

RELEASE TO THE PUBLIC  
JULIE ALLGEIER  
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**GOVERNOR PRENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
Monday, July 11, 2022**

A hybrid meeting of the Governor Prence Planning Committee was called to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Skaket Room of Town Hall.

**Regular Members, Present:** John Sargent; Mark Mathison; Fran McClennen; Tina Shaw, Debra Oakes, Alexis Mathison, Hadley Luddy (remote)

**Absent:**

**Town Staff Present:** Marsha Allgeier

**Guest Speakers Present:** Barrett Planning Group (Elizabeth Haney, Judi Barrett), Union Studio Architecture and Community Design (Arica Thornton), Brett Pelletier

John Sargent opened the meeting at 5:30 pm.

1. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no public comment.
2. **DISCUSSION WITH COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY TASK FORCE:** John Sargent introduced the chair of the Task Force, Fritz Luft, who gave a presentation on the charge of the Task Force and its progress and thinking to date. He highlighted what has been learned from its community survey (419 respondents), and interviews of key program providers: interests in gym, multipurpose and fitness rooms, and art space at in-town location; status of COA facility, Library planning, Old Fire House, and Recreation Department offices. He said that the current concept is for a mid-size facility with 24,000 square feet on 3 acres with 80 parking spaces. This includes 13,000 square feet for a main center (current COA uses, 3-4 multipurpose rooms, art room, game room, teen hangout room, warming kitchen, and Rec Department offices), plus a 6,000-square foot gymnasium and 5,000 square feet of additional space for COA programs. The square footage is for a standalone facility on one floor. There also has been discussion of a campus-style concept with spaces at different locations.

In thinking about the Governor Prence site, Mr. Luft offered alternatives that used imaginative building design to integrate community center uses with housing, cutting the building footprint with apartments over community center spaces, and shared outdoor spaces, parking, landscaping, and roadways.

There was much discussion with members of both groups as well as members of the public: housing is of such priority and community center uses take away too much; integration deserves more consideration to achieve mixed use on the site; need for housing, less for seniors and more for young families; co-mingling uses makes it harder

to get developers for affordable housing; question whether there is room (based on campus concept) for some small part of community center; question whether there is something in the Governor Prence site that is essential to the community center.

Consultants showed sketch of one option previously considered by the Committee of one acre devoted to a small community building and open space on the Route 6A frontage.

There was discussion of the timing of the two efforts: Committee is aiming for recommendations to the Select Board by September 2022, because the need for housing is so severe and urgent. The Task Force is aiming for sketches for a free-standing center at a model site on Main Street in September-October; the Task Force has a sunset date of August 31, although there may be a request for an extension. But the charge of the Task Force does not include finding a site.

There was appreciation that the purpose of the meeting was to share information, which has been accomplished. Now the Committee needs to make its decisions of what to recommend.

3. **DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO WITH FEWER LARGER BUILDINGS:** Arica Thornton of Union Studios presented a variation of the 77-unit scheme that grouped the housing units into two buildings:

- Building A with 52 units, 15,000 square feet, on 3 stories and a walk-out on the slope (4 stories);
- Building B with 25 units, 7,500 square feet, 3 stories and a walk-out on the slope (4 stories)
- 116 parking spaces (@1.5 parking spaces/unit);
- Community (internal) open space of about 0.6 acre (27,000 square feet)

Ms. Thornton pointed out that this scheme requires significant zoning relief from the building height requirement and the number of units per building, in addition to reduction in required parking, and also requires elevators. She showed photos of six apartment buildings of comparable sizes, including the planned Pennrose building at the former Cape Cod 5 operations headquarters. In answer to the question of whether the larger building could be split in half, it was pointed out that additional elevators would be required, increasing the cost.

There was discussion among the Committee members as to reaction in Orleans to the bigger buildings, about the need to understand the appearance of height from the street frontage given the grade change, about the need for a cross-section at the highest point of the site. The consultant pointed out that further civil engineering analysis would be needed to figure out how the buildings could be sited on the slope. Ms. Allgeier said that she would discuss the requests with George Meservey and with the consultants to see what was possible.

4. **REVIEW OUTSTANDING ISSUES ON “GUIDANCE FOR REDEVELOPMENT” DOCUMENT:**  
Given the lateness of the hour, it was decided to delay this item until the next meeting. Mr. Sargent asked whether additional meetings were needed to meet the deadline to send recommendations to the Select Board by September. It was decided to meet weekly at least through August 1. Ms. Allgeier said that she would check with George Meservey on room availability and the need to post meetings ahead of time particularly for July 18. July 25 is the next regularly scheduled meeting and then August 1 would be an additional meeting time.
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 27, 2002:** Ms. Shaw moved, seconded by Fran McClennen, to approve the minutes for the previous meeting on June 27, 2022. The motion was unanimously approved.
6. **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 pm.

**Respectfully submitted, Marsha Allgeier, Affordable Housing Coordinator**