Utilities & City Owned Facilities Committee Meeting

attendees

Ron Dill City Manager, City of Ft Thomas
Chief Mark Bailey Fire Department, City of Ft Thomas
David Cameron City Council, City of Ft Thomas
Will Weber Economic Director, Kenton Co
Joe Ewald Director of Finance, City of Ft Thomas
Tom Fernandez Resident
Adam Reis Resident
Mitch Eberenz Duke Energy / Resident
Jerry Noran Boone Co. Building Dept / Resident
Frank Twehues CT Consultants
Emily Bills CT Consultants

discussion items:

- The meeting began with a review of the Mess Hall findings (Existing Uses/Opportunities/Challenges):
  
  > Desire for the Mess Hall to continue to support more ‘Passive’ uses.
  
  > Ron reported the Mess Hall has, on average, 73 rentals per year.
  
  > It was noted there is a ‘guest’ expectation of front door parking. How can we address this need?
  
  > Idea of adding outdoor patio space was well received. The west end of the building is often used for ceremonies and outdoor functions. Going forward, look to dress east entrance for accessibility and guest parking. More user friendly.
  
  > Review of expectations of final deliverables: Chapter summaries, Goals & Objectives, Sub chapters with diagrammatic exhibits to graphically support narrative (similar to handout of Mess Hall created by CT), Meeting minutes, and SWOT recommendations. From these findings, projects will be prioritized and then analyzed from a cost perspective in terms of capital investment and operational expense to determine how to best move forward. See attached for example.

- Existing Uses & Condition:
> Gymnasium Existing Uses include: Basketball, Volleyball, Archery, Gymnastics, cheerleading, walkers, weightlifting (not as often as in the past as equipment is becoming worn and obsolete), Tiny Tots program, and Winter Senior Games. Practice only – no formal competition sports.

> Concessions are not permitted on court. Building has a vending machine in main entry that is well used.

> Spectator viewing areas are limited. Few bleachers, but what they have is underused. Not typically used as a ‘spectator’ gym though consideration could be given to mom’s who drop-off children for various programs.

> Entire Facility is a Registered Red Cross Shelter and they would like to maintain this option. There is a mobile generator.

> Lower Level existing uses include: Meeting spaces, Party Rentals, Lego Build after-school programs, Dances, Senior Group meetings, Recreation Office space, Church meetings and Teeter Tots programming.

> The Ft Thomas Property Maintenance Department uses space for a wood working shop, material storage and workshop.

> The large meeting space also doubles as a Green Room during special events. There is a small coffee bar in the back of the room with water and a refrigerator that is used during meetings and festival ‘meet n greets’.

> During the summer there is a children’s program that uses gym and classroom space as well as programming throughout Tower Park.

> Concerns include noise, especially when the basketball courts are in use, and ceiling height. Column bay spacing is 12'-0” +/- on center. Ron mentioned he may have access to floor plans for CT’s use. Accessibility (ADA) is limited and the property boundary is tight.

> The team suggested reaching out to Karen who was not able to attend the meeting to gather her input into potential school uses.

> The Men’s showers are not used and there is not a need for lockers other than maybe short term lockable cubbies near Gym.

> The Armory ‘front door’ is considered the Tower Park elevation. There is a desire for the entrance to be enhanced and more welcoming (awning etc). The historic entrance off South Ft Thomas Ave is limited to emergency exit use and City employee access only.
There is a strong need for security and line-of-sight considerations.

There is a need for more restrooms as well as air conditioning and gym floor repair.

- **Summary of Discussion (Existing Uses / Strengths / Limitations / Opportunities):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing Uses</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gymnasium</td>
<td>Location linking Ft Thomas Ave to Tower Park</td>
<td>Acoustics</td>
<td>Makerspace/Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness Classes</td>
<td>Historic Property</td>
<td>Vertical circulation</td>
<td>Continue Gym Use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red Cross Shelter</td>
<td>Size</td>
<td>Sense of Arrival (not family friendly)</td>
<td>Continue Red Cross Shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Room</td>
<td>City Owned</td>
<td>Limited adjacent land</td>
<td>Enhance viewer experience for basketball games</td>
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<tr>
<td>After School Program</td>
<td>Proven history of desired location for fitness/recreation use</td>
<td>No central air</td>
<td>Target programming for Tweens and Seniors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daycare</td>
<td></td>
<td>General need for building repair (interior/exterior) including gym floor, water damage, paint</td>
<td>Enhanced Vending</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teen Center/Game Room</td>
<td></td>
<td>Compartmentalized spaces</td>
<td>Sandwich/Ice Cream Shop with connection to exterior/Tower Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Maint Shop &amp; Storage</td>
<td></td>
<td>Limited line of sight (security concern)</td>
<td>Additional City office space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Event Support</td>
<td></td>
<td>Size</td>
<td>Enhanced Multi-purpose/Flex meeting space with full A/V</td>
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<td>City Recreation Dept Offices</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower level ceiling height</td>
<td>Commercial kitchen for rental and to serve special events</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fit &amp; finish of public facing spaces</td>
<td>Leasable flex space</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Under staffed</td>
<td>Reconfigure lower level for better efficiency</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Limited ADA Accessibility</td>
<td>Improved public entrance (family friendly)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Column spacing on lower level limit</td>
<td>Continue Daycare offering</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Building is land-locked</td>
<td>Improved City Recreation Dept Offices</td>
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- **Overwhelming Response:**
  
  > With the long history of the Armory being a main activity and athletic/entertainment, venue there is a desire to continue with more ‘Dynamic/Active’ uses, rather than ‘Passive’, in the future.

- **Action Items:**
  
  > Review Red Cross guidelines for shelter requirements.
  > Ron to provide CT with floor plans/documents for Armory Building if available
  > Review Ft Thomas Historic District Guidelines
  > Touch base with Karen Cheser on input for potential uses to benefit school
  > Bring copies of Tower Park map to next meeting for reference

- **Next Meeting:** TBD

The notes above reflect our best understanding of the conversations during the input meeting. If the above differs from your understanding, please kindly advise.

Respectfully submitted by,

Emily J. Bills  
CT Consultants, Inc.

Attachments:  
FT Mess Hall Study Plan 18_0320.pdf  
FT Mess Hall Study Site 18_0320.pdf