

**Town of Richmond
Town Center and Library Committee
Minutes –June 16, 2022**

Present: Jeff Forward, Christine Werneke, Linda Parent, Laurie Dana, Amy Wardwell
Duncan Wardwell acted for Josh to set up the meeting but did not participate.

I. Welcome & Public Comment – None

II. Additions or Deletions to Agenda -- None

III. Items for Presentation or Discussion

a) Discussion of Design/Build vs. Design/Bid/Build process

There was extensive discussion about the pros and cons of the design/build vs. design/bid/build process, defined in the article shared with the committee.

The committee agreed that the current RFP submissions from architecture firms are for the design and initial cost estimating process for the Town Center project. Following this work, we will be base a bond vote on the design and cost estimating completed under this RFP and the construction bidding will take place under a new request for estimates based on the design chosen.

There was a lot of discussion about the need for transparency throughout this process and, even though there is research that shows that design/build might be more cost-effective it may not be transparent enough to keep our community informed on a step-by-step basis.

It was noted that, even if we choose to work with Black River for design work, Breadloaf could bid on the construction portion of the work.

b) Discussion of interviews of architectural firms and next steps.

Since there were several committee members who had not been able to listen to the full interview recording and the fact that Josh and Dave were unable to attend this meeting, no decision was reached.

There was a lot of discussion about the importance of a process that engages the community in the work and provides ongoing transparency and communication through the design & cost process. Several members expressed the opinion that, in answering the first question about engagement of stakeholders in the process, Black River Design was much more responsive in showing how they had done this successfully in past work with public entities. Breadloaf expressed more of a corporate process in how they would engage with the Committee, rather than community.

The committee also felt that Black River's RFP response was more tailored to the specifics of Richmond's situation and needs rather than being a more of a boilerplate.

Both Breadloaf and Black River Design have the capability to do the design and cost estimating work that we need.

Jeff asked if there were opinions about the team that was being presented as working on the project and the chemistry that might be present. There was some discussion of the size of the teams and firms, with Black River being slightly smaller. Costs were fairly similar between the 2 firms, although Black River was slightly less expensive.

Jeff asked that we defer a decision until the June 30 meeting, giving the rest of the committee listen to the full interviews. Hopefully we will have the whole committee at

that meeting and can agree on a recommendation to the July 5 Selectboard meeting.

In the meantime, Christine offered to call a couple of references provided by Black River Design. In the interests of trying to propose a "not to exceed" amount for a contract, she will ask what the costs were from the references. Laurie will also contact Ilone Blanchard from South Burlington regarding what they spent on the feasibility study work. They will try to have this information for the June 30 meeting.

c) Discussion of response to firms not selected for interviews to answer questions regarding selection process for interviews

There was discussion of what information the town can share from the RFP responses. The consensus was that these were solicited and submitted to a public entity in a public process, so the responses are public documents and can be shared. Josh checked with VLCT on this as well. Jeff will go ahead and respond to the firm that asked for information.

Next meeting is Thursday, June 30 at 7:00 p.m.