



# Meeting Notes

**Date of Meeting:** April 06, 2011  
**Date of Issuance:** April 13, 2011  
**Location of Meeting:** Feeney Conference Room, Cumberland County Courthouse  
**Attendees:** See attached list

**Project Name:** Cumberland County Civic Center Renovation  
**Project No:** 11042  
**Subject:** Initial Planning Meeting

## Topics:

1. Jim Cloutier brought the meeting to order and all attendees were introduced.
2. Paul Stevens reviewed the design team's progress since last week's meeting
  - Meeting with the Maine State Fire Marshal's team at the Civic Center
  - Inspection and assessment of mechanical and electrical systems
  - Preparation of base drawings on the computer to use as basis for design work
3. Steve Duethman led a discussion/workshop to develop a vision, goals and objective for the project. There was general agreement with the vision statements provided in the pre-work stated as follows:
  - *Provide citizens and users with a compelling facility that will enhance the events, the patron experience and the quality of life in the County*
  - *Revitalize the image of the CCCC, in terms of the perception of the citizens, the patrons and artists who perform in this facility*
  - *Extend the useful life of the facility for an additional 30 years by improving upon the functional and operational efficiencies in the facility*
  - *Create new revenue opportunities for the County and enhance the ability of the County to make a reasonable return on investment from improvements to the facility*

The following discussion ensued:

John M - Extend the life of the building 30 years.

Neal D. - The expectation is decades - a substantial renovation - not cosmetic.

Brian P. - Studies to date have not pinpointed years in regard to the structure.

Neal P. - Patrons will drive life of the building. Viability is not just structurally driven, it is economically driven. Janet Marie Smith had a structural report done which deemed it structurally sound.

Don G. - Reasonable return does not mean make a profit. It means covering costs.

Paul S. - The building will not be brand new. Equipment that has a useful life, will not be replaced and this cost will need to be covered.

Neal P. - Even a brand new building requires substantial ongoing investment in maintenance.

Joe B. - Reasonable return means we can fund the bond payoff and not increase taxes.

Jim C. - We may want to improve on the wording of this item.

John Menario - We want to improve the efficiency of the building.

Paul S. - Energy and other sustainability goals should be included.

Jim Cloutier - I would like to fashion an intent to be proactive with urban context issues.

Brian P. - I second connecting to the urban setting as a major goal - be inclusive of the area around the Civic Center.

Neal P. - Is not losing money by doing nothing a bullet? Maybe "adopt strategies to avoid economic obsolescence."

Paul S. - I would like to hear some feedback regarding the building's exterior appearance.

Jim C. - The City Council's opinion is that the building is an "urban hole". It blocks urban circulation. There are no cut-throughs. It is the back wall of Congress Street - but this may be the reality. Can we do more with store front.

Steve D. - Eliminating concrete in favor of glass will allow people to see in and be more connected.

Joe G. - I would like to open up portions of the facade. Are there any funds to address urban design issues?

John M. - The Janet Marie Smith renderings have resonated with audiences. The use of glass give a whole new modern feel. Open up the concourse to Free Street. It will be critical to have these kinds of drawings for our work.

Neal P. - Upgrading the exterior look of the building should be the goal. Get rid of stairs at S.E. Corner.

Joe G. - Not attractive looking up from the Old Port. Maybe should have some kind of concourse or path through the building.

Elizabeth - We need to get some other uses close to the Civic Center to create foot traffic.

Steve D. - Is there enough critical mass around to do this?

Elizabeth - Spring Street is very wide, can we use that space?

Arthur T. - There will need to be something on the south side of Spring Street to create a reason to go there.

Jim C. - Janet Marie Smith thought Spring Street a lost opportunity. We need to get rid of the jersey barriers. Needs to be addressed with the city.

Joe Gray - If we are going to use Center Street that will need to vetted with the city early in this process.

John M. - Is there any way to link to Congress Street?

Linda B. - There is no curb appeal at the adjacent garage. The garage and the Civic Center look like 2 industrial buildings on Free Street. She has concerns about the stairs down from Free Street. There is no green anywhere except in that hole.

4. Steve Duethman next led a discussion regarding priority of the operational issues discussion.

a. Operational Issues Discussion

Steve C. - Capacity is not listed. All the rest of the issues area number 1 priority except for parking.

Jim C. - Do you get feedback from the people about the parking?  
Steve C. - Only from people who do not plan ahead to allow enough time to park. The parking capacity is immense. Signage in city is not good directing traffic to the best route to the Civic Center.  
Don G. - Parking is least important.  
Steve D. - We have a \$28-\$29m budget and there will be hard decisions to make. We may not get everything. Everything cannot be No. 1 priority.  
Neal P. - Loading dock is No. 1 - a big deal.  
Jim C. - Site access is No.1 and introducing additional square footage to provide program space is No. 2.  
Linda B. - 1. Loading Dock 2. Site Access 3. Hospitality & Food Service  
Jim C. - Food is about the customer experience.  
Joe B. - Need to get food services away from the bathroom line. This is where we make the money.  
Neal P. - Current situation causes people to stay in their seats during intermission. Ladies restrooms are what the trustees hear most about.  
Brian P. - No. 1 Food and Beverage exposure inside the building. No. 2 Ticketing No. 3 Dressing Rooms/loading docks and all else. This is a tenant perspective.

#### b. Functional Issues Discussion

Steve C. - Sound is OK. Acoustics are not an issue.  
Jim C. - Restrooms are No. 1.  
Neal P. - When will scope of ADA issues be apparent?  
Paul S. - When we begin design and it will be earlier in the process.  
Neal P. - What about the stair on the S.E. corner?  
Paul S. - We will likely need to find another solution to exiting that end of the building.  
Steve D. - Is one of the best pieces of real estate we have available to build on.  
Joe B. - Accessibility inside and outside is very important, especially with our aging population.  
Steve C. - Sees a lot of issues with people who are not disabled but have limited mobility.  
Joe G. - Confined lobby and concourses restrict access. Need space to maneuver like Hadlock.  
Steve D. - The circulation needs to be organized as well.  
Brian P. - No. 1 restrooms, No.2 concourse, No. 3 technology, experiential, a revenue stream.  
Neal P. - The venue is too large for some events. Can we find a way to downsize it and make it more intimate? Flexibility.  
Joe B. - Is audio visual technology a building design issue? Should we spend money for this before resolving physical structure issues?

#### c. Revenue Generation Discussion

Steve D. - Explained the difference between loge seating and ledge seating. Loge is a defined area with amenities and is sold as a season ticket. Ledge seating is just a shelf (ledge) in front of your seat for drinks/food and is sold on an individual ticket basis. We will show images in the next meeting.

Neal P. - The determination has been made that additional seats are not viable physically or economically. Our appeal in the market does not increase that much unless we get to 12,000 seats.

Paul S. - Is it appropriate for this design to set the stage to add seats in the future?

Neal - Absolutely. Janet Marie Smith was able to add 700 seats.

Steve C. - 350 of these are not valid for concerts. We must physically replace all of the seats as a part of this project. We can't get parts.

Joe G. - The goal is to maintain the 6,700 seat count and meet accessibility requirements.

Jim C. - He takes seriously that management would like more seats, but maintaining the 6700 is very important.

John M. - Excited that Hussey Seating has offered to assist us.

Noel P. - B & D concluded that party suites were not cost effective but that club and loge would be.

Brian P. - Club seats have the best bang for the buck according to B & D. A \$200 ROI/Seat. Loge seating is \$125 ROI/seat.

Steve D. - Club seats are wider, upholstered seats tied to an amenity package, parking in-seat wait service, a club on site, etc. and is sold as a season ticket. Works for sporting events not for concerts.

Joe B. - Are club seats for the corporate market?

Steve D. - No, can be individual. There has been varied experience with club seating. If you don't sell them you are stuck with them. You could sell the seat for a premium for a concert.

Brian P. - B & D report was a good analysis on seating revenue - but they must be sold.

Steve D. - I have 2 questions before we adjourn: 1. Is the budget of 28m a total project budget and is it the budget? 2. What has the committee seen in the past studies that they like?

John M. - 1. The budget is a total project budget and is not etched in stone. The committee will set the budget. 2. See Steve Crane's report on the previous schemes.

Paul S. - What about phasing impact on revenue?

Steve C. - June to September is traditionally slow and closing for that period is an option. Cannot risk construction interfering with scheduled events.

John M. - We want to understand the cost savings by not phasing the project.

Brian P. - Would consider playing elsewhere for a year if it was a big cost benefit.

Elizabeth - Can revenue be generated with restaurants/retail accessed from outside & inside the building?

Steve D. - The investment does not usually pan out and security creates issues. If there were already substantial pedestrian traffic on a corner, it might work.

The meeting was concluded and the next meeting set for 8am on ~~June 4th~~ **May 4th**. The following day a tour of the newly renovated Providence Arena will be arranged.

The agenda for the next meeting will include a presentation of the first draft of a building program and budget. A slide-show of other facilities will also be presented.


Jim Cloutier asked that the consultants work with county staff to develop a public communication strategy.


April 6, 2011  
CCCC Renovation Meeting Notes

*Attachments: None.*

cc: File 11042/28.3

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