

LEBANON CITY COUNCIL
LMS and Santiam Gymnasiums Work Session Minutes
April 11, 2007 (6:00 p.m.)

Council Present: Mayor Ken Toombs and Councilors Bob Elliott, Floyd Fisher, Tim Fox, Rebecca Grizzle, Ron Miller and Ray Weldon.

Staff Present: City Manager John Hitt, City Attorney Tom McHill, Public Works Director Jim Ruef, Finance Director Casey Cole, Police Chief Mike Healy, Library Director Denice Lee, Building Official Jason Bush and Assistant to the City Manager Ginger Allen.

[A handout entitled: "LMS and Santiam Gymnasiums" was distributed to the Councilors.]

City Manager Hitt introduced Lebanon Building Official Jason Bush and Fletcher Farr Ayote, Inc. Architect Troy Ainsworth. Hitt showed a presentation and briefly discussed the history of the gyms and investigation findings by SAIF, the Insurance Company, Lebanon's Building Official, Boora Architects and Fletcher Farr Ayote, Inc. The presentation also included photos depicting the condition of the buildings. Hitt stated that the Lebanon Fire Marshal orally noted, upon brief inspection, that it was highly likely that he would also require the installation of a full sprinkler system to the buildings.

Mr. Ainsworth stated that it did not seem appropriate to overlap the work previously done by Boora Architects and others, so FFA's comments deal with issues pertinent to the future development of each site for the new Library and Police facilities. He noted that it would require a lot of work to bring these buildings up to code and to make it safe, insurable, and a bona fide public asset.

Regarding the Lebanon Middle School (LMS) gyms, Mr. Ainsworth stated that they feel that this is a prime site for the Library. No formal planning of the site has been done yet, but in looking at the site and because the City is interested in having a civic center campus, it makes sense to look at this site as an option for the Library, since there is a building already there, the site is already developed, and the rest of the block would be able to be used for potential park redevelopment.

The demolition cost for the Academy Square gym would be approximately \$108,000-\$132,000. They recommend that the City take a closer look at this with a demolition contractor to get a more accurate estimate. Another consideration is that these gyms have some elements that appear to be salvageable, but there would be time and labor costs associated with this. The wood flooring and cedar siding from the Academy Square gym may be salvageable and could be used in the new construction or sold.

If the Academy Square gym is left in place, the new Library would likely go on the east half of the block, which means that park land would have to be developed. The connection to the Senior Center and future Police building would also have to be made in some kind of landscape manner because it would be physically removed from that connection.

Mr. Ainsworth reviewed photos of the Academy Square gym and noted that there are signs of water intrusion; in addition, most of the exterior walls have problems.

The primary, most obvious issue with the Santiam gym is that the south wall of the building has been compromised to the interior. Because this wall is in such bad shape, the building will have to be shored up and that entire wall rebuilt. He also expressed concern about how the roof framing is being supported by that wall and questioned whether roof work would need to be done as well.

Regarding site planning issues, this gym (or possibly near there) is located in a prime place for entering and exiting the site. Because this site has limited access points for vehicles, particularly police vehicles, it would be helpful during planning to be able to look at all of the options. He stated that they think that the site could be developed with the gym left in place, but it would not be laid out as efficiently.

The demolition cost for the Santiam gym is estimated at \$43,000-\$53,000. Potential salvage items for this site include the wood ceiling, beams, purlins and tongue and groove wood decking. Mr. Ainsworth stated that, if the Santiam gym is to be saved, it would be nice if the City has a future plan for it.

Councilor Elliott asked what the Santiam gym's renovation cost would be. Mr. Ainsworth answered that they were not asked to look into this. Councilor Miller stated that it would be at least \$.5 million. Police Chief Healy stated that a previous architect gave a quick off-the-cuff estimate of at least \$500,000-\$750,000.

Councilor Elliott asked how long the gyms have been sitting empty. Hitt stated that the City acquired the gyms in early 2003. Public Works Director Ruef added that the gyms were being used for storage when the City acquired them. Mayor Toombs noted that the school and gyms were closed in the late 1990's.

Councilor Fisher asked where the money to demo the buildings would come from. Hitt stated that, according to bond counsel, GO bond funds could be used as part of the site preparation work, if Council chooses to demolish the buildings.

Councilor Fisher stated that it seems as though a lot of people are distressed about losing gym space while the City's population is growing, but he questioned whether the City should be in the gym business. He stated that some of the people who supported saving the gyms have walked away from it and have no desire to continue in that direction. Ruef confirmed for Councilor Fisher that there are no gyms included in the Parks Master Plan. Hitt stated that, in the Academy Square conceptual plan completed a few years ago, there was a provision for construction of a full-size gymnasium/community facility; infrastructure and parking would be in place. There is ample room for this if it is appropriately planned for, but there are other considerations, such as funding and who should own and operate it.

Councilor Grizzle asked if the conceptual plan was completed before or after the money to renovate was going to come from private funds. Hitt stated that it was before; the plan assumed that the LMS gyms would be demolished; the library would be placed where the LMS is and a new gym/community facility was planned to go east of the current gyms. Councilor Grizzle stated that she agrees with Councilor Fisher about whether the City should be in the gym business. She questioned whether we should put money into the gyms versus putting the money

towards other things that are needed. Councilor Miller added that any building funds should be used on City Hall, not a gymnasium. Hitt stated that a previous investigation's estimate, made in the 1990's, put the LMS gyms renovation cost at about \$1.5 million. He stated that, taking the money question off the table, should the City allocate money to fix the LMS gyms or should it go towards the community's needs?

Councilor Elliott asked how the new buildings will be affected by using those funds to demolish the gyms. Hitt stated that, according to current estimates, there is more than adequate money to fully construct the Library and Police Station. Councilor Miller noted that demolition would be an incremental cost to the site preparation.

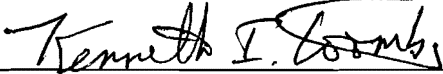
Councilor Fisher stated that he thinks it is great that the plans retain the majority of the grass area on the east side of the property. He added that it is a focal point on that side of town and many people have commented on its beauty; we should preserve that.

Councilor Fox stated that, if a new gym is predicted in the future, building material costs for a new facility should be weighed against restoring the present one. Mayor Toombs stated that the Council has to make a decision whether the City should be in the gym business; although a gym is important, there are some very pressing needs that the City needs to fulfill. There was a brief discussion about how long there has been a lack of available gym space; East Linn Christian School's gym will provide a little relief. Hitt stated that this problem is not unique to our community. Assistant to the City Manager Allen stated that other groups are also looking at this issue. Hitt stated that, if Council decides that this is a direction that we should pursue, it might make more sense to team with the School District, Pool District, or the Boys and Girls Club. Mayor Toombs stated that it would be a great partnership for the City to be involved with the Boys and Girls Club.

Adjourned

Mayor Toombs adjourned the work session at 6:42 p.m.

[Meeting recorded and transcribed by Donna Trippett]



Kenneth I. Toombs, Mayor
Ron Miller, Council President

ATTESTED:



Linda Kaser, City Clerk/Recorder