recreational and cultural purposes.' While Common Council has the ability to modify or remove the deed re-

Former YMCA Community Meeting
Family Partnership Center
May 13, 2019
The City of Poughkeepsie held a public meeting on Monday, May 13th at the Family Partnership Center. After opening remarks by Family Services Executive Director Brian Doyle and Mayor Rob Rolison, John Penney, community engagement director for the City of Poughkeepsie, facilitated a discussion with the mayor and Paul Hesse, community development coordinator for the city. The Mayor said the city felt it was necessary to take over the site after it sat dormant for about 10 years after the YMCA closed. Paul Hesse said a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) for the property has been released. He said the city wants to get a better understanding of the visions the community has for the site. The RFEI may lead to a Request for Proposals (RFP) process that may result in an award of a preferred developer to move the project forward and to fruition. City officials then took questions from the public for about 90 minutes. Seventy-eight people used the sign-in sheets at the event. Comments from the public came along two lines: Suggested solutions and questions. The prevailing view at the meeting was that the former YMCA site should be used again for youth activities in some respect.

**Suggested Solutions**
- “If it has to be taken down, can it be renovated for another youth center.”
- “What resources are we going to put into this (youth center)? We shouldn’t be talking about anything else.”
- “The YMCA had a track, a weight room, fitness room, boxing, swimming pool, locker rooms, offices, racquetball courts, and cafeteria and several classrooms. Build something. This will be your (the mayor’s) namesake.”
- “Utilizing the space to address all social determinants of health at all stage of life – economic stability, neighborhood and physical environment, community and social context, health care system.”
- “The city’s internal vetting process should include community.”
- “The deed restriction (on the property) should be in perpetuity.”
- “Get financial help from state Senate and Assembly.”
- “Utilizing local organizations, businesses, faith communities etc. to get concrete input from residence.”
- “Perhaps for data validating, we can ask Marist (College) for support.”
- “It can be used to tutor kids. Can we have a sports area relating to physical activities (example, basketball) to keep kids out of trouble. It could be used for an after-school program.”
- “Existing school infrastructure could be used” for youth services, to create “neighborhood community centers.”
- “Concepts should be put on public display for people to view, comment and vote on.”
- Three Poughkeepsie High School students said they want to see a homework center for 6-12 graders; employment programs for youth that are well advertised; teen daycare programs; and sports-related facility and programs, larger than currently offered at the high school or the New Hope Center.

**Questions**

**Question:**
“Clarify timeline and process of review of expressions of interest committee composition and transparency RFP timetable. Be a community that makes decisions together.”

**Answer:**
The city initially requested that interested parties be required to submit their RFEI on June 3, but the city has extended that deadline. Proposals are now due on August 5. Written questions about the process must be submitted no later than July 15.

**Question:**
Will floor plans for the current building be available for review?

**Answer:**
Yes, we will include basic floor plans in an addendum to the RFEI. More detailed building plans will be available upon request.

**Question:**
Is there a condition report of the YMCA structure?

**Answer:**
The city has hired an environmental consultant to inspect the building and write a report. The report recommends that no individuals enter the building without full hazmat clothing due to the interior condition of the building, and that includes city employees. The consultant has provided a 45-minute video of the interior that we hope to make available to the public in the near future.

**Question:**
Will development include the land surrounding the building?

**Answer:**
That will largely be determined by the fate of the building and by what type of development and activities would come next for the site.

**Question:**
How much funding will be allotted for this or earmarked project from the City to Poughkeepsie?

**Answer:**
That will largely be determined by the fate of the building and by what type of development and activities would come next for the site.

**Question:**
Is there currently a collaborative or cooperative voice for youth activities and services in the city aside from the school district?

**Answer:**
At the meeting, the Mayor discussed the Poughkeepsie Youth Coalition and the Path to Promise county initiative.

**Question:**
Would you be open to looking at the surveys from the community. Who will you work with as representative of the community through the process of developing a community center?

**Answer:**
Yes, we would want to see those surveys. We will continue to conduct outreach with many community partners and the public at large.

**Question:**
What does the mayor actually do for the school district?

**Answer:**
The mayor is involved and as supportive of the schools as he can be. The school district is run separately by a superintendent, an elected school board and state and federal education laws among other authorities.

**Question:**
Is there a concrete plan and or timeline to evaluate the true condition of the building and the potential cost for remediation rehabilitation or demolition?

**Answer:**
The city has hired an environmental consultant to inspect the building and write a report. The report recommends that no individuals enter the building without full hazmat clothing due to the interior condition of the building, and that includes city employees. The consultant has provided a 45-minute video of the interior that we hope to make available to the public in the near future.

**Question:**
Please look at the Newburgh Armory – it was a similar situation, and with foundation, community and college help is now a very successful.
Several city officials, including Mayor Rob Rolison, have toured the Newburgh Armory to get ideas regarding providing youth services in the City of Poughkeepsie.

Is the city willing to earmark funding for this? Is there a cap to any funding the city is willing to earmark? Can the development include the track behind the building?

That will largely be determined by the fate of the building and by what type of development and activities would come next for the site.

Is there a collaborative voice for youth services?

At the meeting, the mayor discussed the Poughkeepsie Youth Coalition and the Path to Promise county initiative.

What resources are we going to gather to make this [youth center] happen and to make it affordable to youth?

This RFEI process will help determine that. The city will consider a wide range of options for the site but is committed to working with the school district, the county and other partners to address youth services.

What about the county’s financial commitment?

The county says it is committed to helping the city and remains prepared to that once the city determines a direction.

Who’s the community you’re talking about? Where is the community and how are they engaged when we’re not having a meeting like this?

The city administration engages in many ways, by attending other community events besides from this meeting, by meeting with people in person, through social media and updating our website and through many other means.

Why aren’t there more people here? What was the outreach effort?

Preview stories about the meeting were in newspapers, on the radio and on cable TV. The city created an event page on Facebook and periodically posted information on social media. The city had the information continuously on its website and in “The Buzz” newsletter. The city talked about the meeting at other community events. The city posted fliers about the event around Poughkeepsie. The city administration also said it needs the assistance of the Common Council, the school district and the public at large to get the word out. At the meeting, the SNUG organization also said it will help with outreach.

I am concerned about the discussion of economic development goals as stated in the RFEI.

The RFEI makes it clear the site has a deed restriction that limits future land uses to ‘educational,
the city is seeking proposals that have a “demonstrated community benefit.”

**Question:**
“City has documented history of behind-closed-door agreements with so-called ‘preferred developers.’ What is the current, complete list of preferred developers in C/PK? Has the City already had discussions with any of these? If yes, who? Has the City had discussions with any other applicants? What obligations do members of the Common Council have to meet in order to modify or remove the existing deed restriction?”

**Answer:**
“The use of the term ‘preferred developer’ is standard contractual nomenclature used to denote an entity chosen for a specific development project. This is similar to a consultant chosen through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to perform professional services or a construction firm chosen through a Request for Bids. Within the context of the 35 Montgomery Street RFEI, as described in the excerpt above, the award of preferred developer status to an entity would come at the end of an RFP process during which all submitted proposals are evaluated against the goals and requirements of the RFP. The city would then negotiate a development agreement with the awarded preferred developer, within which standards and conditions of the development are specified and community benefits, public improvements and impact mitigations are agreed upon.

“The use of the term ‘preferred developer’ is not intended to mean, and should not be taken to mean, that there is a predetermined list of developers or that there exists a preference for any particular developer. No such list exists, and no developer for the former YMCA site has been chosen.”

**Question:**
“1) What’s your long term urban development plan and how does it apply to our community? 2) What are the prospects of our falling city’s Civic Center? 3) Can the mayor’s office be more proactive?”

**Answer:**
“The city’s long term development plan is to continue promote economic development, job and housing opportunities to the 30,000 residents that call Poughkeepsie home. That involves a multi-faceted approach to workforce development, small business support and business attraction, all while investing in public infrastructure and ensuring a high quality of life.

“We’ve done a lot of neighborhood planning in the last several years, including the Walkway-Gateway District along Parker Avenue, the waterfront transit-oriented development district around the train station, and most recently the downtown Innovation District. The time has come to knit these efforts together into a comprehensive vision for our city while focusing on neighborhoods outside of these three commercial districts. Comprehensive plans are best when they’re updated every 10 years or so, making our current comp plan from 1998 particularly outdated. Housing policy, distressed property remediation, parks and public spaces, economic development, and land use and zoning policies are just some of the topics addressed in a community’s comprehensive plan, and in order for us to be successful and inclusive in the next decade, the time has come to establish our goals and vision for today and tomorrow. This is a major initiative that will require help from all city residents, the Common Council, the business community and other stakeholders.

“With regard to being proactive, taking possession of the former YMCA property and initiating this community conversation on what’s best to do with the property is a proactive step. Rather than allowing this building to continue to languish and deteriorate, the city made the decision to take control of the property and embark on an open and thoughtful process about the property’s future.”

**Question:**
“Please clarify the absolution of the tax liability on the property and any responsibility put on the future development.”

**Answer:**
“Any future development will not be responsible for paying any tax arrears or other outstanding bills or fees.”

**Question:**
“Is the restrictive covenant on the building or does it run with the land?”

**Answer:**
“The deed restriction is placed on the property, not the building. The deed restriction may be modified or terminated by act of Common Council, which would require a two-thirds majority of members.”
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

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| Building Area        |           |       |
| Gymnasium/storage    |           | 10604.0|
| Classrooms/storage   |           | 6869.0 |
| Classrooms           |           | 1988.0 |
| Total Building Area  |           | 19428.0|