

Feasibility Committee  
Special Meeting  
Sunday 5-9-10 4pm

**Members present:** Heidi Ekstrand, Chair, Susan Fisher, Mark Hanzlik, Matt Olsen, Leigh Gerber, Scott Bowlen, Judith McQuerry, Ex Officio.

**Absent:** Todd Phillips, Bob Sivertsen

**Called to order:** 4:05pm Ted Ferry Civic Center Naha Bay.

Introduction of meeting purpose by Heidi Ekstrand: To go back through additional information to see if there is a change in the recommendation to the City Council.

**Persons to be heard:**

Dick Allen: Several remarks have been made about the distance of the Copper Ridge site. Congratulations to Mr. Shay for walking it. Schoenbar Middle School is ¼ mile closer to the Centennial Building than to Copper Ridge and it is uphill. Mr. Allen thoroughly disagrees with the evaluation sheet. His main point is Trucks and Copper Ridge is an industrial zone. The Schoenbar road is closed ½ time in the winter. George still has a landfill in the back of the property. If everyone did evaluate fairly, the Heckman site far exceeds Copper Ridge. The majority of people want the library downtown. Mr. Allen likes the library right where it is at. He'd like to remodel and add over the creek. He isn't sure about what a remodel would involve.

Kathy Bolling: She works at the UAS Library and has had conversations with a lot of people. She also has subbed at the PL. She shared her feeling of what it is like to do library work downtown in the summer. She feels there is lots of confusion why the current building is not adequate. Why not another story. We need a building that is designed for a library. The Tongass Historical Museum is an asset and a draw downtown. She loves the idea of a library downtown but doesn't believe it is feasible. She remembers downtown as a child and misses it. She remembers the Spruce Mill whistle. She has seen the Main School site presentation three times. It is disingenuous to say Main School is workable. She doesn't let her kids wander downtown. The Performing Arts Center is on the way. The library won't save downtown. We are going to lose our chance for a new library. She hopes she will still be welcome by people working for the Performing Arts Center.

Amanda Keiley: 12 year resident. She is a part time substitute at the PL. She supports a thriving downtown. More important is a new library, no matter where it is. Using the new library project as only a boost to downtown is shameful. She believes the library is important. The Main School site is not large enough. No matter where the library goes, she will go there to use it. She supports the Copper Ridge site but any of the three sites is okay. She hopes the community will stand behind whatever decision is made.

Len Lawrence: he is a 47 year resident. He has no business interests in downtown. He wants to keep the library in its current location. He is aware of the timing issue for

funding, but the current location is best. It is central to maintain the fabric of downtown. It is on all bus routes. Local users use the downtown location. 16,000 sq ft. does not exist, but the PL is "married" to the UAS Campus library. He can use his library card at either library not just the current location. E-books and readers will eliminate the need for additional space in the next few years. He is in favor of the library taking over the Centennial Building. He wants to maintain the beautiful rustic building on the creek. He favors moving the museum when the old fire station becomes available.

Mark Hanzlik stated that E-books won't mean fewer books. Mr. Lawrence said the newer generation is not into print.

Pat Jirschele: A resident of Pennock Island. He is in favor of keeping the library where it is at. John Stewart and Pat have spent extensive amounts of time on a proposal to extend the library over the creek to provide more space. They were told it can't be done but they have found a manufacturer of pre-stressed concrete trusses that would be adequate to bare the loads. They have found that the Department of Natural Resources has no objection to a building over Ketchikan Creek. There IS property available on the far side of the creek. Regarding the question of is the State's 50/50 grant money available for an expansion, yes if there is a 30% expansion it qualifies for the grant. He questions the conclusion that the building can't expand up. He says he has seen plans that include Clerestory windows. He wants to see the engineering study that says we can't go up. Even if the project is eligible for the 50/50 grant money, that is 50% of the "proposed" total grant costs. The project could well run over the proposed cost and who would pay? The kayhi remodel went up 23 to 58 million. Schoenbar went from 9 to 30 or 32 million. We get stuck if it goes over. The Coast Guard is loosing the Acushnet and we will loose 60 to 80 jobs. The Loran station is closing and that is another 30 jobs. This is going to be the biggest hurt since KPC closed. Also the city wants to sell KPU Telecom. Pat figures that will be another 20 jobs lost within 3 years. No body wants to talk about job loss. If we build where we're at we own the land and can use it as a match for the grant. If we can expand, he supports keeping it where it is at. He asked for a show of hands for those who want it to stay in the Centennial building and 7-8 people raise their hands.

Gayle Brooks: She works part time at the PL. She brought her 15 year old daughter and 5 year old grandson with her today. Caitlyn is the youngest of five. She and her kids were not regular library users in the past because of difficulty parking. She would bring her children to the library, circle the parking lot and leave because there was no available parking. When the Pt. Higgins summer program started, her family went there until the children grew up and said they wanted "New books". She says she daily deals with "Will I get parking?" If she arrives 30-45 minutes early for work, she can get a space but on the 11-8 shift there is no parking. She says she gets about 2 parking tickets per winter and ticket prices may rise. Without a permit which she cannot afford, she has to move her car every two hours. She doesn't like the elevator to Main School idea. There are too many sex offenders in the downtown area. Internet and tourists – the majority of tourists come in to the library to use the internet and folks must wade through tourists to use the library. Folks come in then simply leave due to all of the tourists. Gayle would like to

see the library moved from downtown. She wants the library back for her children and grandchildren.

Steve Reeve/Kent Miller – These gentlemen showed slides and made a presentation. They represent 10-12 people meeting to come up with an alternative location for the committee to consider. It is difficult to depend on the library in the Centennial building. Preference to Main School site –

- Access to children & disabled
- won't take property off the tax rolls
- can be used as match
- works with other non-profits
- address parking
- children's park
- supported by public process
- residential scale structure
- 32 parking spaces on site
- can come back way from 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue
- Elevator
- good parking, 51 sites at Grant and Main
- some times it is nasty
- parking in evening wide open
- 2 additional parking expansions – Old Hospital could provide 40 spaces

Mark – cost to \$2-2.5 to remove asbestos (\$800,000 Steve's estimate)

Steve Reeve – The old hospital is an issue the community needs to resolve anyway.

Kent Miller – The City has condemned the structure and is planning demolition. It should be considered a resource. We'll have to pay for parking anyway. Have addressed parking on Main Street site.

Steve – want to be very clear about on site parking

Kent – Shows footprint of library

- Shows viewing platform, Elevator, 32 spaces including loading zone and short term parking.
- Bridge to Grant Street Park
- 35% of Library Patrons are children
- 1200 children are within a 10 minute walk
- Parking is only one of three ways to get to library sometimes parking takes one.
- Bike, walking & transit are other options

Transit access

- Grant & Main at parking lot
- Taking additional rock out of cliff

- 51 spaces covered walkway next to Redman's Hall
- It is Possible to make a buss stop at covered walkway
- 8.5 x 18 parking space is standard

Susan – asked what the cost of 1 level additional parking would be and asked what the grade of Grant st. is.

Kent – 12% grade on Grant Street

Susan- Previously there has been concern about Grant Street being used by a Fire truck – Isn't there a requirement for a 60 ft turn around?

Kent- A Fire truck can use the proposed parking lot to turn around.

Susan- So, you are saying we don't need a 60 ft turnaround?

Kent – What we are proposing doesn't affect the end of Edmond Street

Scott – Has questions about the site.

Matt – Questions the cost of elevator at \$500,000.

Steve – will get costs

Matt- believes the annual maintenance of elevator, cost of up to \$50,000

Steve – The cost of Main School will be less than Copper Ridge. That a one story building will really cost less is debatable point really depends. If site prep costs are high it can cost more.

Kent – Has experience with 6 elevators and one tram – wouldn't guess at cost (500,000) could easily be less.

Matt – could it be more?

Kent – Must look at all the components of project site prep and foundation costs. Could vary much more than 500,000 – it needs to be looked at.

Matt – How can we legitimately recommend a site if we don't have the costs?

Kent – Offing a site plan that shows in more detail than other sites how it could meet program. Their group is working with Linda Mallard. Urge best value. They feel they have provided beyond what is proposed on other sites –

- Transit routing : propose all three bus lines stop at elevator
- They are sure this will cost less than the other sites
- Arts Committee assemblage
- Children's park
- 35% of people enjoying library
- Safety of children addressed

John Hill – Own a business in the Mary Francis. Of all the decisions we could make this may be the most important in the next 15-20 years for downtown. Will we next year say we love downtown that is vital to have a good downtown for us? Will we continue to use public funds to do the opposite of supporting downtown. The argument used is that is it cost effective to move the borough, KRBD, etc out of downtown? The Notion is that

downtown is disposable. Programming public funds so tourists can have down town not good idea. Will they say, "What a charming rock pit. What a statement of civic pride." Cost effectiveness is not the only value we should consider. Values should be leading discussion not just cost effectiveness and connivance.

Bobby McCreary – Came in recently to this discussion. She believes the library needs more room and is in favor of downtown. Where did the May 15<sup>th</sup> deadline come from?

Susan – Foraker group experts determined we must be ready by Feb 2011 to apply for the State Grant deadline. There are costs attached to properties.

Bobby- Can you share these costs? What is the project cost? If you need to know more, take a strong look at backing off the May 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. There is a neighborhood feel and ambiance at Main School. Transportation is more available at the Main School site. She is very concerned about transportation to the Copper Ridge site.

John Stewart - Says he has been trying to listen to all concerns. The Objective is to enhance library services. He is very much in favor of the Centennial building – It is the most affordable even as a stand alone. The deadline date of 5/15/10 is just not the case. "We are holding a gun to our own heads." If we don't get the money on this go around we still have opportunity for money. He applauds all the work that has been done but, he and Pat put a lot of thought into their plan. The idea was brought to meeting several years ago. They presented the idea to the people and a visiting architect 'lit up'. He was informed that crossing the creek was not possible. It has been proven as most affordable. Not one of the new sites offers more space for parking. The old hospital must be abated and hopefully must be handled. The Dima property behind American legion could be possible municipal parking area.

It has been talked about how handy Copper Ridge is from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. bypass. By that same route, one can access Main School or Community Building. He doesn't see anything that is going to be more affordable.

"Take the gun away from our head" The current building is just a joy to be in – "I don't go there , but it is a wonderful space." The Centennial Building was engineered for a third story. We need to be cautious of 'free money'\$12 million structure – 50/50 can use what we have to match. Mr. Stewart cited a parallel in Medford, Oregon – they build a grandiose new library, but cut the library budget. The Fire hall will not be utilized soon. We need to look at the true costs.

Give serious consideration to existing library.

Heidi – Addressed the 50/50 match. The first 6 libraries were funded. The second group includes Anchorage, Ketchikan, Sitka, Kodiak and Fairbanks. There is a serious lobbying group working to get this next batch funded. The third fund group is one project in Wasilla.

John – “Sometimes free is not cheap enough”. If we get funding and it costs \$6 million we are still talking about two buildings – we will spend \$18 million to renovate the museum.

Loni Hill – Lives and works downtown. We just built a new school and now may be closing one. Sex offenders are not a good reason to move the library. There are plenty of kids who would not get to ‘dump hill’. It is nice that the library is downtown. It is fair to have it centrally located. An interesting concept is to turn the Old Hospital into parking. She advocates using shuttle buses to go regularly into downtown. The fact is that we are downsizing materials. Fabulous events happen in the library. With or without the library needing space for materials it is politically better to move the museum rather than the library. I am a living breathing Ketchikan tourist attraction. When “I’m walking downtown I say, come with me to the library.” People are thrilled that we live in a functioning town and this is not a summer home. Moving the library is like ripping the heart out of an individual. Health involves mind, spirit and body. Moving the heart weakens the community. Why paint the house and garden. We need it to be truly healthy. Keep the community beautiful and keep it together. Re-hab the old building rather than take it away and create a weakened, anemic community.

Maureen Roth – One of the few to speak against downtown. She Lives equidistance from Copper Ridge and Centennial building. People do walk the bypass – they walk dogs, the Jr High isn’t far, there are joggers. Mr. Murph did a nice job on the small park with a bench. There is a marvelous view. It is a nice walk through downtown in winter. Then the Cruise ships come. We don’t see joggers, dogs and kids in downtown. Then, we see the community on the bypass. The buses will go to the library wherever it is. If 35% of the users are kids the ball park, city park, etc. are very near Copper Ridge. It is very user friendly and multi-cultural. It is just up the hill from downtown.

The community has wanted to upgrade the library facilities for years. She is glad that the committee is here. The Committee has figures.

Taking over the old hospital – the city doesn’t own that and it is a massive problem child. It is not safe.

Downtown is being defined by the people here. We are a community not just downtown. Most folks want to avoid walking through downtown. All the kids I know walk on the bypass. There are no High Schoolers playing at the Grant Street park. Copper Ridge is user friendly and the money is there.

Reed Parker – Wanted to ‘echo’ what others have already said. Mostly he wants to put a foot in the door. He wants us to think about 50 years from now. He wants a long term commitment to the community. He actually Lives closer to Copper Ridge but it is up the old bypass and very steep. He wants to see a new library. Cruise ships are here 3 months per year. 9 months without.

Lisa Pearson – Adult services librarian, lived in Ketchikan 22 years. This is the third time that folks have tried to put the library on the Main School site. It is too steep and too close to the cruise ships. If we insist on sacrificing library services

There is no way this community will spend \$12 million on a new library without state and foundation grant monies.

Shame on the downtown community that just wants the library for business reasons.

Library people actually use library and will use it wherever it is.

If we don't move now we will be stuck in too small a space for years to come.

Judy Hogben- Wanted a figure for parking spaces for employees. She questioned whether the proposed viewing platform proposed for the Main School site would be all season. Can be used year round? Could it be enclosed. We could ask both the hospital and Steamers for maintenance costs of elevators.

Jean Snyder – Wherever the library is I will be coming. People have different opinions. We need a wonderful library with space for people. It is going to be a great library when we get it fixed.

Nathan Brooks – Something overlooked – library serves schools, biggest place where books go.

#### CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING

10 minute break:

Heidi – Now begins the work of the committee. No more public testimony.

Let's look at the 3 additional ideas that have come forward

- Grant Street
- Renovate Centennial building
- White Cliff School

R&M sent a memo from Trevor Sande with additional information about site work. Apologize for Mothers Day meeting!

Best Way to Approach:

White Cliff first:

Heidi Summarizes an E-mail from M Bayless asking if there is possible City Interest. They propose adding a deck over the parking on the north side of the existing White Cliff building. They would build a 14,000 sq. ft. library with a sky bridge to White Cliff linking 2,000 ft inside the existing White Cliff building.

The Foraker review says there are major problems of ownership.

Susan: Not interested in spending time or advancing to council

Matt: Split footage causes problems

Leigh: There is a major question of deck & cost for deck

Mark: Guestimate of cost. Additions could be well in excess of \$1 million

Leigh: not willing to move forward

Susan: ownership too complex.

Judith : Staffing 2000 sq ft in another building would cause a problem of staffing.

Matt – I MOVE “We do not consider White Cliff” – passed unanimously

Grant Street:

Heidi – We are pretty familiar with this lot.

Susan – speaking about parking issue. I spoke with the Court Clerk. There are currently 53-59 space. This is the only lot to park over 2 hours. Days with jury calls 30 people per pool and there can be more than one pool at a time. Jurors receive written instructions to park in that lot. Thursdays, year round, 18 Grand Jurors park there. Not counting witnesses, etc. I am concerned that the City won't move fast enough to remediate parking. Daytime hours are the greatest demand. We could give jurors day long permits like Juneau, but that would make it more difficult for businesses. Then there is the dispute of the slope of Grant Street. It is very steep. This was a very hot issue the last time we discussed the Grant St. site.

Leigh- It has been tried 2 or 3 times to use this site. We are going down same road. If we needed a parking structure before how would it work better now? Size and topography would allow a two story solution. One story with a mezzanine or 2 story both create the same staffing issue. I prefer one story. I oppose this site it doesn't give us a workable site.

Mark-Let me play devils advocate again. Looking into the future, there is a possible decrease in cruise ships. Maybe more people will be walking. Copper Ridge is more difficult in the winter. There is an advantage to downtown. I have mixed emotions. There is no good site in Ketchikan. I love it where it is now. I am one who has a parking permit at the Federal Building so it isn't a problem for me.

Susan: If I had to choose between remodeling the Centennial Building or Grant Street I'd choose Grant St. Let's talk about the library. The best practices. This is what we've learned we don't want to squeeze it into what is there.

Heidi – Is there room for expansion?

Mark- What is the population on island?

Susan – There has been a lot of volunteer time put into this but there are no firm cost attached. I don't know. We have other viable sites we can move on.

Mark- It is 1.3 miles to Copper Ridge from the Centennial. Building. It is 1.3 from Kayhi. Downtown has easier access for Pennock and downtown.

Susan- Lots of people live outside of downtown and lots of people have to drive to the library.

Mark: I spoke with a life long resident who said parking has always been an issue

Scott- We've looked at the Grant Street site. I feel once burned, twice shy. I appreciate what people have done. I have lived and worked downtown and walked to the library. The Grant st. Park has been neglected. I cannot see that size of facility, cannot see the library in that space. We have gone through that site and seen it not moving forward. Best practices is a single story - Grant Street doesn't meet that need. The mezzanine is a second story. 2 economists looked at it and came up with two different things. 2 sets of professional people came up with two different results – that is a cause

for concern. It would be wonderful if there was a site downtown that worked, but I don't see this one.

Leigh- Scott said it very well. The cost to maintain an elevator at my work is \$28,000 a year.

Matt- I have loved Grant Street all along. We have to look at why it failed. It's the site. It has difficult year round access. With the elevator option, we are looking at 2-3 years. I worry about the split level, having an unsupervised floor. The thought of having security cameras in library. There is a whole host of problems. This takes away all the flexibility of the meeting rooms. If the meeting room is important we cannot go into this site.

Leigh – "I move we don't recommend Grant St. to the City Council."

Scott – With the Dawson Property it seemed appropriate to have a yes or no vote.

Susan - We should have a positive motion.

Someone suggested we don't have a motion.

Leigh – I withdraw my motion and Susan withdrew her second.

Matt- Let's move forward with our final motion. Let's have one final motion.

Next site: Move the Museum Department and Renovate the Centennial Building.  
MRV has sent a memo summarizing this option.

Susan – Speaking to Mr. Jirschele. Using the Centennial Building as a match to gain the 50/50 state grant money would require an expansion of an additional 30% or more. To meet a 30% expansion we would be looking at a building of 18,200 sq ft on three stories and built over a salmon spawning stream.

Matt – Has there been a change in the building codes that says we can't add a third story? Isn't it something about loads?

Judith – My understanding is that the building was originally designed to have a third story but since then seismic codes have changed and that is no longer an option.

Heidi – Then there is the timing of the moves. First we have to get the Fire Station built, then the Museum moves, and finally the Library needs to get remodeled.

Leigh – Our job is to recommend sites going forward to the City Council. Then they decide. If they want to put it across from Mudd Bight. That's up to them. Getting into a remodel you never know what the costs will be. Look at Schoenbar. We don't have six months to a year to study. If we miss this band of funding, we get into a band with no certainty.

Matt – I spoke with Sen. Stedman in Juneau. His intent is to fund projects as they are on the matrix. Sen. Stedman knew the projects without reading the paper. He said, "You will get your money this year, be ready."

Leigh – Funding is a huge consideration.

Mark – I go to the library all the time. I go and grab because it is too crowded. Even if it is renovated it would be difficult.

Susan – I'd like to try to make a motion.

Heidi – One thing we should do first is review the R&M memo. Part of the process was Foraker brought in R&M Engineering to estimate and discuss development costs. The memo is for the three preferred sites.

Susan – For the benefit of the audience, Skinner doesn't have City water or waste water.

Mark – Aren't these costs conservative estimates. Couldn't it cost a lot more?

Matt – In this case conservative means costs up to. Not minimum costs.

Susan/Matt – Is the Heckman site the whole parcel or just the back part. The whole parcel.

Leigh – Land cost were not considered because everything was negotiable. That is Karl's job.

Heidi – Is there anything else on development costs?

**Susan – “I move the Library Feasibility Committee reaffirm the three sites forwarded previously through the Foraker Group assisted review process, and that the Copper Ridge Site be the preferred alternative recommended to the Ketchikan City Council.”**

**Leigh – I second.**

Susan – So to wrap up for this past seven years. It is hard to step back and be dispassionate. We have a 16,250 sq ft. facility. We spent time and this is well thought out. It has been debated and best practices have been considered. 16,250 is a whole lot less than 27,000 sq ft. A single story has maximum operational efficiency. It minimizes construction and operational costs. Copper Ridge is the lowest cost to purchase and the lowest cost to develop. This will cause the least burden on the taxpayers. There is dedicated parking of 22 spaces. It allows for handicapped and other patrons all on the lot. There are 130 households with schools and the recreation center nearby. It is within walking distance from Kayhi. There is easy accessibility from North and South ends of town and it is close to downtown. It conforms to the requirements to get 50/50 and foundation funding. We were told that if we want Rasmuson money, we will use the Foraker process.

Mark - In 4-6 months we will have a business plan that will check the feasibility. That the numbers really do add up. They will look at it and see if it is a realistic option.

Leigh - A lot of Ketchikan was gravel pits before they became other things. It will become something else.

Matt - This is the culmination of a process. Yes it is in a rock pit with industrial aspects now. There is good access. The Jail is across the street. The State Troopers want that access kept clear in the winter, not necessarily the residential area of Bear Valley. If we can't have a water site which we might have been able to 20 years ago when Salmon Landing was being developed, The next most iconic view is Deer Mountain. I have never been a fan of the Skinner site. The three we picked are the best. There is a residential feel. There is a 1 year blast and crush rock conditional use permit proposed, but then that is going to be built as residential. Yes, in the area is industrial use but Forest and Miller Ridge above and Bear Valley below are residential.

Leigh – I hope the City Council picks a site and everybody votes for that site. I hope for consensus. That will be huge for future funding. That's how we can get the library built.

Scott – I desire to move forward. I am comfortable with the process and support the motion.

**Unanimous approval of the motion**

Adjournment at 6:50pm

Respectfully submitted:  
Judith L. McQuerry