

Foundry Advisory Committee
July 13th, 2018
Cambridge Police Station - 125 Sixth Street
Meeting Notes

FAC Members

Deborah Ruhe (DR)
Richard Thal (RT)
Folakemi Alalade (FA)
Jamie Sabino (JS)
Jason Slavick (JS)
Marie Saccoccio (MS)

In Attendance

Stephanie Couch (SC), Tom Evans (TE), Michael Black (MB), Stefanie Greenfield (SG), Luisa Donovan, Betsy Boyle (BB), Jennifer Hanley (JH), Meghan McGrath (MM), Michael Shia, James McClurkin, Mike Ananis, Jeff Goldenson (JG), Kathy Watkins (KW), Jeanne DuBois (JD), Justin Crane (JC), Leigh Estabrooks, Folakemi Alalade (FA), Heather Hoffman (HH), Ilan Levy (IL), Sue Cusack (SC), Katharine MacPhail, David Kale, Ellen Shore, Carlos Peralta, Alex Levering, Alex Rogala, Ron Mallis (RM), Joan Squeri (JS), Zoe Vanderschmidt, Martha McKenna.

Construction Project Update (MB)

- Last meeting C7 just came on-board and showed a preliminary building design.
- Currently, the city is working on surveying and testing the site, to understand existing conditions such as hazmat issues, seismic surveys, test holes for geothermal etc.
- Design is happening while coordinating with the operator regarding programing.
- The City of Cambridge and DPW has ongoing communication with the Equity Building – neighbor to the Foundry. Equity is interested in making their designs compatible with the Foundry and might do something temporary to open their building while a permeant design solution is established.
- Cambridge has submitted an application to the Attorney General to use a Construction Manager (CM) “at risk” building approach, which will allow for a shorter construction timeline, and means the City can select their own contractor.
- Next steps are to refine design to a point where they can inform feasibility study conditions and allow cost estimates.
- Feasibility study deadline is September or October.

JS – Have you learned of any surprises? MB – They have not. They already knew they had to seismically support the structure and remove and replace three feet of soil and put in clean fill (at a minimum). If they implement geothermal wells they will have to remove and refill 6 feet.

TE – Design and programing is an iterative process. The building structure informs programing and space, while programing also has to inform design.

The Foundry Consortium Presentation (SC) – Programmatic Efforts and How they Effect Design

- Vision has been established by hard work by many Cambridge residents, the CRA, and elected officials.
- It is an opportunity for different types of art and STEM spaces
- The Foundry will be a crossroads to forge new partnerships.
- Operator job will be to curate program, not for the Foundry Consortium to operate program.

Flex Performance Space Survey

- The Foundry Consortium distributed a survey to figure out questions regarding performance space.
- Highlights – greatest use is areas of dance and rehearsals, classes & workshops and events and fundraisers. Good demand for seats 200 seats max. Understood the supports needed for the performance spaces.
- 50% of respondents indicated they don't want to pay anything for space. JS wants to review data with The Consortium to look into that data further.

Next Steps

- Meetings to discuss the makerspace / workshop (August 8th)
- Validation of the fiscal model
- Discovery of best practices of operation – Michael Shia gave a tour of Artisans Asylum and James gave a tour of Greentown Labs. They are visiting AS220 July 13th.
- Ongoing discussions with community groups
- Non-profit formation – lease with the CRA will be with the Foundry Consortium
- Dev of criteria for prioritizing use of the space and curation of programming. – prioritizing competing uses of space.

Needs Assessment

- Cambridge already conducted a community needs assessment and it has a lot of information the Consortium can use.
- Researching what has come before. Look at what are the workforce development potentials. Ex: MAKE Santa Fe NOMCON, Fab Lab, etc.
- Possible internship idea in the Foundry – Studio 125 a full service technical production firm.
- They are learning about the needs of musicians shut out of spaces in Cambridge
- Get involved – new website www.cambridgefoundry.org and sign up for the newsletter

Engagement and Diversity

- IL noted the meeting attendees are very white. Does not see The Port being represented, or think their voices are being heard. IL indicated more outreach is needed. SC – agreed but noted they do not have funding for outreach. SC – also expressed the short (2-month timeline) the Foundry Consortium has been on board.

- TE commented that that is something the city will try to work on in the next few weeks, though it will be a multi-month project, and that the upcoming community meeting at the Dante Alighieri is at the knuckle of The Port, Wellington-Harrington and East Cambridge.
- JH - BioMed will help assist / make connections with the community. TE – Indicated the CRA will follow-up with her.
- Jeanne – there are a lot of people in the Consortium who have connections with communities such as The Port. Other conversations are happening.
- MM noted that she is attending the FAC meeting in place of her JAE coworkers, as they are conducting free dance classes in Boston and Haiti, but that their views are represented.
- FA – Indicated that a venue where youth are present is also needed.
- DR – recommended using co-urbanize.
- JS – asked about opening the survey back up – he knows how to get a lot more people to respond. Jamie also wants to send it to the Children’s theater. SC said that is something they will do.

Cambridge Seven – SG – Draft Presentation for Community Meeting

- Starting the concept design in the building and is in the process of getting feedback from the operator, CRA and City.
- Will review what’s inside the walls, and what is the “welcome mat” around the edges of the building - how they want to reach neighbors from all sides. East Cambridge, Rogers Street Park.

Building Renovation History

- Restoration of a landmarked building is a big success already.
- The Foundry is one of the last remaining buildings of the pump works.
- Over time the building has changed, but the bones (trusses) are intact.
- The architects are learning lots of stories coming up with existing architecture. Women’s labor movement. Polish labor women workers.
- Historical uses over time – Blake and Knowles: 1890, 1931 – Taxi/trucking storage: 1951-1980’s – Office Building: 1980’s dug a basement and added 3 floors.

Building Analysis – Where we are today

- Ground floor doesn’t meet the ground
- Garage built into basement
- Think they are sitting on a wedding cake foundation – series of granite foundation that stepped out. These can affect where you drop columns.
- Water table 10 feet below grade
- Can’t put mechanical equipment on the ground for resiliency measures.
- Soil removals – 3 feet needs to be removed and replaced around the building, but it might have to be 6 feet.

- Structural analysis – new 80's floors don't meet contemporary seismic requirements. Also putting additional load on the structure is compromising
- Egress stairs not meeting code
- No direct windows on second floor
- Mono trusses in good shape
- Roof has asbestos. TE was surprised, but the design team was not. Need to be re-roofed.
- Stucco building – where old wing was removed and rebuilt. Stucco needs repair, needs concrete block. Not reinforced assumption. That current structure can't handle mechanical equipment or load of an additional 4th floor.

Ideas/Vision

- To lower the floor to ground level and creating a crawl space about 4 feet, allow the space to be opened up into what it used to be.

Option 1 – Ideal situation where they can get everything everyone wants into the building while sticking to design intent (including square feet from a possible addition).

Option 2 – If no addition is possible, how the building can be designed and programed.

- RT Asked if 38,000 was initially indicated by the CRA that the Foundry would have 38,000 s.f. Where those numbers net usable?
 - o TE – Yes, that presumed the building had about 75% efficiency, based upon using the existing floor levels (excluding the basement). CIC's proposals of 70k included using additions and the basement.
- HH – There is an assumption many nonprofits cannot pay market rate, but many can. Don't use words that foreclose uses that we want.
 - o SC – agreed and recommended a change to include office space that is market rate and reduced rate instead.
 - o HH thinks there should also be a preference for every use in the building to be community related.

Option 1 - Robust plan - adding square footage

- **First floor** – Idea that when you walk in the front door, you feel welcomed. Glass walls will allow people to see activity. There will be space to find information, welcome desk etc.
- Walking through the front door, you will see multi-purpose rooms, classrooms and makerspaces. At the end is a performance space. First floor will be flexible and active.
- People can aggregate in the gallery space. Gallery space will be naturally lit, and at night it can be a pre-event space.
- RM suggested having a temporary co-working space in the building. SG noted she will discuss what you can do for the open space.
- **Second floor** - X's show open to below spaces on second floor.

- The public can access all the second floor – walk around the atrium and have art studio spaces and multi-purpose rooms. The stucco building becomes the offices floor plate.
- **Third Floor** – office space
- Could look at 3rd floor viewing of the performance space
- **Fourth Floor**– office space
- This space will be the addition on top of the stucco building
- The addition will not affect / touch the mono-trusses.

Option 2 – everything stays the same with levels renovated.

- **First and Second floor** – Nearly everything stays the same as Option 1.
- Mechanicals are moved inside, and restrooms on ground floor is relocated.
- **Third Floor** – entirely office
- Fourth floor does not exist with option 2.

Landscaping

- Rogers street has the potential to open up for events
- Bringing green into the building from the side yard – such as Ficus trees
- SG diagrammed the red-lines on the plan to explain foot-traffic
- Discussed a curb-cut on Bent street to expand the “welcome mat” in the north side.
- Discussed the rooms of the foundry opening up onto the side yard.
- Need to be careful of noise and neighbors – but you could think of music events.
- Side yard design encourages people to walk through the space
 - o Area is 24 feet wide x 200 ft long with a 6 ft of “dedicated sidewalk”.
- The space could be broken up into “rooms” ex: a picnic table area, movable chairs, at 200 feet long breaking up the space is necessary.
- Some areas have greenery, others have hardscapes.
- MS – what is happening with the residential building (Equity)?
 - o SG - Currently they have a stockade fence, and a curb cut on the open area abutting the Foundry.
- MB – The city has been in discussions with Equity, is very open to working with the city on design. They are holding off on final designs until the Foundry catches up.
- FA - recommended a mural on a Foundry wall, like in Central Square.
 - o MB still needs to meet with Traffic and parking and Cambridge Arts Council for that.
 - o JC – noted that we need to be careful with landmarking, but some of the building did have paint. IL recommended putting a fake wall up as a possible solution
- IL indicated concern for lack of light for the art studios and asked if there is a way to make it so the office space also had less light to make it more equitable.
- SC noted you could have light with LED so you’re not painting on it, or project something on the Verizon tower over the Foundry
- MB noted the City is chasing a Verizon contact.

Discussion

- JG – Is concerned that both Option 1 and Option 2 has the theater at the culmination of the building, and that the main entrance of the building focuses on Kendall/Central square residents not East Cambridge. He recommended the theater to be off to the side space so you get an indoor “street” to act like a bridge between communities. TE – noted that SG should explain the process they went through to selected the performing art space location and respond to structural and historical requirements. thinking of structural – MB noted they are trying to accommodate just what JG is talking about. They have a model which will be brought to the community meeting.
- SG Performance space in the middle makes that room very special. The space needs to have a home that can support the correct height and volume – natural fit to put it at ends so columns are not interrupted. They don’t have the same space proportion and opportunities if they put the performance space it on the side of the building.
- SG they have also spent a lot of time talking about the front door. From a security and control point one entrance is easiest to know who is coming in and out of the building. They selected Roger St, as the entrance as the street is wider. On Bent St. they are trying to expand sidewalk to make it more welcoming and take out a few parallel car spaces.
- JG - when he saw information on the Foundry, he saw it as a STEM community learning space, and doesn’t want performance space conflated in importance.
- JS – countered that the first thing she saw in the building was arts, and never just STEM. Looking at needs assessments, arts and theater came up consistently in Cambridge.
- FA – noted she is excited about The Foundry Consortium’s visit to AS220 so visual arts can have a full discussion. Foundry tries to do too much, because of too many voices.
- RM asked if there is enough flexibility in the building to change over time. SG noted that that is the key to this design program. Be flexible for change. Need lights, floor, storage, garage door. Has to stay really flex, gritty, nothing really precious.
 - o JS but it cannot be so flexible that you can’t do things.
- FA look at RSDI and MIT at their continuing education program. FA has reached out to RSDI and would happy to make that connection to the Consortium.
- JS asked how do you decide between Option 1 and 2?
 - o MB cost is a driving force and programming needs. Minimal additions are likely less expensive, but they hope to see a possibility range between. Opt 1 and 2.
 - o Next up is the feasibility recommendation (late summer or early fall). Then we move into SD.
 - o Another community meeting will be planned for September.
 - o These processes will be in parallel with the City’s submission to the inspector General to do the construction using a Construction Manager “at-risk”.
 - o They are hoping for alignment between the feasibility study, and at-risk approval to help finalize ideas of cost.
- RT some of it is a choice – both options are a reduction of 10-15% of GFA so something has to give.
- TE- part of it is a peel away, assigning arts studio vs community room, how many of those are flex and can have evolution. Ex theater space cannot become an artist studio but other spaces could. Understanding where there are flex in design as project evolves.

- SC – raised an example of Santa Cruz, starting out market rate office space and arts, and as their programming funds grew, they gradually worked out of office space and more into community only. They avoided competition with other non-profits by finding themes for art that were not in competition to the non-profit community. Ex social justice for farm working community.
- MS 20 years from now we might be interest in subsurface use. Is there anything structurally that would make that feasible?
 - MB stated there was a thought process to use the subsurface area where the garage presently is located as some sort of storage area.
- MS Leggat McCall wants to lease parking space in a municipal garage. Option 1 and 2 makes the municipal garage spaces even more important to use for Foundry visitors.
- DR - What is the construction timeline, would it begin still in 2019?
 - MB – A Construction Manager (CM) at risk process allows you to do demolition and design together/earlier. Ex: Geothermal wells could start earlier and work in parallel with the design process. There is some risk, but it is minimized with smart design, and moving construction faster is always quicker and saves money.
 - Costs of construction and steel will affect costs. MB can't comment on that now, ex: On a recent city project structural steel comes out of Canada. Steel is in everything. Winn's project will soon be wrapping up, but estimates have construction material going down in 2020, but the Foundry will start just before that cusp.
- SC – Asked about disabilities, and decisions regarding monitoring pathways and mat choices. Does the historic commission have jurisdiction over sidewalk choice? KW – notes the DPW has jurisdiction over sidewalks and meets with accessibility groups monthly. Uses wire brick style sidewalks which are better people with disabilities. There are more options with high quality concrete pavers that are visually appealing but also more accessible.

Next meeting is July 25th at 41 Hampshire Street, Dante Alighieri Society.

There will be another FAC meeting in **October** which will be a good time to give feedback for a check-in on design.