


MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Westover and Members of the Assembly
Jim Dinley, Municipal Administrator

From: Michael Harmon, P.E., Public Works Director 
Stephen Weatherman, P.E., Municipal Engineer

Reviewed: Mellissa Cervera – Bean Contract Coordinator 

CC: Jay Sweeney, Finance Director
Sarah Bell, Library Director

Date: September 25, 2012

Subject: Kettleson Memorial Library Expansion Project

Background:

Starting in 2002, Kettleson Memorial Library started to identify significant space needs through a lengthy process of analyzing library service standards and community surveys. It was determined that the 1983 addition needed to be updated and substantially expanded (2004 Kettleson Memorial Library Expansion Plan Report). The library expansion has been on the capital list since this was identified, but has struggled to attract State funding against larger project priorities. As a result of the challenging funding dynamics for rural libraries, Senator Bert Stedman helped create the Library Expansion and Construction Grant Program. The creation of the Library Expansion and Construction has revitalized the project with the potential of receiving 50% funding from the State

The predevelopment process began with a report and recommendations from the Foraker Group. Based on their evaluation and the input from the Library Feasibility Committee a complete replacement of the existing building was recommended with a total cost of \$10,224,362. To apply for the Library Expansion and Construction Grant Program the Assembly approved resolution 2011-29 applying for \$5,700,000 in a matching grant. The legislature approved a direct appropriation of \$5,700,000 with no match requirement. The CBS received authorization to start expending these funds towards the project in July 2012.

Analysis

There was considerable public scrutiny as to why the existing building needed to be demolished and replaced with a new building with high costs. To address these public concerns we analyzed five options for the project as follows.

- Do Nothing: This option still requires considerable funding to bring the existing library up to current standards and perform needed maintenance and repairs. This option has a CBS general fund cost of \$2,152,000 and includes such items as a roof replacement, ADA bathrooms, replacement of the HVAC system and upgrading the glazing and exterior walls. As the roof, glazing and walls are replaced or upgraded the building operating costs are reduced over time. The net effect of the Do Nothing option is that the usable program space will be reduced.
- 30% expansion of existing structure: The 30% was the minimum expansion to make the project viable and to meet the minimum expansion required for the Library Expansion and Construction Grant Program. This option added a small amount of the desired program space but focused on bringing the Library to current standards for restrooms, stacks and archive storage. This option has the lowest operating cost because the building envelope insulation is improved but provides the smallest amount of new program space.
- 60% expansion of existing structure: The 60% was an expansion that approached the program spaces the new building would provide but limited the expansion. The expansion addresses the library needs such as expanded Tot area, Teen area, new computer area, revised stacks, archive storage, multi use meeting area and small meeting room. While it does not meet all of the goals the full expansion does, the expansion provides space for all of the required programs.
- 80% expansion of existing structure: This option equals the program space of the Foraker Group new library building. This expansion meets all of the needs identified in the Foraker Group predevelopment program. However the expansion begins to exceed the capability of the existing building to be expanded. The cost benefit of cost to new space is not as efficient as the 60% option.
- Relocation of the Library to a new location: In addition to the size options the relocation of the Library to other locations was evaluated. The Old City Shops, the Skate Park, Midtown and Central Business District were evaluated and in all cases the relocation cost for a particular building size was greater than expanding the existing building.

As the feasibility process was undertaken we had Library Staff meetings, Feasibility Committee meetings and public meetings to present and refine the various options.

- April 5, 2012 Feasibility Committee Meeting
- April 19, 2012 Public Meeting
- May 2, 2012 Public Meeting
- August 23, 2012 Final Feasibility Committee Meeting

At the final public meeting April 19, 2012 where the size options were presented the 60% expansion option got 44 votes out of 62 votes. The 80% got 1 vote, the 30% got 1 vote and the Foraker Group new building got 10 votes. The public supported the 60% expansion as does the Library Feasibility Committee, the Library Board and the Library Staff.

Fiscal Note:

The State of Alaska grant is for \$5,700,000. The conceptual planning budget for the 60% project size is \$6,484,000 which includes all potential project costs. At this level of conceptual design, the contingencies are large and the project may gain additional grants and / or donations as it moves forward. As the project is refined through the design process we will make adjustments as needed to stay within the available budget. Additionally, the project will be designed with appropriate additive alternates to assure the final bid can be reduced or expanded to stay within the budget.

Recommendation:

Approve publishing a Request for Qualification to obtain the services of an Architect to design the 60% expansion of the Kattleson Memorial Library.