

Ilsley 100 Project Team  
Minutes of Meeting  
September 15, 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 (Present)
- Barbara Doyle-Wilch - Public Member (Present)
- Ken Perine - Public Member (Absent)
- Ruth Hardy – Alternate Public Member (Absent)

Non-voting Members:

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

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

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the September 1, 2022 meeting were approved as presented.

Visit to Library in Manchester, VT

McVeigh said the facilities manager gave the tour of the Manchester library and was able to give a different perspective on things and pointed out the more practical “what not to do” items and the mechanical systems, instead of highlighting on the library spaces and uses. Mincher said she appreciated the very nice outdoor space they have for programming and for the enjoyment of staff and library customers. Some of the observations made during the tour included the insufficient soundproofing, tall ceilings, large windows that cause excessive heat or cold and basement offices with no windows. McVeigh mentioned they did have a shared space with the Historical Society. The Manchester library is private, but they do get annual funding from the Town of Manchester, and this library is brand new and they abandoned the old library and dealt with it after the new library was constructed, and after several years it was sold and converted into a restaurant. Mincher said the woman who does the fund raising for the library has a daughter at Middlebury College and is willing to offer advice to the Ilsley Team.

Update on Estimator Henry Erickson

Hart said the Selectboard authorized contracting with Erickson, but he will need additional information before he can begin the estimation. She said all of his references were “stellar”.

47 NexBridge EDI Proposal

48

49 McVeigh said Khan had obtained the NexBridge EDI site proposal from Town Manager  
50 Kathleen Ramsay, and the minutes from the EDI site committee indicated that the proposal was  
51 not pursued at that time while they waited for the completion of the Downtown Master Plan.

52

53 Harris said the original EDI site had been defined in a certain area, and she wondered if the  
54 Selectboard would allow the EDI site to be expanded upon to include both the lower and upper  
55 parking areas, and perhaps as an alternate include the existing library site as an adaptive reuse  
56 site for the project. She said it seemed that one concern with the previous proposal was that the  
57 Town would be losing control to the developer, but in this case the library could be the anchor  
58 tenant, could own their own space as in a condominium arrangement, with parking and housing.

59

60 McVeigh asked Khan and Brown what the next step would be with the Selectboard should they  
61 decide to include the EDI site as a possibility in the matrix for a new library. Brown said he  
62 couldn't speak for the entire Selectboard, but he felt the Board would be receptive to the idea and  
63 to just continue to keep them informed, or you could go before them and ask for their opinion.  
64 Khan said he felt the Selectboard Chair is receptive to the idea.

65

66 Hart questioned the process and if they decided to pursue that site would they need an RFQ for a  
67 developer, and would it then become a Town project and not a Library project. She said if  
68 they're talking of having a public-private partnership then they need someone with expertise in  
69 that process to advise them.

70

71 Hart said she and McVeigh will be updating the Selectboard at their September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, so  
72 they can mention the 4 alternatives that includes building a new library on the EDI site, and the  
73 possibility of bringing in a private partner. She said she had also met recently with Town  
74 Planner Jennifer Murray.

75

76 Review the Draft Narrative of Matrix Options

77

78 McVeigh said Harris and Hart have been working to make sure the description of each item is  
79 clear.

80

81 Doyle-Wilch said one thing that they hadn't included was the importance of outside space and  
82 felt that has been ignored somewhat. She said it's mentioned in the matrix, but not as much in the  
83 narrative and Mincher agreed. Hart said she understood what they were saying, but the  
84 narratives were just describing each option, and weren't meant to evaluate options.

85

86 Harris said another item not mentioned in the matrix or narrative is the maintenance cost of each  
87 option, such as it will cost more to maintain an old building that's renovated than it will for a  
88 new building, and we might want to look at that.

89

90 McVeigh said in the option to renovate the existing library, the assumption is that the 1977 and  
91 1988 additions would be torn down. He said he agrees they'd have to come down, but at the time  
92 the GAB plans were presented before, some folks in town were very unclear why there was a

93 need to tear down perfectly good buildings, so they would need to find a way to make it very  
94 clear why that would be recommended. Doyle-Wilch said most of the people that she spoke to  
95 that were against tearing them down, were people who had helped raise funds to construct those  
96 additions, so there is a lot of emotion involved. Harris said that option doesn't necessarily mean  
97 the GAB plans will be used.

98  
99 McVeigh said the other assumption is that they were limited to what could be done due to having  
100 to remain on this site, but the Town also owns the land behind the library site, so they were not  
101 totally constrained to the existing site.

102  
103 Gish said if the library built on the EDI site that would mean loss of property taxes for the Town  
104 in the future. Hart said the possibility of those lost tax dollars is one of the decisions the  
105 Selectboard will have to make when considering allowing the library build there. There was  
106 more discussion on the loss of taxes, and the fact that if it was a mixed-use project with  
107 condominiums or commercial property, then there would be tax dollars generated. Harris said  
108 that is one of the items in the Order of Magnitude estimate that will not be simple to do. She said  
109 Erickson can produce construction estimates, but all those other costs, such as moving the library  
110 off site during construction, or purchasing land, are all costs we'll have to present.

111  
112 They discussed whether or not to use the former Ben Franklin building as the example in Item C,  
113 and decided that even if it sold in the interim, for illustration purposes it would provide an  
114 estimated cost to use for a comparison.

115  
116 Review Draft Site Evaluation Matrix

117  
118 The Team reviewed the changes to the site evaluations since the last time they'd reviewed them.  
119 Doyle-Wilch was concerned that outdoor space wasn't given as much weight as should in the  
120 evaluation.

121  
122 Mincher said in thinking about all the library designs they'd reviewed in urban areas that were  
123 modern and had lots of windows, she said to keep in mind we're a rural area so we need to think  
124 about where we are so the design fits the location.

125  
126 McVeigh noted the item about green construction had been removed and said the last time he  
127 and Hart had presented at the Selectboard meeting, someone from the Energy Committee had  
128 quite emphatically said the new building would need to be green and energy efficient. Harris  
129 said they'd removed it after speaking to Town Planner Murray who said that it was more of a  
130 value that you put in the programing statement, and it's hard to put a score on it without a design  
131 in front of them. Hart said it's the Team's responsibility that the building will be green no matter  
132 what route they go.

133  
134 Hart said they added a line for "Ease of Implementation" to account for the additional steps that  
135 certain options might involve, such as purchasing additional property. McVeigh had interpreted  
136 it to mean how much disruption would there be to existing library services to accomplish any  
137 given option. Harris said that was covered under Community Alignment.

138

139 There was concern that the scoring numbers for various options were arbitrary, and that’s why  
140 they’ll also be adding the pros and cons of each option. Hart said it isn’t science, but it’s a  
141 subject they’re all very familiar with and thinks there is real value in their scoring.

142  
143 McVeigh asked the Team to go through the matrix before the next meeting and put their scores  
144 for each item and to also write down the pros and cons and send them to him.

#### 145 146 Public Outreach

147  
148 McVeigh said they had talked of ways of reaching out to the public, and Hardy and Doyle-Wilch  
149 had stressed the importance of “sharing the vision”. He asked how they would go about  
150 disseminating the information. Doyle-Wilch said she felt putting out information wasn’t  
151 helpful, you need to ask the public their opinion and input. She said people want to be heard and  
152 feel better if they can offer their opinion.

153  
154 Mincher felt it had to be done in several different ways, through public meetings, social media,  
155 and Gish’s blog. She said it needs to be shared in a way people can react and you can’t do that  
156 with just a website or power-point presentation.

157  
158 They discussed what they would bring to the public and was there more they needed to do before  
159 presenting the options. McVeigh and Hart both thought they should first go to the public with  
160 their programming needs.

161  
162 Gish said for the downtown project they had a town meeting dedicated to only that project and it  
163 was well attended, and he thought the library should hold a similar town meeting only about the  
164 library, and they could use the theme “The New Ilsley”. He said they could share the program  
165 the staff has put together and highlight the deficiencies of the existing building but make it about  
166 the new vision and make it very positive, as well as informational, and to feature the amount of  
167 work that’s already gone into it. He said the harder decisions will come down the road, but now  
168 would be a time to get people really excited about it. Harris suggested breakout areas where they  
169 could go to learn about different aspects of the plans, such as the children’s area or the  
170 community room, and they could also share the design ideas the Team has looked at from other  
171 libraries as inspiration of what we could do.

172  
173 Gish said it’s possible there will be a lot of people that will want to keep the library in the current  
174 building, like they did with keeping the Town Offices in the old high school, and they’ll  
175 probably hear about the Ben Franklin, but it will be a good way to flush out community  
176 concerns.

177  
178 They discussed ideas of ways to present the vision and options and decided to have two meetings  
179 and present the program and vision at the first meeting, and then share the options at the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
180 meeting. Possible locations were discussed and whether to have it in a neutral location, or to  
181 have it in the library, and looked at possible dates. Tentative dates are Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at  
182 7 pm for the first meeting, and Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm for the second meeting.

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184

185 McVeigh said he is wondering if it comes down to two possible options how would they choose  
186 between the two. Harris suggested putting out a Request for Proposals (RFP) to designers to  
187 come up with proposals for the EDI site and the existing site and then take those designs to the  
188 public, and the Team was in support of that idea. Harris said Town Manager Ramsay had  
189 suggested that White + Burke would be a good source for help preparing an RFP.

190

191 Gish will work on preparing a draft of a presentation and suggested they have a slide show with  
192 all the photos they've seen of other libraries. McVeigh suggested a good graphic design that  
193 could be carried out throughout the project.

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195 Various ideas for the presentation and who to invite was discussed, and the meeting adjourned at  
196 11:56 a.m.

197

198 Respectfully submitted,

199 Beth Dow

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