



**SHERMAN COUNTY COURT
SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES
OFFICE OF THE SHERMAN COUNTY COURT**

April 19, 2016 – 9:07 a.m.

Present: Judge Gary Thompson, Commissioner Mike Smith, Commissioner Tom McCoy, Administrative Assistant Lauren Hernandez

A quorum was present. No news media was present.

Courthouse Facilities Schematic Design Review

Present: Heath Gardner, Meg Matsushima, Brian Powell, Debbie Hayden, Ron McDermid, Brad Lohrey

Brief discussion was held about the path of fiber to the courthouse.

Meg Matsushima, Hennebery Eddy Architects, summarized that weeks ago, Hennebery met with each department to review department needs. Some modifications to the plan were made. The purpose of the work session is to present the schematic design. The Steering Committee and Hennebery have developed a preferred option, which will be presented. The exterior of the building will also be presented.

Previously, Hennebery was given direction to develop option three and four. Option three included having the hearings room in the existing building and a two-story link. Option four including the separation of a justice building and an administration building with a one-story link. Veterans Services and Tri-County Corrections no longer need space on site, which allowed for flexibility with placement of other departments. Meg stated no department asked for more than what they needed. The program has been consolidated by 300 square feet.

Meg presented the preferred plan. The plan was tweaked slightly after the last round of department meetings and reflects the change from two elevators to one elevator in the new facility. This plan includes Justice Court in the new facility and features a one-story link.

The elevator includes a private side and a public side. Private refers to employees and those with access. Judges can use the private side, which opens into the employee-only corridor instead of in the Sheriff's Department, which is what earlier plans showed. The Sheriff's Department can access the elevator as well, if needed. The elevator will be two sided and controls will lock when one side of it is being used until the other side has been cleared.

The new plan sets up a nice entrance for the public. Public stairs inside have been reduced in size. A stairwell is placed by the Sheriff's Department for emergency egress, but the Sheriff's Department will have access to it as a preferred way to move defendants to and from the courtroom. The stairwell will be access controlled. There are three stair cases in the new building, and with the occupancy of the courtroom, this number cannot be reduced.

Meg reviewed placement of several departments, bathrooms, break rooms, and conference rooms.

The sheriff's office will be placed at the front of the Sheriff's Department to make it easily accessible to visitors. The department features room for evidence processing, a sergeant office, a situation room with one-way glass, a transaction counter, and the ability to buzz people in behind the counter. The holding room will reutilize one of the existing holding cell doors. Discussion was held about striping the side street for the Sheriff's Department to use for patrol car parking. The shower and restroom designated for the department has moved and is now accessible by all staff.

The Justice Court hearing room stayed similar to previous plans. The public restrooms moved next to the link. The restrooms are single occupancy due to space constraints. Including a multi-stall restroom will be readdressed, though adding three public restrooms and dedicated staff restrooms on both floors should alleviate accessibility issues.

The first floor of the existing courthouse was tweaked slightly. The Financial Services Department will move all storage out of the existing vault and will move into the current County Court office, which will be linked to the clerk's office. The link can be walled off to create two separate functioning offices if needed in the future. The shared space where the clerk currently is will become the clerk's office. The original program requested private offices for both departments, but space constraints did not allow for this. Instead, a conference room has been included which will give an area for both offices to hold confidential meetings or phone calls if needed.

The treasurer/Community Transit space has grown to include a transaction counter, a work counter, a computer station for drivers, and a private office.

The space where current holding cells are is not usable office space. It will be used as a work room, a tax preparation room, and an elections preparation room. The cells will be demolished. The stainless toilet and sink combination as well as the cell doors will be utilized in the new facility.

Discussion was held about separation and sinking in the back of the existing courthouse. The Court feels this should be investigated due to the amount of money being invested in this project. Meg explained there is enough time between now and the start of the project to monitor and see if the building is moving. Heath explained this can be investigated and addressed if it is a problem.

Meg showed where new walls will be placed in the existing courthouse. The closet in the current County Court office needs to be expanded and brought up to fireproofing standards. A small kitchenette will be placed in the back of the existing courthouse for coffee and public access. A small space exists at the mouth of the link in the existing courthouse. This space could be used for display cases, lounge chairs, or public lounge space. The elevation of the existing building is 23 inches higher than the elevation of the new facility. The goal is to set the new building as low as possible according to code so it does not overshadow the existing facility. The buildings will be 23 feet apart, and the ramp will slope down but will still be ADA accessible and include railings.

Plans for the second floor of the existing courthouse show not many walls needing to be moved. The less structural work done, the more money can be saved for other aspects of the project. The existing courtroom will remain the same as in plan four with some minor tweaks. In the new facility, a modest judge's bench, witness, and clerk space will be included, as well as a space for storage and a ramp. The waiting area remains the same. Skylights have been added in the plan, though they can be removed if they end up giving no value to the project. One defendant meeting room was included and Prevention was placed upstairs. The Prevention office will be around 10 feet by 13 feet.

The plan accommodates for the District Attorney's space. The public assess stairs have moved over and made smaller to allow for more room in the office. The transaction counter has been moved to a more public space so the office manager can help people but still has a private workspace. The juvenile and victim's advocate spaces will be smaller than they currently are, but this should not be an issue after paper consolidation and transferring documents to digital storage. The planning team is encouraging all departments to start purging and consolidating paperwork as soon as possible, as creating space for paperwork that can be digitized or eliminated did not seem the best use of project funds. Circuit Court was made smaller to give more room to the District Attorney's space. A work table is planned for the space to give an area for trial prep, meeting space, or extra work space. The juvenile and victim's advocate offices are around 8.5 feet by 13.5 feet.

Discussion was held about the placement of the Information Technology (IT) closet.

Three restrooms will be included in the new facility. The jury room will have a dedicated restroom. The jury room will be available for meetings or conferences when no trial is in progress. Appropriate access controls and signage will be used when jury is in session. The room will be approximately 14 feet by 21 feet. Functions like the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council can utilize this space. Jury assembly placement possibilities were discussed.

Technology needs for the conference rooms were discussed.

The original plan broke up the existing courtroom space into several smaller spaces. A new layout was developed for County Court. In the new plan, the courtroom is left intact and a County Court Administration space has been created where the Justice Court office currently is. The space includes a private judge's office, computer jump-on stations for commissioners, a waiting area, and an administrative assistant desk space. Storage will be moved to the room behind the courtroom. The current jury room will be used as an executive session meeting room where the Court can meet confidentially without having to ask the public to step out of the courtroom. The courtroom will be set up with movable tables and chairs so the room can be used for many functions.

The judge's bench and rail in the existing courtroom are not original or historic, and discussion was held about the possibility of keeping or relocating both. The bench is not ADA accessible. The bar could possibly be relocated to the hearings room in the new facility. One suggestion was to keep the rail in the existing courtroom but to push it back, allowing for a large meeting space and a small reception area. The Court felt that because the function of the room will change and will no longer be a courtroom, the rail is not an efficient use of space if kept to divide the room. Removing the rail completely provides for the most flexibility. The courtroom space can be made into smaller offices in the future if the growth space is needed. If this happens in the future, County Court can meet in the Justice Court hearings room. The Justice Court hearings room has been designed with this possibility in mind. Creating flex space in the existing building is much cheaper than creating it in the new facility. Discussion was held around repurposing existing materials.

Including a space for a stacked washer and dryer for the Building Maintenance Technician was discussed. The current IT closet could be used to store the appliances as well as cleaning supplies.

The entry to the new building will be modest. The entrance to the existing courtroom has three steps, putting the finished floor higher than the site. Setting the new building 23 inches lower allows for an ADA accessible walkway. The main entry to the existing building will not be changed. The new building will be set back so the cupola and tower become the prominent features.

A landscape architect looked at the site. The plan is to gently regrade the slope so it can be easily mowed. A sidewalk will be placed and egress from the new building towards the street will be included. Employee parking and entrance to the building were discussed. The back of the new building will sit several feet into the ground. A ramp will need to be installed to allow access through the back, as it is important to keep ADA access to both

buildings at employee entrances. Due to the elevation difference, drainage around the entrance of the new building will need to be high quality. A sprinkler room with exterior access is required by fire code and will be included in the new facility. The landscaping will be continued around the building. The project must allocate a certain percentage of funds to art, and one possibility is to somehow include art in the landscaping. The landscape architect is trying to save the trees in the front lawn, but the trees on the side need to be removed. The time capsule and flag will remain where they are. The path to the new building requires the benches be removed. ADA access to the existing courthouse will be provided through the link between the old and new building. Employee parking was briefly discussed.

In the interest of consolidating space and using it efficiently, the Planning Department and Sherman County Assessor were combined to share a space. All previous plans had space for a future Planning Department. The Steering Committee feels it is important to plan space for the Planning Department even if the move does not happen immediately. The Court agreed the planner and assessor should be in the same building to provide the best service to the community. The combined department would be where the District Attorney, Prevention, and Juvenile Department offices currently are, and will allow for efficient use of space without ripping down any walls. The space would feature community computer access, an appraiser office, future Planning Department office, future assessor office, a transaction counter, and space for laying out maps, the plotter, and all equipment. The Court agreed the planner and assessor need to be in the same building but do not necessarily need to share the same department/office space.

The size of the justice building is approximately 15,100 square feet. This number will fluctuate as wall thickness and insulation are determined. A custodian closet is planned for the second floor but not for the first. A maintenance/controls room is also accounted for. A fire door is not required to be placed in the link between the two buildings, though sprinklers will need to be installed in both buildings.

Meg presented a slideshow with draft images of all sides of the exterior of the new facility. The design is complementary to the existing courthouse but still provides separation between old and new. A full view of the courthouse tower will be seen from the intersection of 4th and Court Street. The link will minimally impact the courthouse and will likely be made of metal and glass. The color of the brick on the exterior of the new building has not been chosen yet. The sign above the entry will mimic the sign above the entry on the existing building. The entry will be set back a bit and will have a vestibule leading to the inside of the building. The grade of the site will be modified so the new building is set lower than the existing building. The new building is designed symmetrically to complement the asymmetry of the existing building. The roof will be flat to avoid overshadowing the existing building and to allow for a place to put mechanical equipment and solar panels.

Discussion was held around the possibility of the cupola. Knowing the weight and cost of the cupola is necessary before collaborating with the structural engineer. New steel footings may have to be installed to give the cupola extra support against wind.

If the schematic design is approved, the next phase of the project is for Hennebery to work to get structural, landscape, civil, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing narratives. Hennebery will use these narratives to create a project package, which will be given to Sherman County Court and Kirby Nagelhout Construction. Kirby Nagelhout will use this narrative to create a price package, which will be the first round of cost estimates for the project. This price package and refined schematic design will be presented to the Court on May 18. If the budget is over target at that time, the Court and Courthouse Facility Advisory Committee can discuss the next steps to take.

Discussion was held about minor modifications to possibly be made to the interior of the existing building. Heath will meet with the Energy Trust of Oregon to look into the process of energy upgrading and to investigate the possibility of incentives. The interior of the existing courtroom was discussed including the possibility of

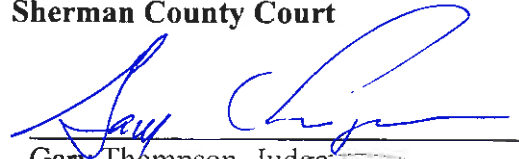
moving ceilings and mechanical systems. The focus will be on pricing out projects that must be done and then exploring the possibility of additional projects. Technology in the courtrooms will be addressed in later plans.

A public open house has been planned tentatively for June 2nd. The open house will likely be held in the early evening. Hennebery will present draft renderings of the exterior of the courthouse as well as have draft floor plans available for citizens to look at.


The current project schedule shows permitting beginning in November of 2016. Depending on the speed of permitting, ground breaking for the project could begin as early as the beginning of 2017. Demolition of the existing Weed Department building will be done prior to ground breaking. Before demolition, the building will need to be documented according to State Historic Preservation Office requirements. Dumpster and recycling placement was discussed along with parking. The Court is interested in the benefit of solar power. Energy savings possibilities were discussed regarding solar panels.

Being no further business before the Court, the meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m.


Sherman County Court



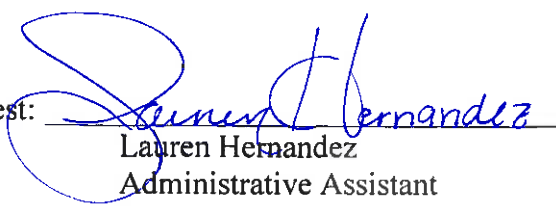
Gary Thompson, Judge



Mike Smith, Commissioner



Tom McCoy, Commissioner

Attest: 
Lauren Hernandez
Administrative Assistant