliminated. The Parking Tech building area is not convertible and is much too low to function for anything.

Mike acknowledged that demolishing the Parking Tech building would allow for the Police Station to be built in that approximate area, and Concept D was the closest of the four to that idea. Concept B would close the driveway down, but it would keep the Police Department independent from all the departments. It would be a matter of relocating the Police Department building somewhere else. This could be a point of study when taking a closer look at it. The Police Department would be twice the size of the Parking Meter building. A new building would have to be built for Parking Meter/Main Street in order to have the independent Police Department building, if the existing Parking Meter building would be demolished.

Stan Mills expressed a desire for a gateway to Baltimore Avenue. Concept A is the only concept that would remove the Parking Meter building. He preferred dual access from north and south, a level entry for the Convention Center, façade width and preserving green space. Concepts B, C and D should be eliminated, and an analysis should be done of a separate building in the east or west parking lot for the Police Department. The third concept for consideration would be to utilize the two wings of the Convention Center and build a second story. Sam disagreed. Pat Coluzzi agreed about trying to preserve green space. She favored Concept A and did not like the idea of eliminating the entrance onto Rehoboth Avenue in Concepts B, C and D. If a separate building would be built for the Police Department, she would favor the area where the existing Parking Meter building is located in the east parking lot. The stand-alone building for the Police Department could be modified to not take up as much space as proposed. Jim Ellison said that with Scheme A, leaving the Police Department where it is shown would maximize parking. From an architectural perspective, there is a nice clean façade and building all the way back through the Convention Center and comes out to the building line along the street. There may be merits in doing that and losing a little green space. There might be a way to accommodate a little green space around the entry to the Convention Center. Jim Harty said that getting the City accommodated because everybody's needs are primary, and everything else would be secondary with regard to green space, etc. The parking lot behind the firehouse floods and is very low to the water table. Sam said that he would not building a public safety building that does not have a first floor elevation at least as high as Rehoboth Avenue. He suggested asking the Breakers Motel, firehouse, etc. about what their experiences have been with flooding, etc.

Mike mentioned that the new Main Street office could be applied to any of the concepts. The idea of closing one of the streets can be removed from the concepts, but it would mean moving the Police Department to another location. With regard to the recycling, it could be moved onsite to the area at the water tower or to an out-of-way space..

Bill Sargent suggested that all the concepts should include the necessary leveling and draining from the parking lot behind the firehouse. Pat agreed. Stan suggested that consideration needs to be taken into account with how the placing of a secured gate on the west side would impact traffic patterns and tractor trailers and equipment coming into the parking lot. The security area fenced off for the Police Department would consume a large area.

Mike noted that the next stage would be further analysis of where rooms are located, parking, drives, walkways, recycling, etc. With regard to the general nature of the Convention Center, massive public parking would need to be available for use. The design work would allow better pedestrian access to the site and to the Convention Center. be needed. The east parking lot is one of the few places in downtown Rehoboth that would physically allow a parking garage, which could be considered in the future.

Sam liked the idea of having public parking on the east side of the convention center. There would need to be an entrance that would have ramps and not a lot of steps. It would be preferable to have loading in the back of the building vs. the front. If the main focus of the entrance to the convention center would be on the east side then loading would be on the west side. Having massive parking would make more sense.

Mike said that if there was secured parking on the east side, it would make the idea of having a gateway to Second Street more difficult. From an architectural point of view, two problems may be solved: 1. Screening the area for the food service deliveries and improve the façade of the entire building. 2. Loading may need to be in a more secure environment on the west side.

Jim Ellison thought that how to handle the face of the Convention Center should be a design consideration if Scheme A is chosen.

Police Chief Keith Banks said that the secure area for the Police Department would use most of the west parking lot if a gateway to Second Street would be put in at the water tower and the impound lot would be moved to the west lot.

Mike said that based on all the discussion, Concept A would be taken to the next level. A site plan will be developed with the concept that shows individual parking spaces, the impound lot, recycling, etc. for discussion. As part of the site plan exercise, Mike will look at locating an independent police station to show what the impact would be.

Sam noted that at some point, the Task Force would need to bring the fire company into the discussion particularly if there is going to be a building in the east lot and how it would impact its operation, what the fire company needs, etc. Stan suggested that Mike come up with a concept of an independent building on the west side. Putting the Police Department on the west side would preserve parking on the east side. Bill Sargent dreaded the thought of a parking garage, but he thought that as an adjunct to putting the Police Department on the east side as an independent building, a parking garage could be built. Some of the parking could be integrated with the police needs. He would like to see the concept of a public safety building on the east side. When this concept is developed, the thought should be that there may be the possibility of a parking garage in the future.

Mike said that a one-story Police Department could be built on the east side with a parking garage built over it.

Sam could never envision himself in favor of a parking garage, but if the police and administration could be accommodated under Concept A, then why destroy the possibility if it makes sense. Pat said that she liked the idea of Concept A, but leaving Building & Licensing and IT Departments at Building 306. This would shrink the area needed for Concept A and provide more green space. This would be worth looking at. The plan for the east parking lot would need to have grass medians, trees, etc. and have an entrance for pedestrians from Second Street. Jim Horthy noted that selling Building 306 would bring the decrease the costs for the City Hall complex.

The consensus of the Task Force was to move forward with Concept A.

Greg Ferrese agreed with Concept A and said that the ideal situation would be to have everyone under one roof. Jim Horthy agreed. Greg noted that in the estimate, the State wage rates are stated. The City may be able to get grants for the east lot through Bryan Hall of Office of State Planning Coordination. Sam hoped that the police and City staff needs could be taken care of on the west side. Then the entire east side would be available to the public. Some parking could be provided for the public to get to the Parking Meter building.

Mike explained that Phase 1 of Concept A would provide public access to the Police Department from Rehoboth Avenue. Phase 2 would create a walk-through from Rehoboth Avenue to the lobby area of the Convention Center. The new Police Department would have a sally port in a secured area on the west. What will be done in the next variation is to show rooms. Since the Police Department will be on more than one floor, the correct rooms will need to be shown on the correct floor. Processing will occur on the first floor along with 9-1-1, and the second floor will be dedicated more for offices, etc. Alderman Court will be located on the second floor near the public access at the rear of the City Hall Complex. Mike could come back to the Task Force in approximately three to four weeks with a site plan and floor plan layouts. Rick will try to have costs ready for the next meeting.

The next Task Force Meeting will be held on August 8, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

There being no further business, Chairman Cooper declared the meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

**MINUTES APPROVED ON
SEPTEMBER 13, 2012**

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Cooper, Chairman)

(Ann M. Womack, CMC, City Secretary)