

Ilsley 100 Project Team
Minutes of Meeting
May 26, 2022

Voting members:

Joe McVeigh - Ilsley Library Board (Present)
Amy Mincher - Ilsley Library Board (Present)
Dan Brown - Middlebury Selectboard (Present)
Farhad Khan - Middlebury Selectboard (Present)
Jim Gish - Public Member (Arrived at 10:30)
Barbara Doyle-Wilch - Public Member (Present)
Ken Perine - Public Member (Absent)

Non-voting Members:

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

Also Present: Nick Artim and Steve Smith of the architectural firm Smith, Alvarez and Sienkiewicz.

The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. in the Ilsley Library Meeting Room.

Approval of Minutes

McVeigh had a correction for the May 12, 2022 minutes. He said the minutes stated he had spoken about the “pillars” of the library project, but he said those “pillars” of foundational ideas were developed by the library trustees and were incorporated into the charge of the working group last fall and then endorsed by the working group and Selectboard and incorporated into the charge for this Team as well.

Reflections on Field Trip to South Burlington and Shelburne Libraries

Since Dana Hart was away, she had prepared her thoughts on the field trip that McVeigh shared with the team.

In the South Burlington library Hart had liked the “behind the scenes” space for staff and storage but had not liked that the board room and program area were not accessible after library hours. She also felt there were some spaces that were redundant, and she was surprised they charged for their meeting spaces. Brown said that library had 40,000 sq. ft. which is a lot of space.

In Shelburne, Hart liked the way that the public areas were accessible after library hours and that the public restrooms served both the library and public spaces. She did not, however, like that they were single use restrooms, or that the staff space and storage was lacking.

Doyle-Wilch said South Burlington had a lot of windows and she wondered about the cost to keep those clean, but at the same time it was bright and lovely, and she remembered a librarian from years ago who said people should be able to look into the library and see what’s going on. She also liked the wayfinding signage.

51 Mincher liked the different seating areas in the South Burlington library, but thought the lighting
52 was odd and rather random. She said she thought South Burlington was built so they could
53 grow into the space over the years.

54
55 They looked at photos of their trip and discussed the various things they'd liked and noticed
56 about the South Burlington and Shelburne space.

57
58 Doyle-Wilch said the library really has to match the community, so you really need to
59 understand your focus groups and she thought these two libraries really matched their
60 communities well.

61 62 Design Example

63
64 Doyle-Wilch shared the East Baton Rouge Parish Library in Louisiana, a 49,000 sq. ft. library
65 that cost \$21.4 million.

66 67 Alternate re-use Possibilities

68
69 McVeigh said as a team they need to look at all the possibilities and one of those is considering
70 the possibility of just fixing up the current building, or building an addition, or build a new
71 building in a different location. He said if they were to build a new library elsewhere, then they
72 need to look at the possible reuses for the current library, and said Nick Artim and Steve Smith
73 Smith of Alvarez and Sienkiewicz were here to talk about this.

74
75 Artim said one of the questions when looking at all the options, is what could be done with the
76 current building if the library was to move, and he's invited Smith to join them to discuss this
77 today.

78
79 Smith said one adaptive reuse project his firm is working on currently is renovating the former
80 Blodget Oven building on the Burlington waterfront into Hula, a technology center for
81 businesses focusing on various technologies. He said he doesn't know if there's that type of
82 need in Middlebury, but it is working well in Burlington.

83
84 McVeigh said he thought there would be some restrictions on an adaptive reuse of this building
85 because of the historic nature of the structure. Smith said you'd have to work with Historic
86 Preservation, but adaptive reuse projects of historic buildings happens all over the country.

87
88 Artim said these standards for preservation allow for reuse and the standards are not as rigid as
89 they used to be to allow for more flexibility when renovating or expanding. Artim said you'd
90 want to get Town Planner Jennifer Murray involved in this early in the process. He said if the
91 word gets out early on what is being planned for the reuse of the building, that will calm a lot of
92 the anxieties in the community and prevent people forming opinions of potential uses.

93
94 McVeigh said when going through the matrix process, one of the options will be to build a new
95 building in a different location and if that is decided to be the way to go, he feels that having a
96 definitive idea of the reuse of the existing building would be critical to know before going to the
97 Selectboard. Brown said that's true, but they have the time to get ideas and the Selectboard
98 would be open to it.

99

100 Brown asked if they would need to keep the additions when adapting the space or would they
101 need to tear them down and is it going to be outrageously expensive. Smith said their long-time
102 estimator has determined that construction costs have risen 30% in the last year, which is
103 unprecedented when looking at the historic annual increases of ½-1%. He said that doesn't
104 mean costs won't come down when the economy settles down. He said at the moment it will be
105 less expensive to renovate rather than building new. He asked if a hazardous materials study
106 had been done, because hazardous mitigations can add a great deal to the cost of a project,
107 and if they hadn't done one they should plan on doing one as part of their due diligence.

108
109 Smith was the architect on the addition/renovation to the historic Middlebury Congregational
110 Church and described the process they went through when designing that structure. Brown
111 said the building committee met with the architect constantly throughout the process and it's a
112 beautiful place, but they have found out they don't have enough storage.

113
114 Artim said one thing he learned during his time on the Selectboard is that people are more
115 willing to spend money if they see something as a long-term vision and described the process
116 involved in the fire department expansion project. He said it will be important to have this
117 project ready to go when the economy shifts.

118
119 McVeigh wondered what information would they need to make an informed decision on adaptive
120 reuse of this building. Khan felt it would be overall cost. Brown said they'd need to have a good
121 idea of what the new use of this building would be and what it would look like. Gish they would
122 need to know how it would benefit the community. Brown said he feels you would need to
123 separate the two projects. Harris said first you need to know what's best for the library and
124 once that's figured out, you'll know whether this building can be renovated or do we need to
125 build new, and then we can figure out what the options are. Brown said he feels it would be so
126 much easier to decide what we need and build it somewhere else than try to modify the existing
127 space. Harris felt they'd know in the next month if that will be necessary or not.

128 129 Communications Update

130
131 Gish said he appeared on Len Rowel's MCTV show and did a wrap up of the downtown project
132 but was able to discuss the library project. He said the first blog is out there and his next blog
133 will be on the field trips and present what they saw.

134
135 Khan and Brown both thought Front Porch Forum would be the best way to direct people to the
136 information on the Library website.

137 138 Square Foot Program Update

139
140 Harris said the existing building drawings are posted in the document section on the library
141 website showing the net square footage and how they're currently being used. She said the
142 gross square footage over 4 levels is 18,329 with a net square footage of 11,046 sq. ft., which
143 puts the overhead space at almost 40%.

144
145 Harris said Library Director Hart had made a list of all the spaces she'd like to see in the library,
146 but it didn't have the square footage necessary for these area, so that is what needs to be
147 calculated. She said they have to be careful to include storage spaces, since those typically are
148 not added to building programs and can easily get ignored, so she will include them and assign
149 them a square footage. She said when Hart comes back they will sit down and figure out what

150 she wants for area in each space and after that they'll have a net square footage of usable
151 space. She said one thing that is not included in these drawings are the spaces used by the
152 Friends of IIsley Library, because they're using corridors and areas that aren't typically counted
153 as usable space, so she will add these in as well. She said once they develop the "ideal
154 program" they can discuss it with the team and then determine whether it can be accomplished
155 on this site or not.

156
157 Doyle-Wilch said they know what the library needs, but they haven't even met with potential
158 collaborators yet who might also want space in the building, such as a Welcome Center or
159 space for Community College of Vermont (CCV) classes, so she wondered how do they focus
160 on those and when does the community say what they want. McVeigh said he's beginning to
161 think the team may need to break into smaller groups to look into collaborations and funding,
162 and perhaps community engagement. Doyle-Wilch agreed and said she could be doing
163 whatever was appropriate during the time in between team meetings, and if they want to
164 accomplish all that needs to be done sooner, then they'll have to put in some more hours other
165 than just meetings. Harris invited Doyle-Wilch to join she and Dana Hart in completing the
166 programming effort, to bring Barbara's staff interviews full-circle. Doyle-Wilch accepted.

167
168 McVeigh said Ken Perine has discovered he has a conflict and is unable to attend some of the
169 team meetings, so having a separate fund-raising group to start looking into funding options
170 now would be a good idea, and Ruth Hardy has expressed interest in helping as well.

171
172 Artim said CCV was very interested in being a partner when the new Town Offices were being
173 planned, and they expressed interest when the library expansion was discussed before, so he
174 suggests having conversations with them.

175 176 Matrix Criteria Selection Discussion

177
178 Harris went over the draft matrix she had consolidated, and the scoring criteria and options.

179
180 Gish wondered under Community Alignment, if the Downtown Master Plan aligns with what the
181 community wants as opposed to what Town government wants. Brown said the Master Plan
182 was developed with community input and adopted by the Selectboard, so it is the town's master
183 plan. Gish just wonders if there are some ideas that might not have been covered in the Master
184 Plan. Mincher thought the only thing that might not be mentioned in the Master Plan was the
185 social aspects, and she isn't sure if the Master Plan touches on that as much. She said the
186 library brings together community members that might not otherwise get together.

187
188 Harris said the pillars of this project as described in the Team's Charge, were pulled from the
189 criteria and will be incorporated into the building program.

190
191 Doyle-Wilch asked about the survey done prior to hiring the architects on the first library
192 expansion attempt and was there any information from that survey that would be useful or
193 should they do another. She said when she and Hart did the "tell-me tour" they met with 20
194 groups from various organizations, and it was fascinating what the library meant to different
195 people.

196
197 McVeigh said he'd really like to see more points put on the building program, since the pillars
198 will be incorporated in the program. He doesn't think the library would move very far from where
199 it is now, so wouldn't put so much emphasis on the site/location.

200

201 Following further discussion on what work team members would try to accomplish before the
202 next meeting on June 16th, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm.

203

204 Respectfully submitted,

205 Beth Dow