



Dane County

Minutes - Final Unless Amended by Committee

Alliant Energy Center Comprehensive Master Plan Oversight Committee

Tuesday, November 1, 2016

3:00 PM

AEC Conference Room

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A. Call To Order

Meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m.

Present 10 - SHELIA STUBBS, SHARON CORRIGAN, ARLYN HALVORSON, TOM DECHANT, SHERI CARTER, JONATHAN BECKER, DEB ARCHER, NATALIE ERDMAN, BREWER STOUFFER, and GREGG SHIMANSKI

Excused 2 - ZACH BRANDON, and ROBIN SCHMIDT

Others present: Rob Hunden, Paul Nelson, Brett Haverson, Bill Franz, and Karin Peterson Thurlow.

B. Consideration of Minutes

1. [2016 MIN-348](#) MINUTES OF THE 9/19 AEC COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING

Attachments: [2016 MIN-348](#)

A motion was made by ERDMAN, seconded by SHIMANSKI, that the minutes be approved. The motion carried by a voice vote.

C. Action Items

There were no action items.

D. Presentations

There were no presentations.

E. Reports to Committee

1. Status report from Hunden Strategic Partners on the Marketing Planning Process

Rob Hunden, the consultant completing the marketing study, made a status report to the committee. He indicated:

- 1) They are working on a meeting planner survey to get a sense from those who are coming and those who are not on why and why not;*
- 2) They are doing a review of comparable complexes. The AEC will need to have a fiscal and financial sustainability plan. Those which are impactful have a robust and positive governance structure and funding model. They are retaining and expanding their niche.*
- 3) Hunden reported seeing desire for farm to table restaurants on site. He pointed out that there must be activity to make a business viable.*
- 4) The firm is working on the scenario of a new/renovated coliseum as well as how consistently active the complex can be. It will require discussion on less dense to more dense approaches.*
- 5) The AEC gets about a million people through each year. It would be good to track who comes, who stays on an annual basis to measure the impact.*
- 6) Hunden is looking at the concert venue and identifying competitors. They responded to a question from the County Executive regarding upgrading the bathrooms at the Coliseum; he believes that updating the bathrooms is a positive.*
- 7) The firm is analyzing the size for ultimate build out. If money were no object, there would be a Coliseum where the administration building is, and all buildings would be connected. There will be a cost-benefit comparison, realizing the great cost of a new building.*
- 8) Connectivity to the downtown will be addressed, as well as linking to parks and to the neighborhood.*
- 9) They are still in the data gathering process.*

Discussion ensued. Brewer asked, "Who are the best in class competitors?" Hunden said those with a consistent annual funding stream are keeping up the most. Others limp along with a minimal annual budget line item. When things get bad, then there is an infusion from a governing body.

The best include the Fort Worth Will Rodgers facility, which has funding through the city budget but is a pass through of the hotel tax. It is an enterprise under the city with an executive director. Hunden noted that AEC and Monona Terrace could be one authority.

Kentucky has a state-run convention center and expo center.

Three areas - Billings, Oklahoma City and Tulsa - have great equestrian centers. The Indiana State Fair Grounds just got an infusion from the state to rebuild their coliseum.

Hunden pointed out that funding and governance are the challenges for most facilities.

Corrigan asked about return on investment of initiatives. Hunden said the baseline is what the AEC is doing now; from that level it will be possible to measure net new induced spending.

Becker asked if survey and interview of local vendors had occurred. Hunden said he would revisit the list. They have spoken to many. Local businesses seem not really happy at the AEC, but are not going anywhere. What they want is more expo space, more flexible space inside, and a covered area outside in the parking lot out front.

Hunden indicated that the northern half or third of the campus seems under-used. Local businesses did not react negatively to that. It may be necessary to structure some parking and move things around.

Discussion ensued.

Corrigan asked for a reaction to density. Shimanski said the AEC needs financial sustainability, and he believes that sustainability will come with density. Halvorson agreed.

The discussion turned to the question: "How do others raise money?" Hunden responded that approaches vary.

Stouffer spoke of an airport in Austin. He wondered if people have the same concept of density and mix of residential and entertainment. Hunden spoke of the push and pull between the two.

Hunden is also working with the old stockyards in Fort Worth where people go to see the cattle. They have stock shows and restaurants and are looking at putting in residential.

Stouffer wondered if five-story affordable housing could be part of the vision or not. Erdman questioned what event space at the AEC is robust. She believes housing should not be the first use; rather core business.

Shimanski spoke of repurposing parts of the site for parking and making parks or usable green space to make it attractive to neighborhood. He does not want it to be a place that just has a few big events.

Carter asked about Rosemont in Chicago. It is an example of a positive spot. She also said there is a need for a space for 200-people events.

Hunden said you need glue that sticks it all together - but places to eat are extremely limited. However a food business would not be feasible if there isn't consistent business. You could do pop up food trucks, or even own the food trucks.

Halvorson says the county can invest if there is buy-in to a great plan. He believes a referendum is not a problem.

Archer wonders about examples of complementary large retail, like Cabellas at Lambeau. Hunden said Branson Landing is like that. It has an outdoor mall. Traditional retail is hard to make work.

Archer wondered if there is interest in going to the P3C conference - the public private partnership concept.

Hunden indicated the AEC has limitations regarding hotels. Dane County has to do much with private investment in restaurants and hotels. That is down the road.

DeChant asked if restaurants needs to be onsite. He pointed out that transportation does not address the food problem.

Discussion ensued regarding the Coliseum. Halvorson said that a Champaign-Urbana Coliseum had a ring built around it to add amenities. It expands the concourse.

2. [2016 RPT-456](#) Discussion of Efforts to Raise Funds for the AEC Visioning Facilitator

Attachments: [2016 RPT-456](#)

Discussion turned to the pending county budget. Corrigan indicated she had forwarded an amendment to add \$50,000 in the budget to hire a facilitator for the AEC redevelopment process. GMCVB has also committed \$25,000. Additionally, the County Executive has put \$100,000 in for the master plan. This adds to the \$150,000 already budgeted.

F. Future Meeting Items and Dates

The next meeting will be Monday, December 19 at 3:00 p.m.

G. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

There was no public comment.

H. Such Other Business as Allowed by Law

Stubbs mentioned the intern who will work on inclusive engagement for this project. She will make a presentation to the committee in January.

I. Adjourn

A motion was made by ERDMAN, seconded by HALVORSON, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by a voice vote.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Janice L. Lee, subject to approval by the committee.