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**UNDERWOOD POOL PROJECT
Belmont, Massachusetts**

**BELMONT UNDERWOOD POOL BUILDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING**

April 10, 2014

Belmont Town Hall – Conference Room 1

Attending:

Underwood Pool Building Committee (UPBC) – Anne Paulsen (Chair), David Kane (Recreation Commission Vice-chair), Stephen Sala (Treasurer & permanent Building Committee), Joel Mooney (Permanent Building Committee), Kristine Armstrong, Adam Dash (Vice Chair & Warrant Committee)

After vote to approve minutes of previous UPBC meetings, Ellen Schreiber (Secretary)

Also in attendance – Peter Castanino (Director DPW and UPBC liaison), Gerald Boyle (Director of Facilities), Chris Rotti (BH+A), Deborah Marai (PCI), Mike Smith (Historic District Commission), members of the public

Call to Order: Anne Paulsen called the meeting to order at 7:44 p.m. with a quorum

1. Approve Minutes of Previous UPBC Meeting

- Deborah Marai noted that the following is added as item 1. to the minutes from the 4/3/14 UPBC meeting; number of all other items will be adjusted:

1. Schedule

- *PCI handed out a milestone schedule from now through construction.*
- *The schedule shows the new pool opening in the 2015 season.*
- *The schedule is tight. Schedule will be reviewed at each meeting going forward.*
- *Thursdays will be held for meetings; actual meeting dates to be verified.*
- Kristine Armstrong made a motion to approve the minutes of the 3/13/14 Public Hearing and the 4/3/14 UPBC with amendments Deborah mentioned regarding schedule, David Kane seconded the motion. All UPBC members in attendance voted in favor of approving the minutes.

2. Discussion of Bath House Design

- Anne Paulsen stated that the UPBC made a decision to balance the required program into 2 bath houses: avoid having one large building; avoid additional disturbance of wetlands buffer zone on west side; avoid cutting into the hill. At same time, the UPBC understands the impact of building even a small bath house on Cottage Street will have on neighborhood, and the Committee has been trying to address concerns.
- Anne Paulsen said the UPBC should decide tonight if these are the floor plans to move forward with.
- Chris Rotti handed out drawing images.
 - Site Plan
 - ❖ Chris noted that the overall site plan addresses comments that have been made throughout the design process, including comments made at last week's meeting with the pool staff and public safety.
 - ❖ Peter Castanino reported on the meeting with pool staff and public safety:
 - To address safety concerns, keep entrance to the bathrooms and vending area are open and visible, no "hiding" spaces.

- Consider roll-up doors at vending so there are no space people can go in where others cannot see.
- Don't like landscaping between 2' and 7'.
- Suggestion for strategic use of motion detectors.
- ❖ The pool fence parallel to Concord Avenue has been pulled back to maintain east-west walkway; this is seen as a benefit to the community.
- ❖ East bath house has been simplified, size of filter building has been reduced.
- ❖ Southeast area of the pool site fairly level; able to increase space between entry and filter portions of east bath house.
- ❖ West bath house shown with dashed lines indicating footprint of existing bath house.
- ❖ Slight changes in pool deck to align it with building locations and emergency access, gates, etc.
- ❖ Site plan includes important dimensions: 14' between east bath house and pool, 15'4" between west bath house and pool. Chris indicated these dimensions are fairly generous.
- ❖ The white area at the zero depth entry shows trench drain, where jets are.
- ❖ Peter Castanino confirmed that the Fire Department wants access to both bath houses; this is mainly an ambulance access concern.
- East Bath House
 - ❖ Increased space between entry and filter buildings to 30' with transparent fencing between the two buildings; this is wider than what was shown at the meeting with safety officials. BH+A to coordinate required access to buildings (emergency, maintenance) as design develops.
 - ❖ Gained efficiency at entry building: 4 family/accessible toilet/shower/changing rooms and 2 single toilet/shower/changing rooms; the 2 singles open directly to pool deck; reduced entry building frontage on Cottage Street.
 - ❖ Reduced width of filter building as well.
 - ❖ Some members of the Committee asked about having more bathrooms with direct visibility from the pool for safety reasons; others think that 2 is sufficient. Chris Rotti added that a critical mass of facilities is needed for people coming into the pool, there are 4 now as people enter.
- West Bath House
 - ❖ Layout has been simplified – men's and women's grouped toilet/shower/changing rooms, Lifeguard room and storage.
 - ❖ Wall between grouped bathrooms does not go to ceiling, able to hear what is going on.
 - ❖ The Board had a discussion about safety and supervision; Peter Castanino reported that at the safety meeting, the Police Department discussed separating the entries to the men's and women's bathrooms. Chris Rotti proposed, and all agreed, to change the layout so that the men's and women's bathrooms are on opposite ends of the building, with the lifeguard room between, so that the entries to the bathrooms are separated.
 - ❖ The Committee asked BH+A to consider how the lifeguard room could have audio connection and/or direct access to both grouped bathrooms.
 - ❖ West building has a long elevation, and grouped bathroom programming makes it difficult to introduce windows; BH+A will look at introducing similar room articulation language as is currently shown at the East Bath House.
 - ❖ Stephen Sala noted that BH+A has included handicap accessible accommodations within each grouped bathroom.

- ❖ Kristine Armstrong asked BH+A to consider using counters instead of free-standing sinks so that people will have a surface to put things on when using the facilities. BH+A will incorporate changing as required.
- Renderings
 - ❖ Chris noted that the renderings show how the project maintains the open views and open feel of the park as much as site constraints will allow.
 - ❖ BH+A has just started to take a look at how new layouts start to affect massing; this needs to be developed further.

3. Mike Smith, Historic District Commission

- Anne Paulsen introduced Mike Smith.
- Mr. Smith thanked the UPBC for getting the project to this point. From the beginning, he has been impressed with the work BH+A has done, including the Feasibility Study which brought us to point to keep pool where it is now.
- Mr. Smith sees that the building plans have been simplified, which is a step in the right direction. He indicated that project is at the stage of development where the architecture is to be refined. He believes the buildings should be more orderly and cohesive with each other, reflective of the historic nature of the site.
- Mr. Smith asked what the position is of the Conservation Commission regarding building on the west side of the site.
 - Anne Paulsen said the UPBC has not met with the Conservation Commission. Anne has had 2 conversations with the Conservation agent, and Tom Scarlata from BH+A also met with her.
 - Regarding building on the west side, the agent said the first thing the Committee will be asked is if there is the ability to build somewhere else.
 - If building a bigger footprint than what currently exists, the team will be asked to consider how this will impact wetlands, buffer zone and riparian setback - not that a bigger building cannot be built, but that it would need to go through Conservation Commission review.
 - Anne said she left with the feeling that it would be better if new construction on the west stayed within the footprint of the existing building.
 - Anne added that if one large building was built on the west side, it would start to encroach on the hill, requiring excavation – potential for added costs due to excavation and retainage of earth. The UPBC chose to balance the program requirement with the site constraints by having 2 bath houses.
- Mr. Smith said it seems the UPBC also wanted some facilities near Cottage Street.
 - The entrance/control point is there.
 - The filter building is staying on Cottage Street.
- Mr. Smith asked about the different facilities in the East Bath House.
 - Chris Rotti explained that the “family” rooms satisfy handicap accessibility requirements, family use (parent with multiple small children, father needing to help a daughter), and anyone who needs assistance.
 - “Single” rooms have toilet/bath/changing but are smaller.
 - Mike asked if some of these facilities can be moved to the west; the new West Bath House design is currently smaller than the existing building.
 - ❖ Chris noted that the design allows for the possibility that on slow days, West Bath House can be closed off; would not be able to do this if design provide too few facilities at the East Bath House.
 - ❖ Ellen Schreiber noted the 2 “single” bathrooms are near where smaller children will be in the pool, where parents can keep an eye on them.

- ❖ Chris said the West Bath House design is about 7' shorter than the existing building. However, the building will probably grow to incorporate proposed changes to address public safety comments (separating men's and women's bathrooms).
- Mr. Smith asked about the proposed building materials and shape and form of buildings; shed-roof buildings shown are not what one would typically see in Belmont or the northeast. What is the point of view of the architecture?
 - Chris said BH+A started with simple, traditional forms; feedback was not to be too contextual with surrounding housing, so BH+A intentionally looked at a different approach.
 - Chris said it would be great to be able to use stone or masonry, but budget is driving many of the decisions regarding materials. Design proposed to use cement-based (Hardiplank) clapboard siding.
 - Mr. Smith asked the point of view of the UPBC.
 - ❖ Adam Dash said it is important not to build something "fake historical".
 - ❖ Ellen Schreiber said that early in the process, looked at a design similar to the existing bath house; it looked like Disney.
 - ❖ Mike said this is the exact point the Historic Commission made.
 - Anne asked for guidance from Mr. Smith regarding the look of the buildings; the UPBC wants to be responsive to input, but at some point the design needs to be finalized and she knows it will not please everybody.
 - ❖ Mr. Smith said the Commission is not going to push the pencil of the architect. The Commission feels orderly, simple, clear architecture is important; they are not opposed to modern architecture.
 - ❖ Mr. Smith said the current design of the Underwood Pool bath houses is getting closer, but not there yet.
 - ❖ Chris said BH+A has simplified forms and therefore getting closer, but agrees that there is a way to go. To date, a lot of the effort has been working out the site plan. He does think the visuals BH+A have provided to date are good because they spur comment and reaction from which to move forward.
 - ❖ Anne Paulsen understands the benefit of simplifying the forms, but she does not want the buildings to look like garages.
 - ❖ Mr. Smith proposed the example of Louis Kahn's Trenton Bathhouse – not to copy, but as an example of how architecture might be ordered.
 - ❖ Kristine Armstrong said the Wellington School is an example of forward facing architecture. Mr. Smith agrees that the Wellington School is an example of legible architecture; the question in his mind is if the Underwood Pool buildings are able to achieve same cohesive look as the Wellington School.
 - ❖ Mr. Smith offered the Waverly Fire Station as an example of a modern addition. The Historic Commission favors modern architecture.
 - ❖ Regarding materials, Mr. Smith offered that natural materials are what would expect on this playground site. Mike said that the details will be important (example, roof edges/eaves); that will evolve.
- Mr. Smith asked about the view from Concord Avenue.
 - Chris verified that the telephone wires crossing the site will be underground.
 - Regarding landscaping to mitigate the impact of the fence spanning east-west visible from Concord Avenue, Chris said a certain amount of visibility needs to be maintained; there are code and public safety implications. Will

- need to be careful that plantings do not instead draw attention to the fence, and that the view from Concord Avenue up the park is not blocked.
 - Adam Dash noted the UPBC heard feedback that people want to keep the view uphill from Concord Avenue. Joel Mooney added people have also commented on the view of the water from Concord Avenue. Anne Paulsen said that there is no landscaping along the fence now.
 - Mr. Smith said it is the sweeping landscape that makes this such a special site.
 - Mr. Smith requested as the design moves along with the landscape architect that the team engage the Historic Commission.
 - Project also currently includes filling in tree line along Concord Avenue.
- Mr. Smith asked about the projects intention to include solar panel.
 - Solar is not part of the project budget, but BH+A is trying to include provisions for future solar in the building design. BH+A has had discussions with member of Energy Committee, and Chris is meeting with Sustain Belmont tomorrow. Chris verified if solar panels were installed, could be generating power year round.
- Mr. Smith thinks it is important that the UPBC have a conversation with the Underwood family and get their point of view.
- Mr. Smith asked if the UPBC has met with the Planning Board.
 - Anne said the Committee reached out to the Planning Board and had an informal meeting with them once had progress on Schematic Design to get their input.
 - Joseph DeStefano, Planning Board member, said he is not a fan of the architecture he has seen for the proposed buildings. He said he spoke with Helen Underwood Baker who has seen recent renderings and is not a fan. Mr. DeStefano says this is an important project, and he wants to see if he/Planning Board can add value to project through the design.
- Mr. Smith said that there will be a new Historic Commission representative on the UPBC to replace James Smith; it will likely be Mike Smith.

4. Comments from Members of the Public

- Jerry McCarthy
 - Mr. McCarthy thanked the UPBC for taking into consideration his and his wife's concerns. He likes the 30' space between the buildings on Cottage Street.
 - His concern is mainly over the height of the buildings on Cottage Street; he asked the architect if at some point he could get the dimensions of height of buildings at Cottage Street.
- Bob Kennedy reiterated his comments from past meetings
 - Mr. Kennedy said this is a pool in a park; the more the design can do to lean towards park architecture the better; park architecture is mostly sloped roofs.
 - Nature is the key; use natural materials and natural colors to allow the architecture to feel at one with the landscape; he knows that the budget prohibits from building out of stone, but consider bringing it in to define the entries and at the base of buildings as a way to tie them to the ground.
 - Recognize the history of this historic site; shed roofs have no history.
- Mary Kennedy
 - Ms. Kennedy commented that she is disappointed with the architecture of the buildings as shown, though she does not think the architect has been given opportunity to really work on the architecture of the buildings yet.
 - Ms. Kennedy asked that BH+A consider the context of Belmont, including the legacy of the Underwood family, the prominence on Concord Avenue.

- Chris Rotti verified required plumbing counts have been verified.
- Ms. Kennedy said it sounds as if the UPBC made decision not to go with one large building, it is now up to architect to make it work.

5. Action

- UPBC in attendance are in agreement for move ahead with the discussed changes to the West Bath House that address the concerns of public safety and the Planning Board. With these changes, the layout of the bath house buildings on site and the bath house plans themselves will be established.
- Chris Rotti said that having the floor plan and site plan established is important; BH+A will get floor plan revisions to the UPBC as soon as possible and will keep designing the building forms/architecture.
- BH+A continues to work on the detailing/construction document development of the pools themselves while continuing to work on the exterior of the buildings. Deborah Marai indicated the schedule is tight, need to hit the milestones: per the schedule, Design Development/30% Construction Document review set is scheduled for 4/29/14.
- Important milestone is 5/19/14 60% Construction Document set which will be used to update the construction estimates.
- BH+A will meet with Joel Mooney and Mike Smith 4/11/14 to continue discussions on the exterior of the buildings.
- Anne Paulsen asked that the landscape architect come to the meeting on 4/24/14. Adam Dash said details need to be worked out for the site plan approval.
- In preparation for the next meeting on 4/24/14, Ellen Schreiber asked BH+A to send out progress sketches over the next 2 weeks.
- Additional UPBC comments
 - Anne Paulsen does not want to lose natural light and ventilation features
 - Adam Dash said the design is threading needle between modern and traditional
 - Ellen Schreiber is concerned about incorporating natural materials given budget
 - Buildings constructed of sturdy materials and require low maintenance
 - Reminder that Peter Castanino has additional concrete blocks, like the ones currently on site.

6. Town Meeting 5/4/2014

- Anne Paulsen noted there are 2 items related to the Underwood Pool being voted on at Town Meeting:
 - CPA expenditure of \$2M (Warrant Committee voted 12:1 in favor)
 - Authorization for debt (Warrant Committee voted 10:2 in favor); requires 2/3rds vote.
- Presentation
 - Anne Paulsen asked Adam Dash to a presentation at Town Meeting – simpler and shorter than recent presentations, just the high points.
 - Ellen Schreiber thinks the images shown need to reflect the direction the project is going in; she thinks it will go a long way for Town Meeting if people see their comments have been considered.
 - Ellen added that the big question will be what the bath houses look like, everyone has seen the pools.
 - Note the plan issues that have been addressed.

- Deadline for including information with packages to Town meeting members was today. UPBC will determine at 4/24/14 meeting if they will email anything to Town meeting members in advance of Town Meeting.
- In advance of Town Meeting, the League of women voters meeting Monday 4/28/14 at Beech Street Center. Anne Paulsen will do a 3 minute presentation.

7. Community Outreach

- Meeting with public safety and pool staff last week – see notes above
- Conservation Commission – need to schedule meeting
- Planning Board – will schedule meeting(s), plan review required
- Shade tree – need to reach out to.
- Historic Commission - Tom Scarlata, Chris Rotti and Joel Mooney meeting with Mike Smith tomorrow
- Town Meeting - May 5; CPA funding is on the schedule; see above
- Recreation Commission – David Kane suggested meeting next in May or June

8. Meeting Adjourned

Kristin Armstrong made a motion to adjourn the meeting, David Kane seconded the motion. The UPBC voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 p.m.

Adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 p.m.

Next UPBC Meeting Dates:

- Thursday, April 24, 2014 @ 7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, May 1, 2014 @ 7:30 p.m.
- Hold Thursday evenings going forward for potential UPBC meetings

Upcoming Milestones:

- April 11, 014: Historic Commission
- Monday, April 24, 2014: Presentation to League of Women Voters
- Monday, May 5, 2014: Town Meeting
- TBD: Public Presentation by UPBC to Joint Town Committees

Attachments:

- PCI: UPBC Meeting Discussion Point
- BH+A: Site plan, building plans and renderings package

Respectfully Submitted, Deborah Marai, Pinck & Co. Inc.