



CITY OF ASTORIA

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 25, 2016

TO: ASTORIA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

FROM: BRETT ESTES, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: HERITAGE SQUARE/LIBRARY LOCATION – NEXT STEPS

BACKGROUND

The City Council adopted a FY 15-16 goal to investigate locating the Astoria Public Library as part of a mixed use project within Heritage Square, an almost 1.5 acre site in downtown Astoria. On August 17, 2015 the Astoria Development Commission authorized a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to hire a consultant team that will assist the City's efforts in redeveloping the Heritage Square site and potentially the library site. On December 7, 2015 the Astoria Development Commission heard a presentation from City staff and the City's consultant Walker | Macy and Hacker who provided initial architectural design, basic "order of magnitude" cost estimating, and a financing strategy. On January 12, 2016 the City Council held a work session to discuss various options for moving forward. Based on this discussion, staff received direction on two paths: evaluate the current cost estimate for Heritage Square to understand potential cost savings, and develop more information (including architectural concepts and cost estimates) on the options for expansion at the current library location. This would facilitate an "apples to apples" comparison of the universe of options for the future of the library.

At the January 12, 2016 work session, Council stated a desire to issue a new Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit a new set of architectural professionals. Below is a summary of the options agreed upon by Council on January 12, including the proposed combinations of the existing library site, which they wished to be included in an RFP.

A library study will include a comparative analysis of the following:

- Library retained in current location, completely renovated with usable library space in the *basement*.
- Library retained in current location, completely renovated with a new addition on the adjacent *parking lot*.
- Library retained in current location, completely renovated with a new addition on the *Waldorf Hotel* site, which would require *acquisition and demolition*.
- Review of existing cost estimates from for the Heritage Square concept

Since the last work session, staff has received feedback from Council members. It would be in order to review and discuss the direction of issuing a new RFP as well as any specific criteria which a consultant should use in evaluating estimates. This will ensure that Council continues to concur on specific issues and staff receives clear direction on how to prepare a scope of work.

PROCESS

At the January 12th meeting, staff identified two methods for moving forward: 1) Amend the existing contract with Walker Macy that would act as a pass thru to Hacker Architects who specialize in library projects, or 2) Release a Request for Proposals/Qualifications (RFP/Q) to select a new architecture firm. Once consensus is reached on the above options, a scope of work can be developed to implement the options.

Subsequently, staff would bring forward a scope of work either in an amended contract form or a RFP with a timeline for future release. The first option could be executed within three weeks while a new contract could take 2-3 months. Either option requires Council approval assuming the contract amount exceeds \$10,000 and the project budget would be allocated from the Capital Improvement Fund.

In addition to the contract execution, staff is requesting direction on the level of public involvement the Council desires which affects the project timeline, budget, and staff capacity. Given the Council's overall interest level, FY 15-16 Council Goal, and eagerness to find a solution, staff suggests using a Council work session format in lieu of a project advisory committee. Staff could also schedule an open house and other events to present the options described above and solicit public input.

Once the City Council selects a site for the library, additional work can commence on the programming with more accurate cost estimating. Under any scenario, staff will continue to work on completing the environmental clean-up of Heritage Square and work with the Department of Environmental Quality on the issuance of a "Notice of No Further Action."

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Astoria Development Commission consider the options for moving forward and provide direction regarding implementation of the City Council Goal associated with Heritage Square and the Astoria Public Library.

By: _____
Kevin A Cronin, AICP, CD Director