



Beacon Falls Community Media Center Building Committee
10 Maple Ave
Beacon Falls, CT 06403

BEACON FALLS COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTER BUILDING COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2018
(Draft Copy-Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order/ Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Krenesky called the monthly meeting of the Beacon Falls Public Community Media Center Building Committee to order in the Connie Christensen Children's Room of the Beacon Falls Public Library at 7:07 p.m.

Members present: Mike Krenesky, Arlene Brumer, Martha Melville

Members absent: Steve Ruhl, Doug Bousquet

Others present: Sue Dowdell, Library Director; Sadie Colcord, CERC Economic Development Consultant

2. Public Comment

No Comments

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion to accept the November 27, 2017 Meeting Minutes as presented: **Brumer/Melville**; *no discussion*, all aye.

4. Correspondence

No Correspondence

5. Old Business

A. Visits to Area Community/Media Centers

M. Krenesky discussed other potential sites to visit in addition to Shelton (East Lyme, Hamden, Easton, Canton, Bishop's Corner). S. Dowdell suggested Seymour, which has mixed use space in its library building as well as a separate community center. It was agreed that the Building Committee Clerk will contact the Seymour facilities and coordinate a tour of both, including time to speak with the directors (preferably Saturday, or else an evening).

6. New Business

A. EDC Conversation

In November, M. Krenesky suggested that the Building Committee should be involved in discussion with EDC to see where a community center does, or does not, fit into the development plan for Beacon Falls. The BOF will not put up more funds to create a plan or bring anything to a town wide vote unless it can be proven that there is citizen support. BOF suggested that the committee may want to suspend until it can get a directive ready.

S. Colcord, a CREC economic development consultant, suggested that community feedback needs to be a primary focus, so it should first be determined at the BOS level how to best gather that feedback so that the Building Committee can proceed in its purpose.

S. Dowdell asked how libraries fit into economic development plans. S. Colcord replied that it helps build property values by offering a better quality of life and services, which impacts the types of people attracted to a town. It impacts developing businesses, who would look into whether or not it's a place their employees would want to live, the safety of a neighborhood, and type of citizen attracted to the town. M. Melville asked if community centers and libraries are considered in town rankings (like those in Connecticut Magazine). S. Colcord confirmed that it did, but did not know to what extent.

S. Dowdell asked what the most effective way to conduct a survey would be. S. Colcord thought it would be difficult to conduct one that would reach the entire community if it were online (not everyone has email access, and multiple surveys can be taken by one person). She would get input from coworkers about conducting a full town survey and follow up.

S. Dowdell stated that the Library Board needs to review and update its Strategic Plan and a survey may be part of that, and asked what percentage of the town population would be needed to validate the results of the survey. S. Colcord said that a response rate of 6% would be good, but it depends on sample size. M. Krenesky said that it would need to be determined at a BOS meeting how to proceed and that a survey may be too small to be considered binding, so it may need a vote. M. Melville stated that the BOF should define what they would accept as proof of public support. M. Krenesky also pointed out that the BOS would have to fund a survey out of a line item in their budget.

The past survey had a response of 300 people, and 90% said that they would like to see something proceed.

S. Colcord suggested that the construction management firm that her mother works for could come and do a site evaluation (at no cost) for both 104 N. Main St. and Wolfe Ave, if someone from BOS would meet with her. General estimates on cost and needs would help create a more useful survey and help gauge public support. S. Colcord departed the meeting at 7:32pm. S. Dowdell planned to follow up with her in an email with the list of characteristics that the library/building would need.

B. 104 North Main Street

Motion to add discussion of 104 North Main Street to the agenda: Melville/Brumer; no discussion, all aye.

M. Krenesky said that this property was discussed at the last EDC meeting and that the Firehouse was not interested in it due to the location being a challenge for the equipment. Joe Pavlic had proposed that the library/community center and senior center could be relocated there. It is 28,000 sf on 5 acres with ample parking and room to expand. M. Krenesky suggested that it should be evaluated, especially in terms of cost to renovate it versus the cost to build at Wolfe Ave.

S. Dowdell pointed out that much of the children/youth library programming is centered on programs where students can be walked over from Laurel Ledge Elementary School. 104 N. Main does not have the type of neighborhood access that would make this possible, whereas Wolfe Ave would still be an accessible location for students. Timing for afterschool programs cannot be changed because it would interfere with other after-school activities and the programs are attractive because it serves the parents as an alternative to after-school care.

M. Krenesky then suggested that a possible solution is a smaller library at Wolfe Ave with a larger community center at 104 N. Main. S. Dowdell said that the library would need 7,500 sf minimum to maintain what they currently have and to be ADA compliant, and that the initial report had discussed 18,000 sf of space, which was brought down because it would be sharing the big community center space. She also asked if 104 N. Main was still considered to be in a floodplain, which M. Krenesky thought it was not, but it is in a depression toward the lowest part of Main Street.

M. Krenesky said that he leaned towards 104 N. Main not being the space that would be needed, and that the ideal space would be Wolfe Ave, but that there may need to be two options on the table. S. Dowdell agreed that there would likely be no funding this year and that they needed to develop a list of what they specifically wanted and needed in a building as then ask the community if they want it and at what cost. She also pointed out that clarification needs to be given by J. Roderigo as to what he would accept as evidence of community support.

7. Adjournment

The next regular monthly meeting will be held **Monday, February 26, 2018 at 7pm** in the library.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55pm: Brumer/Melville; no discussion, all aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Kerri Vardon, Clerk
Community Media Center Building Committee

CC: Library Director
Parks & Rec Commission, Chairman
Community Media Center Building Committee members
Sadie Colcord, CERC