

Ilsley 100 Project Team
Minutes of Meeting
March 24, 2022

Voting members:

Joe McVeigh - Ilsley Library Board (Present)
Amy Mincher - Ilsley Library Board (Present)
Dan Brown - Middlebury Selectboard (Present)
Farhad Khan - Middlebury Selectboard (Absent)
Jim Gish - Public Member (Present)
Barbara Doyle-Wilch - Public Member (Present)
Vacant - Public Member

Non-voting Members:

Dana Hart - Ilsley Library Director (Present)
Judith Harris – Consultant/Town Liaison from Harris & Harris Consulting (Absent)

The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. in the Ilsley Library Meeting Room and Joe McVeigh introduced the team members present.

The agenda was adopted as presented.

McVeigh said many of those on the Project Team were part of the Working Group that met in late 2021 and early 2022. He said the Team will not only have the report prepared by the Working Group, but the work done by the previous Building Committee who gathered a lot of valuable information. He briefly ran through the items in the Working Team's report and then suggest they review the Charge for the Project Team.

McVeigh said the Charge begins with the vision statement and the "pillars" that the trustees worked on, and the Working Group felt these were quite important for a new building or a renovated/expanded building. He said many of these "pillars" aren't found in the current library space. Hart said the Trustees delved deep into this and solicited input from the staff as well, and she reaches for these "pillars" whenever someone asks why a new or expanded building is needed, and she feels they're the foundational aspirations they have now.

Doyle-Wilch asked if these "pillars" are substantially different from what the first Building Committee were looking at or did Covid bring about new needs. Hart said she thinks that the Committee had goals that were in alignment with the current "pillars" but they looked at it more in terms of what needed to be fixed in the current library, whereas this is meant to be more aspirational and to look at possibilities.

Gish asked if Col. Ilsley's bequest of land to the Town has any building restrictions. Hart said the restriction was that the building be used as a library in perpetuity, but she hasn't seen the original gift papers and she isn't how sure how enforceable they'd be now.

McVeigh remarked on the challenges involved in making the existing building energy efficient and the desire of the community to do this, since sometimes making things more sustainable equal more expensive. He said one of the Charges is to develop a square footage program, and he said Hart, Harris and Doyle-Wilch have started working on.

52 McVeigh said one thing that came out of the Working Group's work was to look at the possibility
53 of locating the library in a different location. He said this was a 180-degree change from the
54 previous 2017 Building Committee's findings, and the Working Group discussed this and said
55 another site can't be ruled out as being too expensive if it isn't explored. Hart said one of the
56 difficulties around renovating the existing building is the ability to improve the sight lines that are
57 so important to the staff and the ability to improve this would be almost impossible in the current
58 footprint. They discussed the existing additions to the historic building and how the structures
59 were constructed that made it difficult to renovate.

60
61 Doyle-Wilch said the work done by the 2017 Committee was very centered on the needs of the
62 library, but since the Downtown Master Plan has been approved, it makes it based on more on
63 the community needs. She said the Master Plan was put together after discussions with
64 hundreds of community members, and she feels that any renovation or expansion has to "hook"
65 with the Master Plan and what was heard by the community members.

66
67 Gish asked if Middlebury Community TV (MCTV) was a stakeholder in this project and who
68 would be their representative in this process. Hart said she considers them a stakeholder and
69 MCTV Director Kurt Broderson works very closely with the library staff on programs, so they will
70 be working very closely with the square footage program development.

71
72 McVeigh said he isn't sure how to pursue potential partnerships to share programs and costs,
73 but he believes something was discussed before with Community College of Vermont, and
74 believes some interesting ideas had come up before. Doyle-Wilch said she thinks a lot of good
75 ideas on potential partnerships came out of the Downtown Master Planning process, so
76 suggested looking there first. McVeigh said we're fortunate to have a fairly vital downtown, so
77 perhaps they need to look at how the library contributes to that vitality. Doyle-Wilch said the
78 Brandon library has two apartments that contribute to their income.

79
80 Hart said she'd been talking to Rebekah Irwin at the College Library, and they're about to do a
81 feasibility study about combining the special collections with the art library Hart asked if she
82 should contact the person doing the study to see about the possibility of a partnership with Ilesley
83 Library, and she was told Middlebury College President Laurie Patton is spearheading this
84 project and she should reach out to her, so she wondered what they thought of that. She
85 thought this was a good time to alert President Patton of the work Ilesley Library is beginning on
86 our study into the expansion/renovation project and that we're open to partnerships.

87
88 McVeigh said he wished Harris was present for this discussion on alternative development
89 strategies, but he said the possibilities is having one group design the building and another
90 group build it, another is one group could both design and build it, and thirdly if cost was an
91 issue would it be possible to do the project in phases. Gish said with the Rail Bridge project the
92 construction company Kubricky was at the design table with the VHB engineers from the
93 beginning, and that was a real plus for the project.

94
95 McVeigh said he had a discussion with Nick Artim who said a Design Build is more of a
96 challenge on a complicated project such as this one. He said Harris has said when you think
97 about the professionals don't just think about architects but think about a design team that
98 would include engineers and estimators. Mincher said if we found the right architect, those
99 services might all be included within one firm.

100
101 Doyle-Wilch asked if we work with the plans from 2017 or do we start from scratch. McVeigh
102 said he doesn't think we have an obligation to the former architect who has already been paid

103 for their services, but they are familiar with the building so there would be some advantages to
104 that, however it was felt that maybe they didn't do as good a job at public outreach as a more
105 local architect who has had better luck with public projects. He said it's up to this Team to make
106 sure that we are getting feedback and involvement from the public. Hart said she thinks the
107 first step is to decide what we want the architect to do and then put out a Request for Proposal
108 (RFP) and hear from others. McVeigh said they need to examine what went wrong with the
109 2017 design process so they can improve this time.

110
111 There was discussion around the budget available at this time. Hart said there is around \$30-
112 35,000 for further architectural plans and \$20,000 earmarked for a fund-raising feasibility
113 consultant, so this Team should look at a more detailed budget for the planning phase and said
114 Harris will have very good ideas on how to do that. She said once we have a better idea of
115 what funds are needed in the planning stage, there may be grants that she can apply for to help
116 cover the cost. McVeigh said it had been discussed having subcommittees of this Team to
117 focus on public engagement and funding. He said Gish isn't sure a committee is the way to go
118 for public engagement, and they've had some difficulties to find someone to fill the funding
119 strategies position. He said they have four possible people, but Ruth Hardy is very interested,
120 and she worked on fund raising for the school district before she was elected to the Vermont
121 Senate. He said she's committed to the Senate from January to May but would be able to work
122 on this on the other months. McVeigh said when working with facilitator John Barstow last
123 year, Barstow said they should look at this as "funding" and not "fund-raising", since this may
124 need a bond vote, along with grants and some sort of federal or state appropriation and is not
125 just asking for donations. Hart says she sees Ruth Hardy as someone who would know of
126 different avenues available for funds and has experience with private grants and is comfortable
127 asking for private donations. here were other names mentioned as well that might be possible
128 with assisting or advising with funding.

129
130 Hart gave an overview of the Ilsley Library website and how to find the Ilsley 100 Project Team
131 page and how it can be developed further in the future to provide with for the public with
132 information on the change in the project direction and provide an option for public comment.
133 They also discussed future Addison Independent articles and the library newsletter.

134
135 Hart gave an update on the request to Senator Leahy's office on congressional funding. She
136 said the request was submitted to Leahy for this earmark in the amount of \$3.9 million for the
137 Library Project. She feels the application was strong with some excellent letters of support, and
138 her contacts have indicated Leahy's office has contacted them about Ilsley Library and library
139 needs. She thinks any funding announcement would be made this summer. Hart said these
140 funds would have to be used for renovation/expansion of the existing building, and she was told
141 by Leahy's staff that a new building on a different site would not be eligible for these funds.
142 Gish pointed out you could use these funds to renovate the existing building and still build a new
143 children's library somewhere else.

144
145 Hart reported that she is working with Doyle-Wilch and Harris on preparing a preliminary square
146 footage program that is the first thing needed to retain an architect and obtain design options.
147 She said Harris has experience in figuring out the square footage necessary to accommodate
148 anything that needs to take place within a given area and has done so for two other Town
149 buildings. She said she and Doyle-Wilch have been working on the different areas needed in
150 the library with a description of what goes on in each area and any architectural feature needed
151 in that area. Hart said Doyle Wilch had also interviewed staff on what they saw as needs.
152 Doyle-Wilch said part of this was public relations with the staff, since some of them had been
153 here through the 2017 planning, and some felt they didn't have the input they thought they

154 should have. Hart agreed that the staff did not feel included in the last plan, and they felt good
155 about having some input, but realize not everything they would like will be able to be included.
156 She said the information they gather will go to Harris who will determine the amount of square
157 footage needed as a jumping off point for the Project Team.

158
159 McVeigh said Nick Artim suggested they should look at the big picture and consider options and
160 evaluate each one. Some of the options might include:

- 161 • Do nothing – what would be the costs involved, such as new boiler, continued
162 maintenance
- 163 • Renovate the existing structure with no expansion
- 164 • Build an addition to the existing building
- 165 • Build new on a different location

166 McVeigh said he's not quite sure of the process to do all of these, but this is what needs to be
167 done to move forward.

168
169 Hart said she thinks the "Artim Matrix" as we've called it, is a prudent way to move forward and
170 be able to show it to the community and balance the cost with the benefits of each option, and
171 have the Project Team choose an option and hopefully have the Selectboard endorse the option
172 they choose. She said being able to have rough estimates on the cost of different options would
173 help at the end when a design is finalized and the cost determined, then the public wouldn't be
174 quite as surprised and could look back at how it was arrived at. She feels this would be a good
175 exercise and the public would be able to see the pros and cons of the final option that is chosen.

176
177 Gish said VTrans does this for all their projects, but they hire an engineering company to
178 determine the various options for them, so he thinks we may need to have a feasibility study
179 prepared by someone, because this Team isn't capable of determining the various cost options.
180 He asked if there was funding for this, and Hart said she believed so, but if this is the direction
181 this Team wants to go with, then we need to determine where to find those funds to make it
182 happen, and she agrees it's beyond the abilities of this group to prepare this matrix. She said
183 this group can determine the scope of work and hire someone to do this study. She said she
184 believes the Selectboard would be fine with the Team using the \$30,000 that's available now for
185 a feasibility study since it's for "design services" and not necessarily an architectural design.
186 Brown agreed with her.

187
188 They discussed the process for finding and hiring someone to do this study, the process of
189 doing the study, and the advantages of having this completed to begin the project and promote
190 community input. Hart suggested having an end point/date for the project and then set a
191 schedule and timeline of work to meet that date.

192
193 Doyle-Wilch comment that in the 2017 planning process, the citizens that were not happy with
194 the plans were personally connected to the library and the 1985 addition and couldn't see the
195 need to remove it, but she said there is a whole new group of people moving into the
196 community. Brown said it was the same way with the Town Offices and some people had a
197 personal connection to the building that used to be the high school before the Town Offices.

198
199 They looked at the action items and will begin with Gish and Hart to discuss publicity for the
200 project and will report at the next meeting. McVeigh asked everyone to look at the "Artim
201 Matrix" and make comments and changes as they see appropriate to be discussed at a future
202 meeting. Hart reminded them that this is what the expert will be completing, but said we want to
203 be clear about what information we need to get out of the matrix at the end. Hart said in her

204 mind the goal is to have this Team, the Selectboard and the community all in agreement of the
205 direction this project is going in and the rough budget. She said one of the things the Working
206 Group learned from the former architects of the project was they prefer being given a budget at
207 the beginning and then they can design to fit that budget. She feels that would be the benefit of
208 this exercise, and then we could do an RFP saying here's the program and the direction we're
209 going and here's the rough budget. Gish said we have to let the public know we don't know
210 where we'll be getting this money, but we'll explore every nook and cranny for funds. Hart said
211 perhaps whoever we found to help with fundraising will have ideas on the best way to convey
212 the various funding options available that might be used for this project.

213
214 They discussed potential dates for visiting some recent new and renovated libraries in Vermont
215 and asking Town Planner Jennifer Murray to come and go over the Downtown Master Plan as
216 to what sections would be applicable to this project.

217
218 The next Ilsley 100 Project Team meeting will be Thursday, April 14th.

219
220 The meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

221
222 Respectfully submitted,
223 Beth Dow