

COMMUNITY CENTER COMMITTEE MINUTES APRIL 16, 2012

Begin time: 6:10

Oregon Country Fair Office

Committee Members: Thom, Hilary, Tony, Andy, Charlie, Steve, Indigo, Norma, John, Saman, Bear, Anna

Scribe: Hayley Shapiro

Agenda: Charlie, FFN story and a CCC email question to pose to the group
Subcommittee presentation and questions

Charlie: I put in the article into the FFN, one thing was changed that I was not happy about, which was that he bi line came from me and not the committee because they preferred to have a name. At the end I put that if folks wanted to get in touch with anyone that they could get in contact with the CCC, I set up a forwarder and I put myself on that for now, the question is who on this committee do we need to have on that loop or do we just want a point person who then shares with the rest of the committee? I frankly don't have a preference.

Hilary: Maybe we can start with everyone and if it gets too overwhelming people can opt out

Thom: Yes, I would like to see it go to everyone, so we can see if something deserves a response

Steve: Yes, and that allows for everyone to have a response

Charlie: But we still need a point person so not everyone responds

Tony: Yes, we will have to filter who responds and replies so it doesn't get convoluted

Charlie: So there is another way to do that, you just forward to all, which I can do instead of adding everyone to the forwarder, I can set up an email list and forward it to you and then we can reply internally. Anna needs the weblink in order to get better sound quality to join the meeting. Okay, so done.

Tony: So this is what we sent out to everybody, this is one that was sent to Portland but was returned as nondeliverable, so I kept it so we can show you what we sent out to the nineteen different firms, this is what it was a targeted letter, with the survey that Norma printed out, and they were all successfully sent out with a short time frame for turn around and out of the nineteen firms we got eleven responses. Many sent back other material more than just the survey, some took time and supplemented with extra material. This I will pass around and these are the eleven survey responses from all the firms and we organized them in order of our ranking. These all came back by the deadline, some people had an issue with the mail slot not accommodating them but they had them all in on time for the most part. We came up with a ranking system; Anna threw out good criteria of how to rank them. We basically just ranked them on a five point ranking scale and went through and came to agreement on the ranking. They are all pretty much fives and fours, there is a cut off point at some point down this stack, at Erika Price, after that we didn't consider the rest. We needed a cut off point to have a reasonable amount of firms to move along with and interview. It was pretty interesting the responses we got back,

Anna: I have the ranking if anyone is curious

Tony: Yes I do too, they are just not on the surveys that we printed out, we did have a cut off thinking four or five would be reasonable to actually interview, then it actually came down to about seven, because the last couple Studio E and Erika, actually represented things that we

didn't feel other firms represented so we now have an ambitious lofty goal of interviewing seven firms

Anna: and I want to thank Thom for helping us fill out the interview criteria, and I am now dedicating time in order to go through these, whenever is appropriate Thom and I can put together questions that might be good for the group to brainstorm on

Thom: Yes, we need to develop some criteria when we go into the interviews so that we have the same information when we go in and interview all the firms

Tony: Whatever the committee decides but I thought the subcommittee would be doing the interviews

Hilary: I don't know what the criteria were but here I see lots of big firms, some I don't know and then others, I am disappointed Rainbow Valley did not get on, so I am wondering what the criteria was, to me as far as an organization that is part of our community and has a lot of overlap they seem like more of a good organization than some of these other big firms

Saman: Do they have architects working with them?

Hilary: Yes, I believe so maybe not with a stamp but for this process they have what we need, so yes I am kind of disappointed and am wondering what the criteria was

Thom: Yes this is not necessarily a final list, we made criteria based on what they did with the form, how well they filled in the blanks, what their design ability could be and what was their response, did they follow the guidelines and answer the questions. We didn't think we could interview everyone out of eleven we chose about half, this is a first go we can go back and revise this

Tony: Maybe some may be better for the build part, but a lot of firms really fit the criteria better for the design phase

Hilary: Yes, and when I called the first three firms they all seemed really enthusiastic, and were sensitive to our process

Indigo: As I remember did we give them a three and a half

Thom: No we gave them a three

Tony: Yes we can talk about that, it's just compared to the other firms based on what they provided they really followed the form to a T and some sent detailed proposals, we can go down the list if you want, Brokav has done a lot of big stuff here in town and have a lot of recommendations from the community, they are big and pro and have the staff to accommodate no doubt that they will give us a deliverable, how well they deal with us is to be seen. Pivot and Solarc worked together to do a joint proposal which was pretty exciting, this was one of the firms that was like we have these strengths and they have these weaknesses and together we can do a better job, jointly they were a strong candidate. Pealson also submitted a ton of material, spent a lot of time doing what we wanted plus more, and that benefitted them since it was targeted and more informative

Andy: He actually came out and got a tour, which shows that he was interested in seeing what he would be working with

Tony: Ya he did the hummingbird wholesale warehouse, which is impressive and deals with food production. Skylab is not as straightforward but really interested firm from Portland who design some crazy stuff, which is pretty cutting edge. A lot of this stuff will get sorted out in the interview phase where we can find out more answers to the questions many of you have. Next, Roberts and Sherwood they did the big downtown library and have done other big community

centers they are a big firm here in town with extensive staff and large professional firm. Studio E here is where we got to the point where we felt we had enough firms to interview, but they were really honest, especially when saying they have never designed an outdoor venue. So we came out of this with more questions than we had answers but now we have enough to move to the next phase where we can go and do interviews.

Hilary: Is there more information that this for Studio E?

Tony: Yes, probably somewhere we were also looking at websites along with all this information

Thom: Studio E had a good response as far as campus design

Tony: Anna was Erika Price who did the LLC long house?

Anna: No she was the project manager for... (communication failure)

Indigo: One of the reasons we kept her in there was for the balance between large firms and a sole practitioner and wanted to see what she can bring to the table in that position

Tony: And not to mention the work she has done with a lot of Native influence and such

Thom: Yes, I think she is the only one with the word tribe on her form

Tony: The rest was, to be honest, just not as good as we were looking for, the Arbor firm was less interesting and mostly has only designed churches, same with Rainbow Valley at this phase they just didn't float to the top, the rest just didn't fit as much of our criteria even though they are interesting. Part of our goal was to find out if we are going to engage with a design firm now, it would be beneficial if they could see us all the way through the process.

Charlie: Pivot did Harris Hall which is a great building

Tony: Ya it's a really interesting room

Hilary: I am also very impressed by Pivot

Tony: And Craig Patterson responded with information saying he worked for the state for two years and said he built something in the community village, he has a saw mill, and feels he is a great person to do the project, but he got a zero on our ranking unfortunately

Steve: Craig's energy over the years has gone into building these small structures, rather than bigger buildings

Hilary: So, I don't want to force you guys to change your rankings or anything, I have vented and I am disappointed where Rainbow Valley came in but I think that if you go out and do interviews and weed out as you go then we will have good results. I think some of these firms are too big, that is my personal opinion, I would like to see more of a medium firm in the position

Tony: The bigger firms just have more staff that can come and work with us

Hilary: Yes, but that also means they may be harder to track down and more expensive, some of these other firms like Pivot are just a better size. Maybe the format was not the format that was going to help them shine

Anna: I appreciate everything that you are all putting into this first cut. Now we need to go over maybe the first series of questions that we will ask in the interview. I heard comments on some of the facilities that we know of and like, so maybe as part of the criteria in this first round of interviews we can do tours of buildings we like, that posses characteristics we want to include in our own building. I am happy to form up what we have so far for questions and send them out to the group but I wanted to know what everyone here was thinking for that process, for the second round, for forming up good questions and ways for us to get the firm list down to about three, maybe four, but I think three might be better. Calling up there references is also a great way to see what these firms have done, yes we want to see how things were built, how they have aged, if they are being used with there original intention

Tony: Ya and how much did the design allow for future incorporation of new technologies and new things that come along are things designed at capacity or not, these are important things for us to know

Hilary: Ya talk with Dean, there are a lot of frustrations as far as the long house goes with implementing new technologies within the design

Anna: I think Erika is really key for me to see how she would take it to the next step

Hilary: What does that mean?

Anna: Well, like if we ask something like have other clients gotten the outcome that they were looking for? I am interested in seeing how these firms respond to that

Charlie: I bet most of these firms could find people on there staff who have been involved or been to the fair

Anna: Hi Indigo have not seen you in a while, do we want the subcommittee to work on more questions? Well, Thom wrote out about twelve questions that seemed like a good list which I was happy with but if others had started to write out questions in areas that we wanted to field specific responses then we would bring that to the table here

Hilary: Yes, I don't have specific questions now but I am interested in questions regarding size, affordability, having a firm that is more local which I think is something that the fair community has voiced, and I am not as concerned with the design per say

Anna: Yes, maybe we should think of cost, we have a plan that is intensive with getting this plan out, but we don't know what will be affordable, what can we say our budget is

Hilary: Well we have 25,000 dollars

Charlie: Not to be coy maybe we should have more of a ballpark in the 20,000 dollar range and then if we need have that 5,000 as backup

Tony: But even to put a number on it seems like we know what on the market that will mean, its almost arbitrary, what does that number mean?

Andy: Ya, if you say 25,000 dollars some may see that and there eyes will light up others may not know, so do we really want to disclose that information. I have a feeling that once we start working with an architect they will have more of an inside track, it will be nice once we narrow the list to those last three, so we can see more of what they have done and see if there is a similar style to what we are looking for. In the last three candidates if they had like a signature building then we could, as part of the process, tour it with them and have them walk us through the process of how that came together, we may have a better chance of knowing what we like once we see there portfolios and what they have done. That's the bottom line for me when hiring, we want to find a compatible vision

Thom: Well, we need to wind up with our vision to do that, this part of the process is do define our vision so they are not defining our vision for us, that doesn't get us where we need to be. We are looking for a firm that can guide this organization towards our vision, and then draw up the details of what it would look like. I don't think we should talk about cost with these guys, we should first and foremost find someone qualified to help us figure out our vision, and ranking them based on that, and then maybe get to the cost. The whole cost thing I think comes later when we come to selecting an actual firm

Charlie: I agree with Thom this phase is for us to help ourselves flesh out our vision, the next phase is then finding who will help us implement that so it manifests, they should be coming to us saying how they would build this and that and what they would need, our budget is more internal information. There has to be some iteration of that estimation for each firm when they are thinking of the work they will do

Steve: I like all these ideas, once we have maybe narrowed it down then we should go and visit things they have done and talk to the people they worked with to find out if they have what they originally wanted and if it is serving the purpose

Hilary: I think the architect vision will be more important the second time than this time. And I think it is important to get an idea of cost now so we know what they bill per hour and that kind of information and know what we may get billed. I am concerned especially with some of these big firms it may be more expensive to get the exact same result. This is more of a discreet thing looking for people as more of consultants, and they should be able to talk about how they would build and what a project like this would cost

Indigo: For me on the subcommittee it would be helpful if we hone more information based on what we want to ask these firms, so what are peoples' thoughts on what should be brought into the interview process

Tony: Back to the cost part, every organization has a budget when going into a project and the firm will weigh into that too. This is a high profile project, and we may have a good idea coming out of those interviews what it is going to cost us based on size alone maybe.

Andy: I was thinking that it may be a bit impossible with all the ideas from our side and then a big firm on top of that, maybe a smaller or medium firm will be more of a key in the puzzle for balance. For this phase now, it may be better to have a smaller more local firm

Thom: Well it may be that a middle-sized company would be better, I was hoping that after this interview process there will be a variety of representation so when we come back to the committee to decide on the finalist. For this next round I have some categories of information to look at and I would think that we would also look at depending on what they say to us we can fit into these categories to derive a score. Ranking them on their experience and past performance, also ranking specific folks within the firm on there experience, looking into all there stuff and ranking them based on what they have done, maybe they have engaged in a process with non profits before and that could rank them higher in the experience category. Looking at there technical capabilities, can they do nice graphics that we can use and present to our family. The location of their main office and their consultants, so if someone is local and accessible that may rank higher. We would look at their portfolio review and awards and certificates. There level of commitment to the project, there customer service. According to that, we may be able to sort this out. I got these from a qualifications based selection process

Anna: I am also experienced with going through qualifications, which is a two part process. And now I think we have more information as to what to add into those qualifications as far as finances, and local examples which we can use to be more prepared for the next time we come back to this group

Tony: I also want to point out that after the first part of this process we may not come back with a firm we are totally happy with but we will be looking for a group that will be able to bring us all the way through this whole process. But we reserve the right to bring it back to the drawing board if we do not find what we are looking for. There is no intention of hiring someone just for the conceptual part of this design phase, and then hire someone else, we want to find someone who meets the qualifications to bring us all the way to the design phase

Saman: If I am going to build a house my wife and I would think up the details of what we would want in that house. So for me I feel like the person needs to know what the central vision will look like before going to the firm. Then we can see how they apply our ideas, and have a better idea of how they will work with our ideas. That would be how I would pursue it I would want to know what I want before searching for a person who would decide for me

Hilary: Right but within this first phase afterward, we want to have some issues settled that will allow us to put in a planning permit, we are not yet at the point where we are saying we want

four side rooms, we are at the point where we are figuring out where this can even go, we still need to pick a location. The design firm may then say to us here are the issues you need to resolve and come back to us. That detailed information is going to help us answer questions we have not been able to answer up until this point, they will help us based on what we do know, and give us more specific information

Anna: Yes, I think we are on the right track and those questions will get answered

Hilary: Yes I think having professional help to solve some of these issues will help kick us into gear

Tony: Yes and we do know some of the information, we can sit down with the kitchen crew and flesh out their specifics. We know we need a meeting space and outdoor seating, we just don't know the process to manifest these needs into a conceptual design. Also, the details based on our needs which through this process we hope to get answered. The site planners can help us with finding a logical spot based on what's on site and how it will work, we need someone to walk us through the process

Indigo: And we have done some of the work reaching out the Fair Family, there is a monkey survey that went out to the family and we have a list of what they will want to see, this design firm can also help us with the dialogue to get the huge list of desires the family will have and narrow it down. This firm will only help us move forward more efficiently. I am also happy to share that survey with whoever wants to see it

Saman: Yes and I appreciate all of your hard work, I am not trying to stir the pot. I also like to save money and find out how we can be the most efficient, by all means I think you all know that at first I didn't support a community center but I will go along and support it. For me I am a cheap skate, I don't always want to spend the money.

Charlie: The list is over

Anna: Is this the only list of this that we have now, is there an electronic copy?

Hilary: Thank you subcommittee for doing all this!

Anna: Yes, we now need to schedule more meetings, and be respectful of Norma and Tony's time because they will be really key in the next round, as key as they were the first time around. All the responses we got back I think say a lot about how they see our organization, we probably got a lot of response from big firms because we too are seen as a large dynamic firm, and we are being respected for that

Tony: Yes, large firms will have a range of costs maybe more expensive, but they also have a larger range of resources.

Anna: Maybe the subcommittee can make a small pdf of all the material we compiled and received. This process may help get more people on board once we have all the information and can present it in an entire package.

Tony: How should I respond to those who submitted that we did not choose to interview?

Hilary: Maybe wait until we are really satisfied with the ones we interview and then also we can go back and send out a nice cordial letter thanking them and letting them know of our decision.

Meeting Summary: The subcommittee came to the meeting prepared to talk about the results received from the letter of interest and survey. After acquiring a number of responses the committee was able to narrow the list down to seven potential firms for interviewing. The subcommittee, and committee have worked on, and will continue drafting appropriate questions for the next phase of this process. These interview questions will help the committee flesh out a vision, and ideas for a design. As part of the interview process the committee is interested in seeing previous projects done by the firm and inquiring about their building processes, goals, and thoughts post building. The next meeting is May 21st at 6 pm.

End time: 7:20