

**Oak Park Facility Review Committee
February 21, 2024 - Meeting Minutes
Village Hall- Council Chambers Room 201, 6:30PM**

A recording of this meeting is available on the Village of Oak Park Website.

1. **Call to Order**: Co-chair Lueck called the meeting to order at 6:33PM beginning with roll call.

Roll Call: A quorum was present.

Present: Co-chair Colette Lueck, Co-chair Daniel Roush, Lou Garapolo, Dana Wright, Jon Hale, Tom Bassett-Dilley, Jim Madigan, Ade Onayemi, Rebecca Paulsen, Judy Greffin, Marc Blesoff, and Stephen Morales

Missed Roll Call: Gary Arnold

Absent: Pastor Kathy Nolte, Thomas Ptacek, and Greg Kolar

Village Staff: Robert Sproule, Erin Duffy, and Susie Trexler

Johnson Lasky Kindelin Architects: Meg Kindelin, Katie McNamee, Kelsey Kuehn, and Kara Johnston

2. **Agenda Approval** - Motion by Member Hale, Seconded by Member Bassett-Dilley. A voice vote was taken and the Agenda was approved unanimously as submitted.
3. **Approval of Minutes**- Co-chair Lueck informed the Committee that the meeting minutes for January 17, 2024 and February 21, 2024, would be approved at the March 13, 2024, meeting.
4. **New Business**:
 - a. JLK Presentation: Program Analysis and Three Conceptual Design Options

Co-chair Lueck provides brief introduction for JLK's presentation of Phase II (Submittal II) highlighting that JLK has included the goals identified by the Committee in their report. She mentions that across all three schemes there are issues that are treated the same and rather than spending time going through each plan in depth, the co-chairs have asked JLK to focus on the differences between all three schemes.

Meg Kindelin reminds the Committee, as part of her introduction to the presentation, that JLK is undertaking a feasibility study. JLK's investigation has been an inquiry into possibility. JLK believes that some parts of the schemes do not work, but felt the need to present them, anyway, in an effort to show that all ideas were explored even those with negative results.

Meg Kindelin gives a brief recap from the January 17th Facility Review Committee meeting by reminding the Committee that the First Floor and Mezzanine levels of the Village Hall facility

carry the most significance and as such are labeled primary and secondary zones. While the lower level was labeled a tertiary zone because it carries less significance, as it lacks the character defining features found in other parts of the building; therefore, providing flexibility in terms of future modifications. Schemes two and three take the site plan into consideration and explore different options for drop off and navigating the South entrance.

Kara Johnston, JLK Architects, discusses use zones throughout the existing building. JLK observed that the existing building contains the following constraints:

- Private offices, workstations, circulation, and a courtyard
- Current access and security
 - Historically, the building could be accessed from Madison Avenue, the parking lot, and Council Chambers entrance; however, that has been adjusted to a single point of access and security at the South entrance from the parking lot.
- Heavy sound transference between the first floor and mezzanine levels
- Accessibility for all between the public entrance and council chambers
- Circulation between public versus staff areas
- Lower level conditions including the lack of natural light
- Lack of flexibility in the Council Chambers
- Security concerns in the Council Chambers due to one point of ingress/egress
- Limited accessibility in the Council Chambers

Katie McNamee, JLK Architects, presents the program analysis utilizing the space program provided by FGM Architects and department adjacencies provided by Village staff. JLK provided the disclaimer that the space needs, depicted in the space program provided by FGM Architects, are theoretical and are meant for a future new construction building. This program provides a baseline with guidelines for workstation, office, and department space needs. While analyzing the space program, JLK observed the following:

- There is a large discrepancy between existing space versus the requested amount
- Building systems and maintenance spaces are considerably smaller due to the size and efficiency of modern mechanical equipment
- The Law Department requested the largest increase in space needs overall
- IT also saw a large increase in space needs due to modern day server rooms that did not exist when the building was constructed in 1975
- Space for a future department to account for space for room to grow- approx. 400 sq. ft.

McNamee further comments on workstation space allotments, as identified in the space program by FGM. The standard size of a workstation is 8 feet by 8 feet in new construction; however, due to the constraints of the existing Village Hall facility, workstations will need to be smaller at approximately 6 feet by 6 feet which is still larger than the current workstations.

JLK identified key takeaways from on site observations, as follows:

- The site plan does not work well for dropped off visitors
- The courtyard is not as active as it could be
- There is not a great way to circulate the flow of visitors through the private work areas to public spaces
- Departments that work with sensitive information do not have much privacy and due to sound transference, their conversations can be heard in other areas of Village Hall
- Storage needs are not being met
- Council Chambers accessibility and security challenges
- Police Department conditions

Member Blesoff comments that the demographics of the public visitors and workforce in the building is going to be different in 25 years than it is today and he has concerns about whether that key information was factored into JLK's analysis of the building. Katie McNamee acknowledges that certain facts about how work will change have been addressed as part of their analysis and can be highlighted as JLK moves through the presentation of the schemes. For example, the smaller workstation proposed by JLK might be satisfactory because document storage will likely occur digitally in the future versus paper files. She also acknowledges that JLK analyzed potential changes to public facing functions in the future and worked to make these proposed spaces flexible moving forward.

Co-chair Roush asks JLK to clarify that FGM identified, as part of their space needs assessment, the number of workstations required and that JLK is not decreasing the number of workstations but instead adjusting the amount of space allotted to each workstation in order for them to fit within the existing space constraints. Meg Kindelin confirms that assumption and provides further clarity on space needs trends that they are observing with other agencies and further suggests that there is a balancing act between space for people and space for things like paper, etc. Kindelin also suggests that the trend that JLK is observing with other agencies is a uniform office and workstation size across the board. This makes it easier to move people and departments around because all office and workstation sizes are the same providing for the perception of equality. Kindelin also highlights the trend of touchdown and benching spaces to accommodate the workforce of the future that take advantage of hybrid schedules and telecommute opportunities. Being more flexible with space requirements allows for the reuse of the Village Hall facility.

Co-chair Lueck expresses her concerns about Village staff reviewing the three schemes and choosing a scheme based on the location of their department in that scheme. JLK acknowledges that while adjacencies of departments that work together is important from a programming and feasibility perspective, when the report is published for public consumption the bubble diagrams do not need to contain the department information but instead could contain quantities of offices, workstations, and conference/meeting space. This will allow for more conversations regarding the feasibility of the schemes versus the locations of departments.

Kelsey Kuehn, JLK Architects, highlights how character defining features of the Village Hall facility compare to existing design trends in new office/civic building construction. These comparisons include:

- Exposed wood structure- laminated timber, timber framing, and exposed timber structure is popular
- Natural finishes including the clay tile flooring found in Village Hall
- Bands of windows and clear story windows
- Natural light
- Masonry circular windows
- Courtyards- clear glass storefront wrapped around an interior courtyard

JLK took that a step further and reviewed contemporary design trends that could be solutions for challenges within the design of the Village Hall facility. An exhaustive list and pictures are available in both the presentation and the building preservation plan.

Kara Johnston, JLK Architects, suggests that the Climate Ready Oak Park (CROP) plan lays the framework for reviewing the sustainability goals of the project. Historically appropriate changes can then be made to tighten up the envelope of the building including adding insulation. A review of how materials are made, brought to the sight, and utilized will need to be reviewed further in an effort to reduce the carbon footprint. JLK believes that both Net Zero Energy and Net Zero Carbon are feasible for the Village Hall facility.

Meg Kindelin recaps the Committee's goals that were identified in the last two meetings- December 20th and January 17th.

Presentation of the Schemes:

The schemes fall into three main ideas: the first being the most conservative and the third scheme being the most aggressive.

The first scheme's goal was to retain as much of the existing framework of the building as possible. In terms of the site plan, there were no proposed modifications to the parking lot of drop off scenario. This scheme also allowed for certain Police Department activities to remain on the lower level.

The second scheme's goal was to celebrate the entrance to the facility. The site plan includes a small, glass box addition at the South entrance creating a more welcoming feel with a drop off location for visitors. This addition would work as a landing zone at the entrance with clear direction and a visible security checkpoint.

The third scheme was the most aggressive of the three schemes, requires removing the Police Department activities from the building altogether, and utilizes the lower level, in conjunction with a sunken plaza, as the main entry level to the entire building. Everyone enters the building from this level where the public commons and most public facing activities/programming will be

located. Staff will then move through this space to access the remainder of the building. This scheme also includes a modified drop off location.

The designs all have some things in common:

- Sustainable upgrades
 - New MEP, lighting, roof, and insulation
- Skylights and light wells or indirect natural light
- Alterations to the ramp to make it compliant
- Additional elevator shaft to serve the Council Chambers
- Soundproof glass walls/partitions to decrease sound transference

Member Morales requests clarification on the design concept of the skylights. He asks whether the additional skylights would be limited to the lower level or if they would be placed sporadically to allow natural light into the interior floors, as well. Meg Kindelin clarifies that the additional skylights would be in the courtyard and light wells on the adjacent walls predominantly impacting the lower level areas.

Scheme One: Most Conservative of the Three Schemes

- Council Chambers becomes a conference room with flexible seating for general meetings as opposed to Village Board meetings
 - Install raised access flooring in the Council Chambers to accommodate flexible seating and furnishings- allows for preservation of existing furnishings
- Room 101 and the Staff Lounge are combined to become the new Council Chambers allowing for dual purpose to host both the Village Board meetings, as well as, other large gatherings
 - Staff Lounge is relocated to the mezzanine level to take advantage of the natural light and away from public facing spaces
- While trying to avoid traditional office space on the lower level, some overflow of office space and/or workstations was required on the lower level for this scheme
- Group all public facing workstations together in or near the lobby area
- Existing lack of restrooms
 - More can be programmed but it comes at the cost of other space
- Add an elevator to the South entrance lobby to service the lower level, first floor, and mezzanine levels
- Police Department activities remain on the lower level, including the firing range
 - The challenge of the sound transference from the firing range remains
- Does not address site plan, drop off, or parking challenges

Scheme Two:

- Glass box, modern addition to the South entrance to control security and create a welcoming entrance lobby

- Addition allows room for two elevators, restrooms, and informal meeting spaces
 - New visual intrusion may be less desirable to neighbors to the South
- All Police Department activities relocated to a new building
- No traditional office spaces on the lower level
- A large Public Commons space on the lower level available for a variety of community activities (i.e. early voting, coat drive, meet a public official, etc.
- Group all public facing workstations together in or near the lobby area
- Council Chambers is overhauled
 - Additional tube walkway for entry to the space
 - Floors modified
 - Flexible furniture
 - New stairs
- Adjusted site plan to include new drop off scenario at overhauled South entrance

Scheme Three: Most Aggressive of the Three Schemes

- In an effort to minimize visual disruption from a historic preservation standpoint, a sunken plaza is proposed for the South entrance to draw visitors down to the lower level as a point of entry.
- Main lobby on the lower level
- Existing lack of restrooms
 - More can be programmed but it comes at the cost of other space
- All office/workstation functions on the first floor and mezzanine levels
- All Police Department activities relocated to a new building
- A large Public Commons space available on the lower level
- Reduce first floor lobby space due to visitor main entry being relocated to the lower level
 - Group all public facing workstations together in or near this lobby area
- Slightly modify room 101 to accommodate the non-public facing functions of the Public Health Department
 - Maintain the double height space to accommodate the historic integrity of the space
- Council Chambers is overhauled
 - Additional tube walkway for entry to the space
 - Floors modified
 - Flexible furniture
 - New stairs

Member Morales requests direction regarding the consideration of the Police Department relocation. Should the Police Department relocation be considered a negative in terms of evaluating the schemes. Member Bassett-Dilley agrees with this statement and expresses confusion regarding the Police Department move being listed as a con under schemes two and

three. Co-chair Roush clarifies that the document given to JLK for their historic preservation evaluation required that sixty percent of the lower level be maintained for Police Department activities and not considered as part of their evaluation. He further states that JLK is identifying the relocation of the Police Department as a con because they are not meeting the specifications provided to them at the beginning of the evaluation. JLK confirms that statement and expresses the opportunity available if the Police Department is relocated altogether. Member Wright adds that the benefit of the firing range on the lower level is only available part of the time due to the sound transference, and often requires the Village to pay overtime for its utilization on nights and weekends when there is no staff in the building or meetings taking place.

Member Greffin reiterates that the requirements were to keep some Police Department activities on the lower level and utilize the space needs identified by FGM. She expresses her confusion about JLK only adhering to one of those requirements across all three schemes and not the other. Director Sproule clarifies that JLK calls out that they do not meet all of the programming needs identified by FGM in Scheme Three. He says that these requirements were provided in an effort to give boundaries to JLK's evaluation, and that JLK found in order to meet Committee goals these requirements might be impossible. As long as expressed appropriately to the Village Board, Director Sproule does not see a problem with the inability to adhere to the requirements in an effort to meet Committee goals. Co-chair Roush appreciates that the Committee has been give creative options that bend the rules a little bit. JLK reminds the Committee that the goal of the evening is to take any feedback from the group and combine it into one preferred scheme. If the feedback from the group is that some Police Department activities need to remain in the building, then JLK will work that requirement into the preferred scheme.

Member Hale requests clarification on costs. He noted that a cost estimate was provided for Scheme One but not for the other schemes. JLK requests that the Committee allow them more time to vet the cost estimates they received before presenting them in full. A rough idea to consider costs is that scheme one would cost the least and scheme three, being the most intrusive, would cost the most.

Member Hale requests clarification on the revisioning of the Council Chambers in Scheme One and its application across the other two schemes. He is wondering if it would work with the features in the other two schemes. JLK believes it would work with any of the schemes. In an effort to not compromise the historical integrity of the space, JLK points out that the space available in the Council Chambers is finite and unable to be modified to add more space.

Member Bassett-Dilley requests JLK's opinion on the space program provided by FGM and whether those numbers need to be adhered to closely or if there is room to decrease the 35% growth factor. Katie McNamee, JLK Architects, clarifies that the growth factor accommodates for circulation space needed around and between workstations and offices. She reminds the Committee that the space program that FGM created was accounting for new construction and

new walls and mechanical spaces that already exist in the current Village Hall facility. She made the adjustments necessary while programming the existing Village Hall facility to account for these discrepancies in space needs. A grossing factor is more of an industry standard for high level planning purposes that gets flushed out when a project reaches the design phase.

Co-chair Roush expresses his belief that it is not a failure to be unable to meet all of the space needs identified by FGM in the space program. The space needs identified by FGM were meant for a new construction building. These needs may need to be decreased to be able to work within the constraints of the existing building.

Member Bassett-Dilley appreciates the time JLK spent mentioning the embodied energy of the existing building. He believes that outside the architectural significance of the building, the embodied energy is another benefit of preserving the existing building. Member Bassett-Dilley seeks clarification of the modifications proposed to the building envelope, as part of all three schemes, including 3 inches of insulation beneath the roof and double paned windows. He would like the concept of net zero energy defined further to ensure that the building will meet the Climate Ready Oak Park plan. He comments that net zero energy can be very expensive to achieve if issues with the building envelope still exist. JLK says net zero energy with the existing building is feasible; however, it is likely not practical or cost effective. Meg Kindelin comments that the pathway to sustainability, in this case, may be being more prudent with the footprint of offices and workstations.

Co-chair Roush emphasizes the importance of embodied energy. He believes that it would be impossible to say that the Village is meeting the CROP plan, even with a new construction, net zero energy building, if the Village loses all of the embodied energy in the existing Village Hall facility.

Co-chair Lueck redirects the Committee to evaluate the three schemes provided by JLK and provide feedback. In the interest of time, she believes that we need to stick to the task in order to complete the evaluation ahead of the April 9th Village Board meeting.

Member Greffin requests that the basement be referred to as the lower level and that the space still be considered for traditional workstations and offices. Meg Kindelin replies that if framed correctly and modernized to provide natural light, traditional workspace in the basement could be made desirable. Co-chair Lueck includes that to avoid traditional office space on the lower level, the Committee could recommend smaller office and workstation spaces on the other floors to provide the necessary space to keep departments out of the lower level.

Co-chair Lueck redirects the discussion to the differences in Council Chambers between the three schemes presented by JLK. Due to Committee feedback, access and flow into and throughout the building was discussed first. All Committee members reached the consensus that scheme one does not do much, if anything, to tackle the South entrance of the building or accessible circulation throughout the building. JLK confirms that scheme one was designed to retain as much of the existing building as possible.

Since the Committee agreed early on that the South entrance did not provide a welcoming façade nor accessible route into the building, the Committee moved past scheme one to discuss the addition to the South entrance presented in scheme two and the sunken plaza entrance presented in scheme three. Meg Kindelin provides the pros and cons of each entrance scenario. Member Bassett-Dilley makes negative comparisons between the proposed sunken plaza scenario and existing buildings with similar entry schemes- Aon Center and Riverwalk. Meg Kindelin agrees that adding a sunken plaza might just be creating a similar problem that exists at the Madison Avenue entrance.

Member Madigan noticed that in all three schemes the Madison Avenue entrance and parking issues are largely ignored. He has concerns that JLK are not addressing entry to the building at the Madison Avenue entrance, not leaving enough parking, and potentially infringing on the existing green space. Meg Kindelin addresses the confusion regarding the parking lot on the site plan drawings and comments that the full parking lot exists with the same number of parking spots in all three schemes. She mentions that the reason for lack of improvements to the Madison Avenue entrance is due to the number of visitors that arrive to the building by car. Katie McNamee comments that the door could remain functional because, across all of the schemes, a portion of the central lobby remains on the first floor. This would create a security challenge, though.

Co-chair Lueck addresses her concerns about a proposed grand entrance to the building when most visitors are likely arriving to accomplish a simple task such as paying a ticket or applying for a permit. She is concerned that the Village will end up with another plaza that isn't used.

Member Hale believes that it would be a misstep to make an investment into the building without addressing programming or improvements to the entrance off of Madison Avenue. JLK addresses that it is a conscience gesture, from a historic preservation perspective, to avoid grand modifications to the Madison Avenue courtyard. Perhaps there is a way to make slight modifications that bring more traffic to the space. For example, an area to allow for temporary art installations, etc. JLK plans to provide programming opportunities for this courtyard space.

Member Garapolo comments that he believes plazas can be exciting and he is a fan of their architectural significance; however, due to the nature of Village Hall, the sunken plaza installation might make it difficult to decipher where the entrance to the building is. He expresses concerns that bringing everyone to the lower level could prove problematic when they then need to navigate the building vertically to accomplish their tasks. He favors scheme two because it addressed the arrival point, interaction between each of the floors, restrooms, meeting spaces, opportunity for art installations, and security. He believes scheme two accomplishes most of the Committee's goals.

Co-chair Lueck polls the Committee regarding the access and flow characteristics of scheme two and whether they are all in agreement regarding scheme two. It appears that the Committee has coalesced around the access and flow characteristics of scheme two. Member Madigan

agrees with this recommendation as long as it does not mean that the Police Department building ends up at the South end of the property. He believes that would negatively impact the neighborhood. Member Garapolo suggests solutions to the potential Police Department building.

Member Greffin believes that scheme one is in the best interest of the tax payer and suggests solutions, such as improvements to the South entrance, that would make it more desirable and assist in meeting the Committee's goals. She has concerns, from a cost perspective, of relocating the entire Police Department to a new building. Meg Kindelin comments that modifying a historic building can be very expensive and provides examples for where these additive costs come from (i.e. reinforcing floors and ceilings to add a new elevator shaft). She adds that it is much cheaper to put an addition on the side of the building with modern improvements.

Member Morales agrees with the concepts laid out in scheme two but has concerns about traffic patterns in and out of the building during peak times. Meg Kindelin comments that the traffic pattern would likely be the same as the existing entrance with the same number of doors or ingress/egress.

Member Bassett-Dilley likes the idea of the Public Commons proposed on the lower level in schemes two and three but has concerns about its use. If there is a great deal of natural light, from the courtyard, brought into this space it could change the perception of the lower level of the building and the utilization of this space. He is looking for a better illustration or image of the natural light into the lower level and how that affects the exterior of the building. He is interested in visualizing that façade. Refers to comment made by Member Hale regarding modifying the courtyard to be the Council Chambers. Member Bassett-Dilley further provides recommendations to engage the courtyard to improve the lower level.

Member Bassett-Dilley directs the conversation to the relocation of Council Chambers and explores the suggestion of putting Council Chambers in the proposed Public Commons space or in the proposed addition in an effort to avoid the wayfinding challenges of the current Council Chambers space. He suggests that modifications and programming of the current Council Chambers space could make it an adequate conference room.

The Committee has coalesced around relocating Council Chambers, and would like JLK to explore Council Chambers in the modified Room 101, in the Public Commons, and in the entryway addition. Member Garapolo commented that relocating Council Chambers is exciting because it could then take advantage of other proposed improvements throughout the building including increased accessibility. Co-chair Lueck agrees and adds that relocating Council Chambers closer to the entrance to the building could help bolster that welcoming feel the existing building currently lacks.

Member Blesoff has concerns that the Committee is putting the cart before the horse by trying to suggest improvements to the Village Hall building and South entrance before design and location decisions have been made about a new Police Department building. Co-chair Roush

agrees but adds that in order to make the conversation manageable, the Committee has been tasked to assume that the new Police Department building is inevitable and the location is desirable. Co-chair Lueck agrees and adds that the Committee does not know what the future holds for the building and that is why it is imperative that the building be flexible to meet whatever demands lie ahead.

Member Hale comments that the triangular part of this building was always meant to be Council Chambers and really has no function outside of that. He has concerns that by saying Council Chambers no longer works as designed negates historic preservation of the building, as a whole. Meg Kindelin responds that the modifications necessary to make the Council Chambers space accessible for all visitors would already impact the historic preservation and function of the space. She comments further that one of the features of the building outlined in the National Register were its embodied ideals- a spirit of democracy and inclusivity. In order continue to embody those ideals in the building, it is natural for the Council Chambers activities to be relocated to a space that is accessible to all, safe for all, and continues to house a spirit of democracy within the existing building.

Co-chair Lueck closes the discussion by proposing the Committee and JLK further brainstorm ideas for the programming of existing Council Chambers that make sense while remaining respectful of its history. The Committee agrees that Council Chambers does not make sense as an inclusive, public space.

Co-chair Roush provides a summary of the discussion to the Committee as the Committee has coalesced around scheme two with the idea that Council Chambers needs to be relocated somewhere else in the building. He would like to explore three options further for the Council Chambers- the Public Commons, Room 101, or in the addition at the South entrance. Member Onayemi comments that if the project modifies a large portion of the building then existing Council Chambers would need to be brought up to code, anyways. He wanted to make sure the Committee members consider this while brainstorming other locations for Council Chambers. Katie McNamee, JLK Architects, comments that there is a difference between accessibility and the Committee's definition of inclusive.

Meg Kindelin further summarizes next steps and solutions that JLK will explore prior to the March 13th meeting.

5. Other/Old Business:

- a. March 13, 2024 at 6:30PM in Village Hall- Council Chambers RM 201
- b. Village Board Meeting: April 9, 2024 at 7:00PM in Council Chambers

6. Public Comment:

- a. The Committee received one public comment from Paul Harding, FAIA, regarding the proposed space needed for the Police Department. He suggests that a criminal justice architectural consultant should be hired to review the space recommended by FGM. Mr.

Harding believes that the Village will find that the recommended space is much larger than what is actually needed.

1. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:12PM. Motion by Member Blessoff, Seconded by Member Bassett-Dilley. A voice vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned.