

City of Cambridge

**PUBLIC FACILITIES, ART AND
CELEBRATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

*Councillor Kathleen L. Born, Chair
Councillor Henrietta Davis
Councillor Michael A. Sullivan*

In City Council February 12, 2000

The Public Facilities, Arts and Celebrations Committee held a public meeting on January 26, 2001, beginning at 11:37 a.m. in the Sullivan Chamber for the purpose of receiving a presentation from David Perry, the architect selected for the rehabilitation of the 57 Inman Street building.

Present at the meeting were Councillor Kathleen L. Born, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Henrietta Davis and City Clerk D. Margaret Drury. Also present were Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager, Lisa Peterson, Assistant to the City Manager, Charles Sullivan, Executive Director for the Historical Commission, and David Perry and David Schatzle, architects.

Councillor Born convened the hearing and explained the purpose. She invited Mr. Rossi to introduce the presentation. Mr. Rossi summarized the progress to date. He said that the project has now reached the stage of preliminary design plans. Mr. Rossi stated that in the course of the work to develop the rehab plan, they discovered more asbestos than was anticipated and other conditions requiring remediation. The cost estimates have gone up accordingly. Total costs are now estimated at between \$7 million and \$8 million. Mr. Rossi then introduced Mr. Perry and Mr. Schatzle.

Mr. Perry outlined the following main objectives of their rehabilitation design:

1. Introduce sound and safe mechanical systems.
2. Take the opportunity presented by the amount of work that must be done to reorganize the building according to "way-finding" design principles and to separate the public space from the private work spaces and locate the public areas closest to the ground floor for ease of public access and way-finding.
3. Create a more pleasant work space and comfortable and pleasant public areas.
4. Address the serious accessibility problems of the building.

Mr. Perry stated that they are recommending that the building be designed and rehabbed to be a "green building." They would like to see the building achieve a "green building"

rating that falls between silver and gold. He explained that platinum is the highest rating, but that rating is not really achievable in a rehab of an old building.

Mr. Perry and Mr. Schatzle then reviewed the plans, floor by floor. Copies of the plans are attached to this report.

The plan calls for the main entrance to be an on-grade entrance on Broadway, with the floor currently considered the basement as the first floor. The first floor of the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department (TP&T) and the Animal Commission would be on the first floor. There would be a two-story entrance and central area, with an open staircase to the second floor, as well as an elevator. The current Inman Street stairway would connect the first and second floors of the TP&T.

The second floor would house part of the TP&T, the Arts Council, the art gallery and the Planning Board meeting room. The 790 sq. ft Planning Board meeting room would seat a maximum of 70 people, and would be fully equipped for media presentations

Councillor Davis asked if the size of the room would be adequate for Planning Board meetings, and received an affirmative answer from the architects. Mr. Sullivan noted that the room is bigger than the present room. Ms. Peterson said that most of the Planning Board meetings will fit very well in that space, and the really large meetings will continue to be scheduled for the Senior Center.

Councillor Davis said that she would have preferred to see a design that kept the art gallery and Planning Board meeting room on the first floor, so that the public areas on the ground floor would add to the ground level presence on the street. Mr. Rossi noted that the open central area of the ground floor would be used by waiting parties who used to crowd around the entrance to the old third floor meeting room.

Mr. Perry said that the architects would also have preferred to be able to provide a first floor meeting room and art gallery, but the 8 ½ foot ceilings are too low to hang pictures and too low for a meeting room to hold 70 people.

The Community Development Department (CDD) would occupy the third and fourth floors. Councillor Davis noted the importance of adequate space for attractive display of all the brochures, booklets and other material in areas that are easily accessible to the public, perhaps in a lobby library, with a computer available for public use.

Councillor Born agreed with that idea and suggested giving the main reception area more of a lobby library feeling. She then asked about the mechanicals. Mr. Schatzle said that all mechanicals except the furnace are on the roof. They rise two to three feet above the parapet and are partially obscured by a higher roof. In response to a question from Councillor Davis, Mr. Rossi assured the committee that the rooftop mechanicals will comply with city regulations.

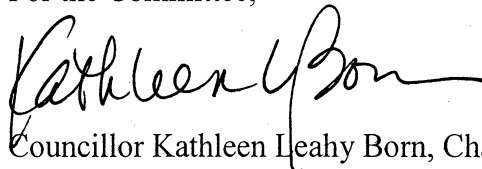
Mr. Perry said that they are proposing the best available mechanical system, not in terms of the highest cost, but rather the one with features that meet many of the green building standards.

Councillor Born complimented the architects on their clean and comprehensive approach to the building design. She then asked Mr. Rossi if there had been any thought of putting TP&T at 831 Massachusetts Avenue and putting the Historical Commission and Inspectional Services at 57 Inman Street, along with CDD. She urged Mr. Rossi to consider what grouping of departments makes the most sense in terms of function and customer service. She also urged replacement of the cornices that used to grace the top parapet.

Councillor Davis stated that she likes the green building aspect and the thoughtfulness of the approach to accommodating the public. She requested careful consideration of the exterior parking; she has concerns about the legality of the present configuration of the parking. Councillor Davis then asked about the schedule for completion, and Ms. Peterson said that the expected time until completion is two years from now.

Councillor Born thanked all those present for their participation. The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen Born', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Councillor Kathleen Leahy Born, Chair

68 S

Committee Report #1

Committee Report from Councillor
Kathleen L. Born, Chair of the
Public Facilities, Arts and
Celebrations Committee for a
meeting held on January 26, 2001
for the purpose of receiving a
presentation from David Perry, the
architect selected for the
rehabilitation of the 57 Inman
Street building.

In City Council February 12, 2001

Report Accepted

PLACED ON FILE