

Design Fees for a New Community Center

Town Meeting Article 33

In 2012 Sudbury Town Meeting voted not to spend \$600,000 for roof repairs at Fairbank Community Center. At the time, Town Meeting expressed the view that a complete analysis of Fairbank should be done to determine if the existing building should be replaced with a new facility housing a multi-generational community center servicing the needs of both Park & Recreation and the Senior Center. The result was the comprehensive 175 page report by Bargmann, Hendrie + Archetype paid for with substantial contributions from the Sudbury Foundation, Friends of Sudbury Seniors and Friends of Park & Rec. The BH+A analysis of Fairbank can be found at <https://sudbury.ma.us/fairbankstudy/documents/>.

Beginning with the 2012 report by engineering consultant Russo Barr and continuing with the subsequent reports by engineering consultant Simpson, Gumpertz & Heger in 2013 and architectural and engineering consultant BH+A in 2015, the structural and code deficiencies of the Fairbank Community Center have been well documented. The roof is leaking badly despite continuous and ongoing repairs and deterioration of the building structure is now appearing in areas entirely separate from the roof. How much longer the 1959 unreinforced concrete block Fairbank School building will be usable we do not know. We do know it will not last long and it will no longer be available to the Senior Center, Park & Rec and SPS administration. All other Sudbury schools constructed in the 1950's have either been entirely replaced (Horsepond, Loring, LS) or substantially renovated (Nixon, Haynes).

In its 2015 report, BH+A discussed the existing conditions of the building, detailed its comprehensive analysis of Senior Center and Park & Rec programs and outlined options for what could be done with the building along with the costs for those options. BH+A concluded that to maintain the building and its use as currently configured there would be a need to replace the roof and façade and perform significant upgrades to the structural systems, locker rooms, Senior Center, pool and other building components and finishes. BH+A estimated that the cost for such work would be approximately \$12 million over the next 10 years. After those 10 years we would have the same building and same configuration, but repaired and upgraded. BH+A further concluded, based on its programmatic analysis, that such a renovated building would not meet existing Senior Center and Park & Rec needs, let alone future needs.

The initial BH+A report detailed three options for replacement of Fairbanks with a new building. All three options assume the existing Atkinson Pool will remain but would be renovated and subject to new construction around it. BH+A concluded that both the first two options, a 40,000 sq. ft. building and a 50,000 sq. ft. building (both including the pool), do not meet current or future Senior Center and Park & Rec needs.

Option 3 is a 60,000 sq. ft. design, including the pool, which BH+A concludes provides for current and near term future Senior Center and Park & Rec needs while providing a building

with a longer life span. It includes an additional small warmer water pool which could be used by seniors, children or residents who require warmer water than exists in the existing competitive Atkinson Pool. The total project cost of Option 3 is approximately \$23 million.

After further detailed analysis of all options and current and future Senior Center and Park & Rec programmatic needs, the Fairbank Task force concluded that the most responsible option for the Town was to start with Option 3 and examine what to do from there.

The Task Force concluded that Option 3 did not adequately address the problems caused by demotion of the building housing the Senior Center and Park & Rec during construction and the resultant two year dislocation of those programs. It further concluded it should consider a larger size gym which would accommodate two basketball courts and allow expansion of the Park & Rec summer camp program as well as numerous other programs; a larger second “family” warmer water pool (instead of the smaller warm pool); expanded preschool space; and the construction of a two story facility which could accommodate SPS administration and create more flexible space including an elevated walking/jogging track around the gym and elevated pool spectator seating.

As a result, the Task Force obtained Option 4 from BH+A. Because Option 4 is two stories, the structure has a smaller footprint and can be built entirely on the south and west sides of the Atkinson Pool. This eliminates the two year dislocation problem because the existing Fairbank structure would not have to be demolished until after the new structure is complete. Option 4 includes the larger gym, a family pool, expanded preschool, walking/jogging track and pool seating. These elements increase the size of Option 3 by about 15% to 69,000 sq. ft. Space for SPS administration can be added for an additional 12% or so. As I write this, the Task Force is receiving and reviewing capital and operating cost estimates for Option 4. After that review, the Task Force will determine the appropriate number for design fees.

The Task Force has submitted Article 33 for the 2016 Annual Town Meeting. Article 33 seeks only design fees for the new community center and does not seek any construction costs. It is expected that the amount of money requested from the Town for those design fees will be not more than about \$1.5 million. The final decision on the amount to be requested in Article 33 will be made in the next couple of weeks.

On Thursday, April 14th, the Fairbank Task Force will conduct two Town Forums and a tour of the existing Fairbank facility. The first forum will be at 10 am at the Senior Center. Tours of the building will be available from 5 pm to 7 pm at Fairbank. The second forum will be at 7:30 pm at Fairbank.

Jack Ryan

Chair, Council on Aging and Fairbank Community Center Task Force