

Approved 3/8/23

**TOWN OF WEST TISBURY HOWES HOUSE COUNCIL ON AGING  
MEMO OF BUILDING DESIGN COMMITTEE MEETING NO. 5 – Feb. 15, 2023**

PHASE: Preliminary Design  
PROJECT: Howes House COA Renovations and Additions  
DATE: February 15, 2023  
LOCATION: Town Hall and Zoom  
ATTENDING: Jen Rand, Town Administrator  
Kathy Logue, Town Treasurer  
Bethany Hammond, COA Staff  
Skipper Manter, Chairman, Bldg. Comm.  
James Klingensmith, Bldg. Comm.  
Susan Murphy, Bldg. Comm., Chilmark rep.  
Bernadette Lyons, Bldg. Comm.  
Max Skjoldebrand (Remote)  
Jefrey Dubard (Remote)  
Dan Waters, W.Tisbury Library Foundation  
Rob Hauck, W. Tisbury Library Trustee  
Sean Conley, W. Tisbury Historic District Commission  
Wendy Nierenberg (Remote)  
Michael Josefek, ACG  
John Keenan, K+K Architects  
Antonia Kenny, K+K Architects  
Jerry Thiboutot, K+K Architects (Remote)

The following is a record of the above referenced meeting:

---

**Discussion:**

1. Skipper called meeting to order, a quorum was noted.
2. Previous Meeting Minutes Revisions: Meeting Minutes No. 4 and 4A (with HDC) Feb. 1:
  - a. Revise No. 9 on Meeting Minutes 4A from “Mark M.” to “A member”.
  - b. Skipper did a roll call to approve the Minutes No. 4 and 4A (as revised); unanimously approved.
  - c. Updated Preliminary Design plans from K+K were available to meeting members.
3. Review of history of cost sharing communications with other towns as there was an article in the paper and discussions at other Selectboard meetings that there was not enough conversation between the towns:
  - a. Jen said the communications began last year (June/July) with Chilmark and Aquinnah. Jen sent emails and Chilmark had a Selectboard meeting following, but there was no response to W. Tisbury. There also has been no response from Aquinnah.
  - b. Skipper noted that there is a Chilmark representative on the present COA Building Committee who can communicate. Skipper said that the COA Building Committee

representatives will be meeting with the W. Tisbury Board of Selectmen this afternoon. Following that, there is a meeting scheduled with the Chilmark Selectboard next week on Feb. 21 and a meeting with the Aquinnah Selectboard on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

- c. Skipper reviewed the previous preliminary Design that was presented to Historic and follow up comments and letters which he felt did not give constructive criticism to help move the project forward. He noted that the Town does not have a lot of choices for location and that the first design was very preliminary. There was discussion that sharing designs before they were approved by the committee may not be productive as the plans are changing rapidly in this preliminary design phase.
4. Schedule: Skipper noted that Town Meeting is less than 2 months away and the plans need to be reviewed by a variety of Boards and Committees, as well as discussed with the other towns, so he is very concerned about the schedule.
    - a. Kathy agreed with Skipper's assessment as there were also letters of concern regarding parking and questions regarding the campus concept with the Library. She agrees they should not forge ahead without addressing these issues. She thought that doing a Town wide engagement this spring could discuss the campus concept, parking and other issues. She thinks a pause on the project may make sense.
    - b. Jen agreed with Kathy's concept to "pause" the Design process until the Committee agrees what the direction is and there is more community input. Skipper also agreed, he was concerned about the current response and did not want to proceed until there was more consensus.
    - c. Jen noted there had been a public forum originally scheduled for tomorrow night and she had realized that the project was not ready. The HDC had not approved the plan and she did not want bring a preliminary plan until it was better formed, therefore the public forum was postponed. She wanted to wait for a plan that the HDC would approve before getting public feedback.
  5. Public and Committee feedback:
    - a. Sean C. (HDC) thinks the Design to be presented today is a vast improvement and thinks the process is working.
    - b. Susan M. noted it takes a lot of homework and thinks slowing down to tell the voters that the Committee is listening to them.
    - c. Wendy N. said there was discussion at the last Library meeting. Parking in the Village area is a huge concern, but that was not so much a Howes House issue. She wondered at what point do you get too far to make changes based on public feedback. Jen said it would still be so early so that changes can be made.
    - d. Jeffrey D. noted he appreciated all the effort and asked about the Wells property, said an eminent domain conversation could be discussed.
    - e. Kathy noted that you can refer people to the Town's Website – the Design plans and Meeting Minutes are posted and people can attend the Committee meetings.
    - f. Rob H. said he has read all of the Meeting Minutes, perhaps the process would be facilitated if more stakeholders would participate in the process and he recommended more outreach. Skipper noted there is a HDC representative and a builder on the Committee and they would welcome a Library Trustee. Jen noted that Wendy is receiving notifications.

- g. Bernadette said in earlier discussions it was noted that programs at the Library should be reviewed to avoid overlap. Skipper said a joint meeting between the Building Committee and the Library Trustees would make sense.
  - h. Kathy moved to remove the article for additional funds from the Town Meeting Warrant and to have a “pause” in the design process (but not in the project). The motion was unanimously approved.
6. Building Design Review (Preliminary Plans dated: Feb. 14, 2023):
- a. West Elevation (State Road): existing windows and the door that were in areas to be reworked were not shown in order to receive input from the HDC and public as to what the best configuration would be.
    - i. The existing door is not being shown, there was discussion since the door is not used and will not be used if a fixed door should remain. Bethany noted it created confusion as people thought it was a entry door and packages occasionally are left there.
    - ii. Jen noted that a fixed door could be marked as not usable by placing planters or (or similar item) in front. Or delete the door and replace with a matching window.
    - iii. Sean noted the overall mass was a bigger issue than the door.
    - iv. Skipper noted that windows should be shown at least as an option, so that the public would not see a blank wall. K+K will make a note on elevations where windows were not shown or yet decided to inform viewers that the layouts were in process.
    - v. John K. stated that the same ridge height of the existing Howes House was used for the ridge height of the addition.
    - vi. There was a question regarding the elevator location and how it vents, Kathy likes a cupola, Sean thought a cupola could be a nice tie with the Library.
    - vii. Jim K. asked for the overall dimension, shown on the floor plans as 82’.
    - viii. There was agreement that some windows and possibly a door be shown to provide a basis for discussion and review with the HDC.
  - b. Site Plan review:
    - i. K+K reviewed the revised Site Plan which retains the single entry/exit to the site adjacent to the Howes House but make the curb cut wider with a painted center “island” to direct traffic flow in and out.
    - ii. The Howes House is relocated to the south and is placed on the same southern edge of the addition to the current building. This allows for a new row of 10 parking spaces on the entry drive into the site and relocates the western drive around the center island over to accommodate the wider footprint of the Howes House.
    - iii. The traffic flow remains circular with a drop-off in front of the Howes House, relocation of the two HC parking spaces and a possible net gain of 2 spaces. The remainder of the parking, center walk and parking for the Library remain as currently exist.
    - iv. The new footprint of the COA is 3303 SF (total 3 floors is 9,909 SF). The existing footprint of the COA is 2,659 (total 3 floors is 6,147 SF).
    - v. The center brick walkway in the parking area is shown extended in front of the Howes House all the way to State Road. The named bricks that would be

affected by the changes to the site would be relocated to the new area of the walkway, there would be consideration regarding exact location and no named bricks would be in the roadway.

- vi. It was noted that the wider entrance and brick walkway opened the view to the Library, Sean thought opening the view was a great idea.

7. Floor Plan Reviews:

a. First Floor Plan:

- i. Reception has been relocated adjacent to Entrance Vestibule.
- ii. Kathy was concerned about the privacy of the Offices if there was a conference area directly outside. K+K noted the open area with files and meeting space can be reconfigured.
- iii. Accessible Restrooms (2 fixtures each) are closer to the front entrance and there can be direct access from inside the Vestibule. Jen noted the Town Hall Restrooms are well used off hours and people have been respectful and appreciative of their availability.  
Jen also noted they have cameras to prevent any issues.
- iv. Skipper noted we need to know more about the nitrogen loading for the building in regards to the site. There was a question if regular or composting toilets would be utilized, presently shown as regular. Jen said she had more information to share regarding site
- v. Wendy asked if two stairs were required - K+K noted yes, required by the building code as two means of egress from the upper and lower floors.

8. Discussion of next steps:

- a. Jen noted that the “pause” doesn’t need to be today, there was agreement that the building plans should be updated with today’s meeting input.
- b. There was agreement that the site survey and nitrogen loading investigation should continue as this needs to be done regardless. There was a motion and unanimous (four members of Committee present) agreement to continue the engineering to include nitrogen loading.

9. Additional comments regarding plans:

a. First Floor Plan:

- i. Skipper thought Reception should be moved to the center of the open area.
- ii. Bethany said night groups use the Office area – would like the office area to be secured. Jen noted a glass wall could be locked.
- iii. Question if the Elevator should be locked, but the large multipurpose spaces are on the second floor and basement. Individual areas could be secured with glass walls or roll down doors.

- b. Skipper thought the Offices were small (9’x10-6”), Jen said her office is that small. It was agreed to add 2’ to the Offices and delete 2’ from the Open Area. K+K will show furniture layouts when areas are agreed upon.

c. Second Floor:

- i. The Multi-Purpose Room has a room divider to provide 2 areas.
- ii. There is a Food Service alcove off of the Second Floor Lobby if there is an event and two individual accessible restrooms nearby.

- iii. Seating along a balcony railing with an opening to the First Floor below to allow a tall glass wall on the south side of the building overlooking the terrace. This will bring daylight into both floors.
    - iv. The balcony area could also have seating, bookshelves or a computer area, etc.
  - d. Basement Plan:
    - i. The Kitchen and Exercise area are open to one another with a divider.
    - ii. Two accessible restrooms and a drinking fountain.
    - iii. The Kitchen has close access to the elevator for moving food carts or trays to the upper floors.
    - iv. There is a large storage area off the Hallway and larger Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing and Fire Protection Room under the original Howes House.
    - v. There was discussion of opening the floor to above to bring the daylighting in from the south wall above. There was concern about the noise and losing Storage, so requires further review.
  - e. Remaining Elevations:
    - i. Jim K. noted that the building is only 2 stories above ground and should be presented as such.
    - ii. Kathy was concerned about noise from the basement and thru the Stairwells. She noted that the Town Hall stairwells echo loudly. K+K to review different materials to absorb the sound.
    - iii. South Elevation – look at different window/door layouts. There will be a solar shade provided at the top of the glass wall.
- iv. John K. noted the patio could be partially a deck that can descend to the patio, this could be set up for events.
- v. Kathy asked if HDC could advise what they will approve on the South Elevation and asked if Sean could ask for guidance. Antonia K. noted if they look at the Site Plan, the South Elevation is now close to the trees on the border with the Art Gallery Field.
- vi. Skipper noted the Building Committee could provide a list of questions for the HDC.
- vii. Solar panels – Sean noted the HDC is in favor of fenestration and solar panels.
- viii. Skipper asked when to pause design? Mike J. thought 3D views with fenestration should be provided. Kathy did not want to see too much time spent further refining the design without input from the Community. This remained open to discussion.
- ix. Financing was discussed. There is another round of funds apparently available soon for Redevelopment costs for Historic Buildings. K+K have a Historic Preservation consultant and will look at this as soon as possible.

10. The meeting was motioned to end, unanimously approved, and was adjourned as per the Chairman Skipper.

Submitted by:  
 Antonia A. Kenny, R.A.  
 KEENAN + KENNY ARCHITECTS, LTD.

cc: Mike Josefek, Don Velozo, ACG