



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

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D. MARGARET DRURY
CITY CLERK

JOHN E. FLYNN
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

NOVEMBER 2, 1992

TO: ROBERT W. HEALY
CITY MANAGER

FROM: *DM*
D. MARGARET DRURY
CITY CLERK

SUBJECT: HEARING FOR NOVEMBER 9, 1992

Please be advised that the City Council has scheduled a public hearing for Monday, November 9, 1992 at 7:00 in the Sullivan Chamber. The purpose of this hearing is to receive an update from the architects on the plans for the city-wide senior center.

Would you kindly request the architects to appear at this meeting to present this update.

Your kind attention in this matter will be greatly appreciated.



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CITY CLERK

JOHN E. FLYNN
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

NOVEMBER 2, 1992

TO: KATHY FILSINGER
DIRECTOR OF THE COUNCIL ON AGING

FROM: *DMD*
D. MARGARET DRURY
CITY CLERK

SUBJECT: HEARING FOR NOVEMBER 9, 1992

Please be advised that the City Council has scheduled a public hearing for Monday, November 9, 1992 at 7:00 in the Sullivan Chamber. The purpose of this hearing is to receive an update from the architects on the plans for the city-wide senior center.

Would you kindly notify the Council on Aging Board members of this hearing.

You are requested to attend at this time.

Your kind attention in this matter will be greatly appreciated.



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D. MARGARET DRURY
CITY CLERK

JOHN E. FLYNN
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

NOVEMBER 2, 1992

TO: JILL HEROLD
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER FOR HUMAN SERVICES

FROM: DMD
D. MARGARET DRURY
CITY CLERK

SUBJECT: HEARING FOR NOVEMBER 9, 1992

Please be advised that the City Council has scheduled a public hearing for Monday, November 9, 1992 at 7:00 in the Sullivan Chamber. The purpose of this hearing is to receive an update from the architects on the plans for the city-wide senior center.

You are requested to attend at this time.

Your kind attention in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

City of Cambridge

The Elder Affairs Committee held a public meeting on Tuesday, October 20, 1992 beginning at 11:30 a.m. in the Ackermann Room, City Hall.

Councillor Sheila T. Russell, Chair of the Committee, convened the meeting and stated that the purpose of the meeting was to hear an update from the architects on the plans for the city-wide senior center. Present at the hearing were Mayor Kenneth Reeves, Councillor William Walsh and City Clerk Margaret Drury. All members of the board of the Council on Aging attended the meeting.

Councillor Russell introduced Kathie Filsinger, Director of the Council on Aging, who in turn introduced Martin Kretsch and Ann Borst, from the architectural firm, DiNesco Kretsch & Associates, who are planning the renovations to the Massachusetts Avenue building which will be the new senior center. Martin Kretsch described the building. It is located between the YMCA and the post office in Central Square; it is four floors and has approximately 23,000sq. ft. total. Mr. Kretsch went on to describe the work to date, including the meetings which have been held with users. He noted that they are in the preliminary stages of design, utilizing a collaborative process. He listed the program components for the building: a drop-in center, an adult day health center, now at Windsor House, a senior health care center, the senior center itself, with a large multi-purpose room, activity areas and offices, the Election Commission and the Veteran's Office.

Mr. Kretsch then described several planning concepts and issues which have shaped the final building design schemes: a desire to maintain some of the existing parking on the site, the advantages of having some column-free space for the multi-purpose room in a building that presently has columns every sixteen feet, desire to take advantage of natural light and use existing features such as stairs and elevator, and the specific needs of programs, e.g., the technical requirements of the health clinic for HVAC systems.

Three potential building designs were presented. Scheme A adds another floor onto the building, with the adult day health and drop-in areas on the lowest level and the Election Commission and Veterans Office on the fifth floor. Scheme B would build out 5,000 sq. ft. on one level, with parking below. The Election Commission and Veterans Office would be on the lower floor, with the adult day health center and senior center multi-purpose area on the floor with the addition. Scheme C builds out on two levels, with 2500 sq. ft. new space on each of the two levels.

Mayor Reeves recommended that the architects try to incorporate attractive outside space and welcoming drop-off areas for transportation. He asked whether the drop-in area needed to be separate from the rest of the senior center, and stated that he does not agree with having the Election Commission and Veterans Office in the building.

Joe Daly, 270 Green Street, Cambridge Housing Authority, noted that while he supports an all-senior building, many seniors citizens are veterans, and users of the services of the Veterans Offices. Kathie Filsinger said that while half of their clientele are seniors, the foot traffic to the Veterans Offices is mostly Vietnam-era veterans.

Anita Shipman, 16 Norfolk Street, Council on Aging Board, said that in all the schemes presented, there is not enough space allotted to the adult day health center. Although the space meets regulations, the regulations were developed 15 years ago, and now the population has changed to include many more seniors in wheelchairs or with walkers, and also many more with dementia. In these cases, more space is needed, which is recognized by more modern guidelines. Unless there can be more space for the program than is presently allotted, the program is better off at Windsor Street.

Ken Holmes, 35 Walden Street, Council on Aging Board, stated that the seniors should have their own building without other offices. Fred Reece, 9 Woodrow Wilson Court, Council of Elders Board, stated that at the meeting of the Council of Elders, they saw scheme C as the best choice, but without the Veterans Office and Election Commission in the building.

Nanette Glenny, 1493 Cambridge Street, Council on Aging Board, reported concerns that the basement would not be appropriate space for the health center and that it would be difficult to get a waiver from the state to use the basement space in that way.

Kathie Filsinger reported on a meeting with the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, City Treasurer, and Assistant City Manager for Human Services. First she gave some background for the issue of sharing space with the Election Commission and Veterans Office. She said that the original plans had been for the use of the building without any additions for a senior center and related programming. The City Manager had then requested that the architect prepare plans that included the Election Commission and Veterans Office, and after being told that there was not sufficient space, he authorized the architect to look at plans that would include an addition. Ms. Filsinger noted that the City Manager believes the addition is only appropriate if it provides space for the Veterans Office and Election Commission. It was never intended that the City would both purchase a 23,000 sq. ft. building and make significant additions to it for the senior center alone.

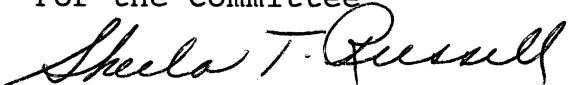
Ms. Filsinger said that she believes that the building is better for seniors from a programmatic view with the new addition, than without the new addition, even if the addition means that the Election Commission and Veterans Office have to be in the building, although it is preferable to have the building with the addition and without the other offices. Fred Reece agreed with this position.

In response to questions about the parking, Martin Kretsch noted that the building will require action by the Board of Zoning Appeals, and parking may be an issue there. He said that from his perspective, the building would be better if parking does not have to be maintained on the lot. He would rather use the space for an enhanced drop-off area and some outside space; however, there may be legal and zoning issues, and political issues with the neighbors. Councillor Russell noted that it is important to pursue the issue of what would be required to eliminate any parking requirement for the site.

Councillor Russell asked whether the general consensus was that scheme C was the best plan for the building, and that the first preference is for scheme C without the Election Commission and Veterans Office in the building. There was general agreement that this was the consensus, and no opposition was expressed.

Councillor Russell thanked those present for their attendance and adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

For the Committee


Councillor Sheila T. Russell, Chair

1.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

S-935

Report from the Elder Affairs Committee
for a hearing held on Tuesday, October 20,
1992 relative to receiving an update from
the architects on the plans for the
city-wide senior center.

In City Council,

October 26, 1992

Report accepted

*Hearing scheduled
for November 9, 1992
at 7:00 p.m.*

*City Manager Jill Herald
& Kathy Tilsinger
notified of hearing 11/2/92 @*