

Knox County Board

Building Committee Meeting

July 14, 2009

Committee Present: Co-chairmen Greg Bacon and George Knapp, Barbara Foster, Lowell Mannhardt, Wayne Saline, Rick Sandoval, Paul Stewart.

Also, Board Members Bill Able and Jan Occhi, Treasure Robin Davis, Sheriff David Clague, Nursing Home Administrator Marianne Wiesen and PIO Gary Tomlin.

Guests: Judy Johnson, Anna Johnson

Presenters: Judge Stephen Mathers, Gerald Olson, Kevin Cooper & Greg Peterson, Al Smith

Media: Eric Timmons *Galesburg Register-Mail*.

Greg Bacon called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

There were no additions to the agenda.

Public Comment: Judy Johnson spoke to the idea of moving all of the county offices under one roof and finding alternative use for the courthouse.

The meeting moved to presentations from interested parties and contractors.

Judge Stephen Mathers Presented: He spoke of his 35 years working at the courthouse. And the history of the building's use, adaptations and maintenance.

He cited 18 other Illinois counties who have moved administrative offices out of their courthouses and left the building for courts and court services.

He presented a letter from Chuck Bednar [included with minutes]

He spoke to dispel rumors about ADA, HVAC and disease issues related to the building condition

He said the only time he knew of the county being sued over liability was when a lady fell on uneven sidewalk outside and sued the government. He knows of no time the county was sued because of the building itself.

He praised Deputy Jim Hanna's work and interest in taking care of the building maintenance and bringing it current after years of neglect.

He said the building served three entities: The courts, the administrative offices and the County Board. He said the courts and court services use 75 percent of the space, and they don't need any more. He suggested a space analysis for the administrative offices. He said the Board needs a meeting room and if a new courtroom is built it will be designed to accommodate the board meetings better than what is being used now.

He made a definite statement of the building being adequate for the courts' needs.

He said there is an overlap of authority [between the board and the judiciary] and we have to work together and he was there for that reason. He handed out the statues and state constitution article that defined the authority of both in the matter.

“It’s got to be a communal effort. As far as what you do with the courts, we have to have cooperation and dialog.”

Later in the meeting Mathers said a court services fund has been used over the years to make repairs and there have been five courtrooms refurbished. In that process, the asbestos has been removed from ¾ of one floor and ¼ of another floor. So of three floors of useable office space, one third already has had the asbestos abatement.

Member Wayne Saline suggested Bacon and Knapp should get together with the judge to share the information that has been accumulated.

Presenter Gerald Olson, Director of Architecture for the Madison Wis. firm Durrant:

Bacon introduced Olson saying, the committee had Durrant’s proposal and Jerry is here to answer questions. He said Durrant specializes in Law Enforcement buildings and courthouses.

Olson said:

The board first engaged Durrant to do a study on converting the ShopKo building into county offices and that study showed it would take 70,000 ft² to put all the county offices under one roof.

He said they propose to bring in HVAC, architectural, mechanical and other various experts to the building for one day to assess condition and capacity, and apply that data to the previous developed space analysis program and create a concept plan similar to what they did with the ShopKo site.

Committee Member Paul Stewart said his concern is that the public does not know the options the committee is considering:

1. To rehabilitate and add on to the courthouse.
2. Rehabilitate the courthouse and move the non-judicial offices to another location.
3. Move everything to a new, single location.

“We don’t have a cost estimate for the other options. It’s important to do it so the public knows the cost of each option. Will you be able to look at all three options and generate a cost estimate for each?”

Olson said they can massage their program and make it work.

Their fee is \$16,000.

Kevan Cooper and Gregory Peterson of Bruner, Cooper & Zuck presented:

Their proposal was for evaluation services of the building for code compliance, ADA, building condition, utility and equipment condition, and to provide a facility analysis report with recommendations, and construction costs estimates.

Their fee is \$15,250.

Although not in their proposal, Peterson suggested the Board do a site survey to identify true property lines to help understand your options.

Al Smith Presenter:

Mr. Smith served as the HVAC and electrical contractor for the county for many years. On July 13, he lead a tour of the building that included Lyle Johnson, Sheriff Clague, Jim Hanna, Greg Bacon, John Pepmeyer, Gary Tomlin. He gave the committee a summary report of the history and condition and history of the building's systems as he remembers them.

Smith's knowledge of the building is extensive, and he offered to repeat the tour for anyone who is interested.

Summary Comments:

Bacon: We have an opportunity to impact how this government does business for generations to come. Do we want to pay for it or put it off and let our kids spend \$50 million or let or grandkids spend \$100,000 million to build it?

Stewart: I think the building can be rehabilitated.

Saline: I have a problem spending \$10 million on something that doesn't meet our needs.

Mannhardt: A parking lot can be added on the west side for \$200,000.

Manhardt: presented a cost breakdown for building additions to the courthouse at three sizes: 18,000 ft². @ \$11,617,681; 24,000 ft² @ \$13,065,241; and 36,000 ft² @ \$15,960,361.

Clague: The State's Attorney and State attorney General should make a determination of what records must be kept for each department and make some determination of what can be disposed of. If we can dispose of one third of what is stored on the fourth floor, that would be great. If we move, it will be a lot less to move.

Committee Member Paul Stewart suggested the Bruner proposal was new and perhaps they should consider it and decide next month who to use for the study. After discussion the committee agreed to that suggestion.

Bacon concluded the committee will decide next month which group they want to use for the study.

Rick Sandoval moved for adjournment and Stewart seconded at 7:30 p.m.

The Committee will meet next on Aug. 11, at 6 p.m. at the Annex.

Submitted

Gary Tomlin

July 15, 2009