

MAYOR'S SPECIAL SENIOR CENTER STUDY COMMITTEE

April 3, 2000

10:00 AM

Chairman Shea called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Shea, Alderman Lopez, Ira "Jack" Royer, Irene Robie, Penny Sconsa, Fred O'Connor, Rita O'Connor, Robert MacKenzie, Barbara Vigneault

Messrs: R. Girard, D. Fang, T. Wallace, T. Gatsas, R. Johnson

Chairman Shea addressed item 3 of the agenda:

Report to be presented relative to ideas for a senior center.

Richard Girard stated as you may recall, when I was an alderman, I was not in favor of the idea of having a separate stand-alone senior center because I thought that renovating the Police Station to accommodate the senior center space would be an appropriate solution. However, with the political fortunes of the Police Station looking like it will remain a station for sometime longer, the effort to have a separate senior center is now more financially responsible than I thought it was before. To that end, I went to the CIP public hearing and have spoken with Alderman Shea and Alderman Lopez about the suggestion that I have that I would like to share with everyone here. It involves the current West Side center. I did some research on that piece of property. On the three floors that it has there are over 11,000 square feet. There is just less than 11,100 square feet on the three floors. I know that parking is a concern over that facility. But the properties immediately to the south are for sale. They are on the market at a fairly reasonable price. For your consideration, use that entire facility as a West Side senior center. The library that is currently there could be relocated to another location on the West Side. Specifically, I have suggested the old Rimmon School at the corner of Amory and Dubuque Streets. The entire second floor of that building is vacant. The space has been retrofit and the library could move in and fit up the space, as it would need to in order to use it. There are about thirty six hundred square feet that they are using in the building that they are in now. There

is just over forty two hundred square feet on the Rimmon School. They could actually expand their space and because it is a wide-open space they would probably be able to configure it so that it is more user friendly. Whatever concerns there are over the library can be addressed. For the purposes that you are looking for, and for the purposes of the City I have had a concern that if the West Side Library moves out of that branch and the senior center moves out that the City is going to be stuck with an old vacant building that really will not have much of a use for. We can take a look at the Rimmon School or even the Brown School to know how long these buildings that the City owns stays in a state of disrepair. The West Side Community Center is on a busline. If the property next door is bought, it could have plenty of parking. The City has put a fair amount of money into fixing up that structure. Mr. MacKenzie could give you better numbers but in the last couple of years we put \$65,000 or \$75,000 into getting that clock tower wall fixed and working. There have been several other things ongoing. The only potential drawback is that it is on three floors. If the City were to take that building and make it exclusively a senior center that the handicapped accessibility issues could be readily addressed with elevators and other things that building should have anyway. The three floors could be an advantage and a strength because you could have several different activities happening at different times without them interfering with each other. That is the thought that I wanted to present. I do know the realtor who has the property next door for sale. I do not know if it is a property that he personally owns and has decided to put it on the market or one that he is brokering or selling for somebody else. I would be willing to contact him on behalf of the Committee. You have a unique opportunity to not only provide yourselves with a unique facility, but use an existing facility to better purpose that the City has. Ultimately, it might be one of your more financially responsible solutions. We are talking about renovating and upgrading an existing structure. We are not talking about having to buy land in a hot real estate market. We are not talking about having to build a facility in a very expensive construction market. A variety of needs and purposes could be met by this facility. If you have any questions or if there is anything else you would like me to do, I would be more than happy to look into it for you.

Mr. Royer asked this place is not big enough to begin with even if they renovate it. We have already taken care of the rooms upstairs for people who go up there and play cards. You can only seat seventy people that is all that is allowed in there. When we have parties, we have to rent a place. Four hundred people attend the parties. How are you going to put four hundred people in that building. The only way that could be utilized if you take an add on where the parking lot is now and buy some houses next door for parking.

Ms. Robie asked Mr. Girard about parking space.

Mr. Girard replied that he suggested that the property immediately to the south, which is a multifamily property on a fairly significant parcel of land, would be bought and turned into parking to support the facility.

Ms. Robie stated from speaking around to many people I have been informed that it is less expensive to start from the ground up, to build a facility then to go into an old established building and refurbish it the way we want it. Also, three floors mean elevators. That means more than one elevator, especially if you have handicap people. The maintenance on the elevators per year is a nightmare. The City would be forever trying to repair that facility. Parts of the center need to be taken care of.

Mr. Girard stated the city operates several elevators and I am not aware that there are regular maintenance is any sort of a nightmare.

Chairman Shea stated any concerns that you may have could be submitted to either Mr. MacKenzie or myself and I could bring it back.

Mr. Girard stated the only other thing is that it depends on the cost of building new versus the cost of renovating existing. When you are going to build new and you do not have a piece of land, one of the things that you are going to have to do is acquire the land and at today's market, unless you can get that donated or somehow find a fire that is going to be difficult. That was my suggestion. My understanding of this facility was not one where we would be able to host a banquet for four hundred people. My understanding of this facility was one that could take care of the daily operational needs of the current senior centers so that the operations could be consolidated in one place that was easy for seniors to access and use. If it the purpose to build a banquet hall that is going to hold four hundred people, the Mayor's Senior Citizen luncheon routinely has seven or eight hundred people. I do not think it is practical to build something of that size and what are we going to do with the space for the two or three times a year. You use that amount of space maybe three or four times a year. What would you do with the rest of that space when it was not being used. My understanding was the daily operational needs of the center not what Mr. Royer was speaking about.

Alderman Lopez stated on the West Side, it has some merit to a degree. It has great potential for maybe a West Side Library in that aspect. I firmly believe that as well as my understanding of senior citizens that a first-class senior citizen center is what we need. Saying that we do not have any land is not true. We have approximately four or five acres of land that belong to the City. It is a good location down by the Singer Park. That area could be very well for a first-class senior citizen center. I agree with Mr. Girard that we do not intend to build something that is going to be for four or five hundred people to sit inside and have

a banquet at the senior citizen center. The senior citizen centers that we had visited throughout the State and Massachusetts, none of them seat four or five hundred people. The one we just visited in Danvers, Massachusetts is an excellent model as well as the one in Claremont.

Ms. O'Connor asked are we allowed to add on a hall to that building like where the parking lot is now where this gentleman said that we could buy those two lots for a parking lot. Are we allowed to go out into the parking lot to add a hall. What we are saying is that we have seventy or eighty people there at bingo twice a week at least. Not including the rest of the people.

Chairman Shea stated that we have an architect here, Tom Wallace, we could use any thoughts and ideas. We are grateful for everyone who is coming and absorbing what they have to say. Probably looking at all possibilities and not closing our eyes to anything. Maybe later on if you wanted to ask that question of the architect, that would be fine.

Alderman Lopez stated as long as we keep it on the forefront that we are going to move forward without all of these obstacles of plans and public hearings. Everybody knows that we want a first-class senior citizen center. If anybody doubts that, we are going to go into a warehouse they have another thought coming to them.

Chairman Shea asked Alderman Gatsas to bring forth his idea.

Alderman Gatsas stated the most important issue is timeframe. My conviction for a senior center is more immediate than down the road. Planning something three-four-five years out is not acceptable. You might not be around to enjoy it but God-willing you will be. It has to be done sooner. There are different avenues that we can approach. The seniors are paying \$58,000 in rent. There are a couple of other departments that would have a problem if we went in and combined them a built a building that is going to save the city some money in rent and put people together and build you a structure. Alderman Lopez is talking about some city property owned land but my feeling for seniors is being on one level is the most important issue. You cannot take 11,000 square feet on three floors and say that you have 11,000 usable square feet. Mr. Girard is trying to fix a problem but when you are done with that you will probably have 8,000 usable square feet. The senior looking for his or her friend wants to go to the third floor and see they are not up there and then stop on the second floor and just missed them because one was walking and one was taking the elevator. You get into a situation that seniors feel much more comfortable and more relaxed in an atmosphere that is open, bright and they can see who is there. Alderman Lopez and I have had conversations about the Singer Park situation. It is a lovely site. Some of the

problems I see is that when you drive down there in the evening there is nothing else around. The security of seniors getting into their cars in the evening and feeling comfortable in the area that they are in. That is not what you want. You looked at a center in Danvers Massachusetts. It was in a residential neighborhood off of Route 114; it was well traveled and well lit. That is what seniors are going to feel. If you put it in an area that is a little bit different you need to get into an access situation that is well lit, a lot of space so that they feel comfortable. We have to make a commitment to this as a Board that we need to do it without increasing the tax dollars within the next six months. Have an appropriate plan, get it done. Either build it or renovate something that is a first-class senior citizen center. It has to be done immediately. It is not something that you can afford to wait on. We should not wait. When you look at grandmothers and grandfathers they are no different than children, you should not be able to say no to them. It should be done immediately and that is a motion that I am going to make tomorrow that we as a Board get this thing done within the next six months and not affect the tax rate. There is enough avenues that we can do it with. We can get you a senior center immediately.

Ms. Robie stated the elderly people do not drive at night. Ninety percent of them do not drive at night. They would have very few activities at night. I do not know of any senior center here in Manchester that has any evening activities. They will go from 9:00 in the morning until 5:00 at night. But when the curtain goes down on the night, they do not drive. We do not have to worry about the uncertainty of driving down into that wooded area. I know that it will be well lit.

Mr. Royer stated the only time that there will be any driving at night would be when we go on a trip out of town where we leave our cars parked there and we get in around 7:00 or 8:00 at night to pick up our cars. That is the only time. Other than that there is no activities at night.

Alderman Gatsas asked if you had a center that was a little bit more convenient for evening process that maybe people would participate in it.

Ms. Robie replied in the negative. Seniors do not go out at night.

Ms. Vigneault stated the number one issue for a senior center is accessibility. People are going to drive, walk and take the bus. Those three modes of transportation are going to be very important. We need to look at lighting. It has to be well lit in whatever area it is because in the dark that is an issue of crime. The programming in the evening with the trips, we need to look at that because people are coming back at night and being transported or driving themselves. Because of eyesight in later years, people have a hard time with night vision. Some of the people do not drive at night. We try to make arrangements for those

folks who cannot drive to have family members pick them up. For those people who are able to get out and have family members drive them we need to look at in the future maybe classes for seniors or seminars can be held at night. We do not have to focus on the present, it is important to look at the future. The numbers of seniors are growing. The numbers in the programming is constantly changing and we need to look at that too. The facility needs to be futuristic and not just for the present. Accommodating large groups having functions is important because of the numbers of seniors of growing and wanting to partake of the programming. It has been difficult. You have to look at those large function groups because right now people are being denied when they do want to go because there just is not enough room. It is difficult to say no. We need to look at planning for the numbers in the future.

Chairman Shea asked as far as a limited timeframe in terms of the type of facility. It has been mentioned about it not affecting the tax base and the expenditure. How do you view it. Either one of you as an architect is a six-month period a limited time to devise and to get everything in order.

Mr. Wallace replied that would be a very aggressive schedule to start construction. You have to really move forward quickly. We are still talking about what things are going to go into the building, where the site is located. The schedule that we have for the feasibility study is going to go for two or three months anyway. Once we get to that point, even if the money is there, we have a set budget to work to. We have to go through the detail design and get bids.

Mr. MacKenzie stated it all comes down to what site is selected. If it is a site that is going to have to be acquired we may be going through friendly negotiations or we might have to consider eminent domain if it is not public property. It does take time if there it is not a public site. Six months is going to be a very aggressive schedule. It is more realistic to say that from today, if this group reaches consensus on how they want to move forward, and if the Board was going to approving monies for it, realistically it would be about ten months before we can start construction. Just looking at how things work and all the regulations that we have to go through, not just City regulations, there are Federal and State regulations that we comply with to make this happen. If it was going to be rehabilitation of a relatively small building that could happen more quickly. But I do sense that the group is looking to see if there is an option for new construction and that does take some time.

Chairman Shea stated that he does not want to limit our concern as far as what we want. I am certain that it would support the tax base in the City or try to keep the taxes down. We should not be penny wise and pound foolish in terms of trying to get something across within the next month or two and then wind up later on

saying this is not serving the needs of the community that we want to. Anyone is welcome to make thoughts and ideas.

Alderman Lopez stated that he agrees to an extent. I also look at it as practical with common sense. It is a problem that we do not have a first-class senior citizen center. We know that we have land and we have to make a decision on it. We do not have to pay for it because it is city land. We talk about Singer Park and we give direction to the people to start moving forward. I agree with Alderman Gatsas in reference to the six-month aspect of it and I agree with Mr. MacKenzie that it might be ten months. At least we want to make sure that the direction of whoever is going to do this is going to move fast in doing it if that is the final vote from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. It would be a waste of time of doing all of these other things when we have the problem and we know how to solve the problem. The problem with City government is that we do so many things on a long-range scale that we do not get to the meat of it and the end result is the first results and first solution that was thought about.

Chairman Shea stated that he does not think that anyone is concerned about moving forward. We do not want to limit the amount of money that we going to spend in building a senior center.

Alderman Gatsas stated that he never brought up money in what we are going to spend. I would not be in favor of anything that was not first-class. I have only been participating in City government for three months. When I give a six-month timeframe and you said to me tomorrow this is the private money and we want to build a building with "x" amount of square footage I could bring you a plan in six months and say here it is and here is your cost and we are done. At some point, I would expect public money to work as well as private money. We need to put some parameters because the senior center has been discussed for an awful long time.

Chairman Shea stated that it just started to come about when Irene Robie brought it up about a year ago at the hearing.

Alderman Gatsas stated that it had to have been longer than that, we had space on the West Side that they are in. How long have you been leasing it.

Ms. Robie stated the problem was as an individual who did not know how to go about it. I would talk with an alderman, a commissioner, the mayor and they would all say that they did not realize that so let's look into it. I did know enough to go forward and gather up a group and make it all public.

Alderman Gatsas stated my parameter of six months is to make a commitment from the Board that we are going to start. Whether that takes six months or eight months to get a plan in place, that is another thing. We need to do some consolidation from the City point of view that we have three or four different agencies that are paying rent. If we are going to build a building, then we are going to add another 10,000 feet to house some of the agencies that are paying rent. It is going to be a give and take. That carries the burden. If they are paying \$80,000 that is one way that we are going to keep the tax rate down.

Mr. Royer stated we have been talking about a senior center since 1986. We became a commission and found out what we were paying for rent and there is no parking. We started looking around then. We mentioned Blessed Sacrament School at that time. We mentioned the Hook and Ladder that was over here. On Lowell Street where Public Service was and Hesser College took over. It has something that has come to light now since Irene Robie has been pushing it but when we found out what the rent was there, nobody has been able to go to the place. That is when we started looking for different places but it just never materialized.

Mr. O'Connor stated on Hackett Hill Road and Route 3A, there is a large piece of virgin level land. The new senior center built right across the street from that. It is accessible, on a busline and it is virgin land. You go in and clean it out, save some trees for shade if you want. It would be an ideal place. It is not in the center of the City but neither is Singer Park. It is available I am sure. It might be something to look into.

Mrs. O'Connor stated we need the land. If we get the land then we can go with the other plans from there. We can plan the inside but we need the land first. That is what is stopping us, either the land or a building. That is number one, is to find out where we are going to start.

Chairman Shea stated that is the reason we have an architect and a person that is going to be working with him to find possible locations for a senior center. It could be that we do not need a particular person because obviously there is a judgment that maybe the Singer Park is the ideal place. However, we should not exclude others simply because who knows exactly what the whole parameters might be for that. Mr. MacKenzie, as the Planning Director, would tend to agree with that.

Mr. MacKenzie stated that he has talked about this before. If we jump to conclusions and say there is only one site, typically projects that have done that have faltered because there is always questions later on down the line why did you not look at this site or the other site. This group has the opportunity right now

fairly quickly to say here are all of the options and here is what we want. At some point, the architect will be asking what are the main parameters. If parking and one level are the main parameters, that has to come out. If we have eight sites and we compare them with all of the data, and we look at all the potential costs, ultimately that can be much more supported. When the recommendation comes out and that is only about eight weeks away.

Alderman Gatsas stated that is the big problem with the public life. If I brought ten locations and put them on this table, there are twelve of you; I would probably get ten different opinions and two people abstaining. The correct way of doing it is to either hire the architect to go out and find ten sites and bring them to you or five sites, either existing buildings or land or hire somebody else to do that. If we go through the process and you could come here and meet for the next ten weeks and you will continue to be just having discourse and not having a location. Either we engage somebody to go find the sites and bring them to this committee, hear the pros and cons and let you folks decide. That is the reason I say the six-month timetable that we have a location either building or land to move forward. We could be here for six months talking about the same issues.

Chairman Shea stated that is exactly what we have.

Alderman Gatsas asked who is looking for sites, this whole committee.

Mr. Wallace replied we have an agreement with the City for the services. They are to identify potential sites. Go through that; try to shortlist it down to four in some detail. Then present alternatives for those four different sites. The committee will select one from the four that will be suggested.

Alderman Gatsas asked are you looking at existing buildings also or just land. Have you come up with anything.

Mr. Wallace replied we have just started.

Chairman Shea asked would you identify who is doing that.

Mr. Wallace replied we have working with us, as a consultant is REI Service Corporation. They are located on the corner of Elm and North Streets.

Alderman Gatsas stated knowing Allen Clark that if you put him to a mission by the time you meet next week he will have the appropriate sites for you.

Ms. Robie stated that she is adamant in having to share the senior center with another agency for the simple reason that we would be pushed into a corner. The

one thing that I have been hanging onto is that piece of property down by the Singer Family Park. However, I have been keeping an eye on that place and I saw a lot of cracked cement around the Singer Family Park clubhouse. I heard through a rumor that they had to dig underneath the clubhouse to put some holding tanks because of excess water. Then I start to doubt whether we could put a building on that piece of property and could we have a second floor. A second floor could be used for storage and it could be used for other agencies provided that we would not be pushed out.

Chairman Shea stated that we are getting ahead of ourselves.

Alderman Gatsas stated you would never be moved out and you would never be shrunk down. You would probably expand to move an agency out because sooner or later I am probably going to be a senior. We are not looking to shrink you down. I am looking to make it a feasible situation for the City so that we do not have to wait three years to worry about bonding and whether it is going to affect the tax rate because you are looking at approximately \$180,000 worth of rent that these other agencies are paying across the City which would easily fund whatever debt service we are looking for.

Mr. Robie stated that would be fine with our committee.

Alderman Lopez asked in analyzing the situation, is there only one piece of land that the City owns that we are looking at which is Singer Park and all of the others we would have to buy.

Mr. MacKenzie replied I have not actually had an opportunity to speak with Tom Wallace. There are a number of sites around the City from parcels that the City now owns at Hackett Hill to other small pieces around the City. We might want to, at staff level, work with them and then bring to you two or three publicly owned sites to balance that off with this group to see what you think.

Alderman Lopez stated all of the senior citizen centers that we have visited. The first-class senior citizen centers run on a basis of two and one half acres.

Mr. Girard asked the committee not to rule out the West Side Community Center. Mrs. O'Connor asked the question if that facility could be expanded. If the neighboring site is taken and turned into parking the current parking lot, it would not be too hard to expand that building behind into the existing parking lot. You could put an awful lot on one floor that is a decent amount of space. In your site selection process, please keep in mind that you could do that. If you were in City Hall three or four years ago, would you ever think that it could have been renovated to be first-class space. Just because you have a building that could use

some work does not mean that it could not be the type of space that you would all be very pleased to be in and it would very functional to your needs. I applaud the desire to consolidate space.

Chairman Shea stated that Ron Johnson has a letter and to come forward.

Mr. Johnson stated that he had sent a letter to Alderman Shea to explain the recreational needs of the seniors. Some seniors for shuffleboard courts, horseshoes, and some other needs have approached us. When you look at the site selection that perhaps you take a site that can also incorporate those recreational needs. Maybe picnic grounds and some other things that would be appropriate for the senior needs. We currently have some shuffleboard courts over at Kalivas Park and that park is being redesigned. The shuffleboard courts have been taken out of the park. The seniors that use those courts right now have been wanting to relocate. They are not comfortable with the site because of security and safety. I had some discussions with them and they felt that perhaps at the new senior center, there could be an area on the outside for shuffleboard courts horseshoes and also incorporate something inside. I would like for you to consider that to see if that can be incorporated into the site selection and also in the new facility.

Alderman Lopez asked if the shuffleboard would be outside or inside, what would you recommend.

Mr. Johnson replied perhaps both. Over at Kalivas Park right now we have about six courts that are outside. When Kalivas Park was renovated back in the 70's it was just after the O'Malley and the Kalivas High Rises were built. Improvements done at the park are catered to the senior needs. The new design is going forward and is bringing it back for an outside pleasure area. In talking with some of the folks, they said that they could use some courts outside during the better weather. There are also some facilities that you can roll out a vinyl court and use it inside if you have a gym area or a large banquet hall.

Ms. Robie asked are there also table shuffleboards.

Mr. Johnson replied over at the park right now there were some chessboards engraved into benches.

Ms. Robie stated that she has been to a social club where they have had the table shuffleboards. They are very popular. Also in the summer, it is great because I see the seniors out there at 8:00 in the morning using that shuffleboard.

Mr. Johnson stated that they thought that they could probably get more people to participate if it was in a better location. As far as being more convenient. A lot of

the seniors who use those courts do not come from those two high rises, the Kalivas and the O'Malley. They are mainly seniors from in and around the City. They thought as a new center went forward, if there was some area left aside for even picnic grounds or outside courts it would help to make a good facility.

Ms. Vigneault stated the recreational needs are important for seniors because that is the attraction in that people can come and enjoy what they want to do and what they need to do for socialization. I want to focus on the importance of keeping the human service issue well to the forefront because for the department that is very important in helping people get connected to the network of social services. Lately, having to use some of the network in trying to maintain life, we never know what is going to happen to us, it is difficult to do these things on your own. To have that support system is very important. You might be using the shuffleboard today and tomorrow you might need some human services to get by. It is important to as well focus on the human service issues. There are so many ideas that the seniors have given us on what they would like to see from swimming pools to Jacuzzis to rehabilitation equipment. Even a canopy lift bus availability so that the bus can drive up and take them on the trips. An airport in the back was also mentioned.

Chairman Shea stated in terms of certain City services that might be incorporated. Maybe people coming in would need some help with a particular problem that concerns people who are aging. It could be related to human services but some department that may be controlled by Welfare of social agencies that could be somewhat incorporated so that people coming in, when they have a concern may be able to get accessibility right away rather than having to go to some other area of the City. They are reluctant to do that simply because they do not have that kind of courage to do it. This is very essential. It is not so much moving all departments into a particular area but anything that may be related. It is better to do that before the fact than trying to create something after. Setting aside a room or an area where there would be accessibility for someone to get that help. These are the things that we have to consider.

Alderman Lopez stated there is so much in that particular area. The basic aspects has to be there first. The foundation has to be there before you grow. For example, some of the senior citizen centers that I have visited are the basic element of the layout of the building and the foundation is there. As they move along, they grow and you have friends for senior citizens at some of these places. Where the director has been able to get grants to get more people involved in this situation as far as help. In Danvers Massachusetts they run three shuttles. Somebody has to go to the hospital; they go and pick them up. All of those things can be envisioned in the future. Until you get there and have the space and the building numbers can happen. You cannot do it where you are at today. I do not

know how long you have existed where you are at but you cannot serve the senior citizens in this City with the facilities that you have. We are on the right track and we have to focus building the building then make it big enough as a first-class center and then all of these things will become the fruit. They will all be there. In Danvers Massachusetts, it is a City of 24,000 people to have 11,335 square feet, a beautiful building. I have a brochure for everyone. I brought only one for the architect and the layout of that particular place. I agree with Alderman Gatsas, as long as we are on the fast track let's eliminate all of this stuff. We know what we want let's move forward.

Chairman Shea agreed with Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez asked Mr. Wallace all of the senior citizen centers that I have seen there is temperature control in every room. There is plenty of parking spaces for an 11,000 square foot there are ninety-five parking spaces to one hundred parking spaces. All of the ones that I have seen have a patio-type atmosphere in the back. Fundraisers do most of that from friends of senior citizens by selling bricks. The Danvers Massachusetts senior center raised a half a million dollars. They built the building and the friends of the senior citizens bought all of the furniture. If you are going to build a new building, new furniture and getting people involved by selling bricks and other fundraisers and other grants. It is amazing that we had talked about this before with Irene Robie and I had the impression that we needed a stage. But all of the directors that I talked with said that they do not want a stage because it is wasted space. If you want to rent a stage for some function. Otherwise, the stage is there and nobody uses it and it becomes a storage area. They all have public access TV so they can plug right in and they have their own senior citizen TV show. That is something that can be worked out with *MediaOne*. All of them work on an amazing number of grants and there are a lot of them out there. A lot of them work in a fundraising aspect, which is memorial funds, and they get a lot of donations through that. I wanted to also give the architect, Tom Wallace, some of the basic rooms that are in these senior citizen centers. Going back to the comment of having a place for four or five hundred people, none of them do. They have a cafeteria, they can go through one hundred and fifty to two hundred people in a room and they do their functions there. The reason for that is that you do not want to have something so big with one hundred and fifty people in because you want to divide your rooms and have the programs such as arts and crafts, have a multipurpose room, a library, a briefing room, have a place where they can take blood pressure test. It seemed to make a lot of sense. In the administrative area, they have a computer room where they teach. They also have the pool table room. They have a 19'x 27' billiard room in Danvers Massachusetts, they said that they should have made it bigger because they have twenty-four tables and forty people want to shoot pool. They do not have a second floor; none of them recommend that.

Ms. Robie stated offices take one floor of the floor.

Alderman Lopez stated I will give you some of these statistics and then I am going to put a packet together for you, Alderman Shea, and all of the aldermen. The booklet I have is the one from Danvers Massachusetts, which is what I will be giving to all of the aldermen.

Chairman Shea stated that Tim Reiniger had given it to him. He is originally from Danvers Massachusetts.

Alderman Lopez stated I did want to give this to the architect and I will get everybody else a copy.

Ms. Robie stated when the time comes to what we want in the inside of that center is going to come under heavy discussion. He mentioned that none of the places that he has been to has a stage. Two of the places that I have gone have a stage. That is because they have a volunteer choreographer that will teach dancing, put on plays. They teach music and put on concerts. They also have line dancing in that room and the teacher is up on the stage so you can see him better. If you have one hundred people dancing, and the teacher is on the same floor you just cannot see him, and you have to copy the person in front of you with all of the mistakes. Our committee would like to see its own free-standing kitchen with a person who will be in charge of that kitchen with two aids and they will cook all of the meals from there. However, there has been talk about having two kitchens, one for the club and one for *St. Joe's Meals on Wheels*. There is going to be a lot of discussion with pros and cons as to what they want inside. There has also been mentioned about a Jacuzzi because everybody has arthritis. When they are exercising and dancing they would like to slide into it. Even I do not agree with my committee and my committee does not agree with me. I am worried that the building will not be able to be put on the river because if it is going to sink it will certainly do so with a second floor. A second floor would be great for Barbara Vigneault to have an office with a window. We do need storage space. If we do not have a basement for storage. If you want to put the other agencies that is fine as long as they are not looking longingly at our space.

Mrs. O'Connor stated that we still need the land to go ahead. We cannot do anything until we know where we are going. The rest of it will fall into place but first comes where are we going. Is it Singer Park or Lakeshore.

Ms. Vigneault stated the feasibility study is important that we feel confident and secure that Tom Wallace's firm will be able to help us with what is out there. And we can feel confident and comfortable with the fact that he will bring back the

information that we need to make the final recommendations about safety and where it is going to be and the best way to go about this. Because the City has a feasibility study and that is important because it is going to reassure our group and also the aldermen about what the best way to go is. We can relax a bit about feeling insecure about what we had to make as decisions right now on that because we need to let some of this unfold with the feasibility study first. Then we can assist with that and then we can all work together as a group to try to give them the best information we can.

Chairman Shea stated we need to give the realtor as well as the architect, some ideas beforehand concerning the particulars because he can select a piece of land but if there are not particulars involved, when he brings back the list he would have eliminated some of them. If there were certain types of essentials that we want in a particular structure then obviously that would be as helpful. Tom Wallace can add anything you want in terms of what you think the realtor might want or need before you get it back to him.

Mr. Wallace stated selecting the site is going to be the most difficult thing that we have to do. Before we can do that, we have to have an idea of how big the building has to be, we do not need to be down to the precise square footage. It will make a difference on what site will accommodate that. We need to; very early on, start focusing on what is going to be in the building. We should plan for some expansion of the building. We have to make sure we do not have a site where we are right up to the boundaries on all sides.

Mr. MacKenzie stated suggested that we have this meeting and Tom Wallace could bring us something in terms of options for use. He might bring us an option for ten thousand square feet and see how many of the things that you talked about today could fit in there. There was a request at the last meeting to give some written comments to Tom Wallace.

Mr. Wallace stated that he has those. Ms. Robie sent those to me.

Mrs. O'Connor stated that the main issue is parking.

Ms. Robie stated that the request was just for what we would like to see in the center at this meeting.

Mrs. O'Connor asked that would involve the site.

Ms. Robie stated that was the reason she was hoping to get the list from Rita O'Connor. It is very important to have your opposed thinking.

Mr. Wallace stated to go through and get an idea of what will fit in ten thousand square feet. Since we have the drawing that was circulated at the last meeting of the one in Claremont because it is roughly ten thousand square feet. The Planning Department was able to get a copy of that floor plan which is what I had put on this board that I have with me today. I have tabulated what spaces they have in there, how big they are and then start to compare it to your list. I saw that there were some spaces missing that you were looking for that were not in the Claremont drawing. There were some questions. One of the things that would be helpful for me would be to start looking at those two things and saying what we do and do not need. We can start on a space program of exactly what needs to be in there.

Mr. Royer stated that some of the rooms would not be needed.

Mr. Wallace stated that it would be helpful to be able to look at several different ones that are already built to get an idea. Sometimes you forget things or you do not think of a combination that is possible.

Alderman Lopez stated the eleven thousand square feet that they have in Danvers Massachusetts serves the senior citizen population of about four thousand people. In the City of Manchester, we have over twenty-two thousand people. By the year 2010 you are going to have a population of thirty-two to thirty-five thousand senior citizens. I agree with the philosophy that Bob MacKenzie has about ten thousand square feet. Personally, we could always say twelve thousand square feet. As long as we have the room for expansion that is the biggest key element. If the funds only take us to ten-thousand square feet, that is fine as long as it is a first-class senior citizen center. The one in Claremont is about ten thousand square feet. I would like to see something around twelve thousand square feet in order to get everything in there. Move forwards in that direction and eliminate all of these other sites that you cannot even do that to. I do not know why we are even looking at them.

Chairman Shea stated history is the best teacher and we know that McLaughlin Middle School is too small. If in fact that the statistics bear out what you are saying then obviously we should look and plan to accommodate the needs of the people that are going to be utilizing a senior center for years to come. Predicate the site in terms of not necessarily an addition on in five or ten years, but making it large enough. There are four thousand people in Danvers Massachusetts that are utilizing a ten thousand square foot space, and we are going to have between thirty and thirty-five thousand seniors. We will have to at least think about a facility that is going to be at least fifteen thousand square feet. Why limit it to ten or twelve thousand.

Mr. O'Connor stated he would not consider taking an old building and renovating and spending the money to do it. Chances are it is not what we want to begin with. It is much more important to get a decent piece of land in an area where it is feasible for everybody concerned. It should be on a busline. To spend the money that way instead of renovating a building that is going to cost just as much as if we started from scratch to begin with. My wife and I have been around on route to the old hospital and that is in an isolated area, there are no buslines there. The building does not look too bad but the buildings around it need to spend some money to either correct them or tear them down and clean it up. The parking lot has to be resurfaced and it is almost as cheap to building a new one. We are going through that where we live now. We are getting quotes on having the parking lots resurfaced. I would rather see a new building to the specifications that we want. Also to have room for expansion in the future. That would be the way to go.

Mr. Fang stated that he supports elderly concerns to the population. This information that I am handing out is a very good article that I got off of the Internet. They talk about what would be in the future population and how we are going to handle the situation. This information later on you can read it. In general, things I support it concern ten thousand square foot and maybe that is the bottom line and then we have to really look into the future. This article mentions the baby boomers within a short period. They would join with us and they are going to be contributors for this project also. Earlier, lots of us have talked about concerns over what we are going to have for this future facility. Maybe we can spend a little more time to talk with the committee members or with our friends or with our children to see what is their proposal down the road. Again if you have some more information when we get together next time and talk about inside of what we really needed and how we can help by looking from different aspects to see what are the important issues we should not miss. This is a space suggestion such as we should look into having areas like the lobby and then recreation areas and administrative areas. Those are going to help us a lot. I would like to ask you to think of a couple of issues. Maybe in the past when we grew up we did not have a chance to be part of the computer users. Nowadays we might not be able to have access to use the computer yet. I have a large family of two brothers and eight sisters and I am the youngest at fifty years old. My eldest sister is just like everybody here. My parents both passed away when they were ninety-five years old. I can see that we can through the threshold to start using computers. All of this information I got over the Internet this weekend. It is an excellent resource. When you mentioned that you need a stage for aerobic dancing to help everybody to exercise. On the Internet they do have all kinds of information. Down the road, if we can provide enough spaces so maybe the local college students can come and help and we can even think that this can be a learning center for the older population. If we look from that aspect, it may be the program requirement for our future facility and give everybody more time to look into it. I was hoping you

would allow me to share some of my thoughts with you at this moment. Alderman Lopez mentioned quality that is definitely something that is our number one priority. How we can accomplish that and the space requirement. That article is to encourage us to look into maybe instead of just thinking as a senior center, maybe we should give this project a different name. Something that is really going to involve most of the people over fifty-five years old. Daily they will use this as like a living room. They will come here to see their friends. If we can have the facilities close by for the people who look one step ahead to see if we can join them with the private sector also within the same building. We do allow certain things to be participated in such as we might have a small post office branch in the building. We can use this as a place that we will be proud of to invite our friends and our grandchildren to come to share with them. The space requirement may be not thinking about what kind of services that we are going to provide. How are we going to encourage all folks, not only the senior citizens, but also the college students. Once we really open up I guarantee you that we will have the best facility in the United States. This is the most important stage if we all try to think and talk to friends and maybe next time when we get together we can put together a wishful thinking list. This is the wishful thinking list and this is reality. Maybe some of you will challenge me and say we do not have that money. Do not worry there are possibilities. We can have fundraising starting right away. I have a list of all of the large companies in the City of Manchester and we can start looking into fundraising from the beginning as you mentioned earlier. We can ask the company to help us to bring their equipment in to give us a course. I see this facility in the future we are going to have lots of special function spaces. We will have multi-function spaces with flexible partitions. We have to look into the future and I can guarantee you that all of my family members are using the Internet. Once you go through that threshold, the virtual reality is a reality. It is in your hands you can come through. That is a different kind of fun things to get into and then we can use that to link the college students to come in and share their experience with the senior citizens but also the senior citizens can help them to understand how they have today. It is all your contribution and all your efforts for the City.

Alderman Lopez asked Tom Wallace about Task #3, Item #5 to evaluate a single senior center versus a separate center. In Task #3 we put that back into Task #1. Am I correct.

Mr. Wallace replied in the affirmative.

Alderman Lopez asked do you have a timeframe for that.

Mr. Wallace replied in the affirmative and stated we are scheduled to finish Task #1 four weeks from today. It will be done the first week in May.

Alderman Lopez stated these are rooms and what Barbara Vigneault and everybody else have to decide what is going to go in. As long as you have the space, you can designate it. Each senior center is different to what the people want.

Mr. Royer asked is this plan is approximately ninety by one hundred sixty-five.

Alderman Lopez replied that it comes to eleven thousand square feet.

Mr. Royer stated that it comes out to more than that.

Alderman Lopez stated that they have storage for some of the space.

Mr. Royer stated but I am adding the different footages together. The length and the width of the building and it comes up to about ninety by one hundred sixty-five in that vicinity. That comes out to thirteen thousand eight hundred and fifty square feet.

Alderman Lopez stated that he was given eleven thousand three hundred thirty-five.

Mr. Wallace asked if there was another building to the left that is not on the copy or another section of the building.

Alderman Lopez replied in the negative. It is all separate one building.

Mr. Wallace stated that the copy was cut off. That one hundred sixty-four goes beyond the edge of the sheet. There is also a notch taken out too.

Alderman Lopez stated are you talking about where the conference room and the director's office are. There is some grassy area there with enough room to expand.

Mr. Wallace stated this is one hundred sixty-four feet and this is probably close to one hundred this way and that gives you sixteen thousand four hundred.

Alderman Lopez stated that the facility is only forty-five minutes away. Even the one in Chelmsford Massachusetts is very good; Irene Robie likes that one.

Ms. Robie stated that she is very fond of Chelmsford especially the multiple room. It has a stage with the drapes. It also has a large sports bar television on a track so that it can be brought to the middle of the stage. Very comfortable chairs on a hardwood floor where people can sit there and either watch television or watch the

stage. These chairs can be pushed over to the side when they have line dancing. The teachers can be up on the stage at the other end of it is a carpeted floor with either eight or ten large round tables where they have their dining. They eat there. Off of that is a freestanding kitchen and they have hired a person who used to run a high school kitchen and she has brought with her two aids. She works seven hours a day and the two aids work four hours. They have very good meals and nutritious. Nothing is fried; everything is baked, boiled or broiled. They have a lot of fruit for desserts. They do not allow tonic in there. They have four different kinds of milk besides the coffee, which is decaffeinated. That is the room that attracted me more than anything else. Another room is as you come in, it really is a classy place, there is a lovely room to the left about the size of this room with two walls of paperback books, it is a library. It has a fireplace in the center, one huge couch, end tables, lamps, a wingback chair in the corner of the table and the lamp. Over on the other side a very lovely desk for a librarian. It just says this is class when you come in. A lot of people do drop in. Another thing that I like about it is as you pass the library, on the right-hand side is a glassed in area with about four desks and that takes up a quarter of the space.

Mr. Royer asked are these facilities owned by the cities.

Ms. Robie replied in the affirmative and stated Chelmsford runs it and they have a very small population. At *PrimeTime* they have ladies who like to make quilts. In order for them to get together to make quilts, they have to start it at home and bring it in and go someplace else and finish it up. They have one room with four sewing machines, two flat long tables where they can cut out their material. They have also a quilting frame where you can put your quilt on and finish it. It is very large and spacious and very active. The tables can also be used if anybody wants to learn knitting or crocheting or anything in the line of sewing. They also have an adult daycare center, a wing of it. I was not impressed because it looked like it was shoved in there, an afterthought. If we do have it, I would like a lot of thought and respect given to that. There is so much parking, there must be one hundred parking spaces. It lacks trees and bushes.

Chairman Shea asked do we want one site or two sites.

Mr. Royer replied we should concentrate trying to utilize city land, which would be no cost to us, which could go into the center. One large senior center I would be in favor of.

On Motion by Irene Robie, duly seconded by Jack Royer it was voted to accept one site for the senior center.

Alderman Lopez stated for the architect with one site you are looking at two to two and one half acres of land. All of the senior centers that I have seen are on that much land in order to make it.

Ms. Vigneault asked are the architects going to recommend one or two sites. That was part of the feasibility plan.

Chairman Shea replied what we are trying to do now is limit it so that we do not look at two potential sites but limit it to one site.

Alderman Gatsas stated that he is looking for a motion to consolidate into one site.

Alderman Lopez stated that he misunderstood the motion.

Chairman Shea asked are you adding that you would like it to be at least two and one half acres.

Alderman Lopez stated that is not necessary, as long as there is one first-class senior citizen center.

Mr. Fang stated that Barbara Vigneault was trying to mention to you is that the original contract states that the architect and his consultant is going to help the committee to do that study to say through their overall study, they are going to recommend based on everybody's input to have one center or two centers.

Chairman Shea stated the overall consensus is one center.

Ms. Vigneault stated according to the agreement that the City made with Tom Wallace, it is my understanding that his firm was supposed to recommend to us whether it should be one or two centers. That is what is in the contract.

Mr. Wallace stated that was the task that you talked about.

Alderman Lopez stated that Ms. Vigneault is absolutely correct in reference to the contract that he has is that one of his studies is supposed to (Task #3) to move it forward on a fast pace to Task #1 to have the public meeting to find out whether or not the citizens of Manchester will want one center or two centers. That is part of his contract. The vote is premature because it violates the working relationship between the planning and Tom Wallace. He is obligated to provide that and go through the procedures of having to do that unless we have changed it.

Chairman Shea stated what you are saying is that all of us here tend to agree that we would like one site but without a public hearing we cannot have...

Mr. Wallace stated our agreement does not say that there has to be a public hearing. Although we did discuss the possibility of having some kind of a public forum to get input.

Alderman Lopez asked how would that affect you if we just say we want one center.

Mr. Wallace replied it would reduce some of the work that I have to do and simplify what I have to do so I can focus more on looking at sites.

Mr. Fang asked do you see any limitations.

Ms. Vigneault replied I am just trying to look down the road to make things smoother as we progress once more of the public is involved in the decision-making process. It is the public's decision what happens. The contract was to make it inclusive of all options so that when someone down the road says they still want two because there still is an east and west issue in Manchester. We want to make sure that was clear and that we covered that information so that we could say these are the facts and this is the reason we are having one or this is the reason that we are wrong and there should be two. Because you still have, in Manchester, with some seniors the east and west issue. It is real strong. We saw that with the hospitals. I am just saying that I do not want to have a snag in the future with progress and put us back to base one because we did not cover it. It was put in there to address that problem. If we had a professional look at it and give it thought and get some facts on it, it would not be that cumbersome to get that information. So that we are not one-sided, we need to be open to all possibilities so that we do not have a problem in the future.

Chairman Shea asked Mrs. O'Connor if she got any kind of feel from the West Side whether the people there want two sites or one site.

Mrs. O'Connor replied we did not. We have people from the East Side come down there. But we did not have any problem with east or west. But we are not big enough to accommodate and everybody there only wants parking and better restrooms with handicap facilities. That is all they specify is the parking and more room for line dancing. But nothing to do with east or west, we did not ask or approach that.

Chairman Shea asked as far as whether they want one or two sites, it was not asked.

Mrs. O'Connor confirmed that it was not asked.

Chairman Shea asked Ms. Robie if she asked.

Ms. Robie replied when I first started to petition, I had gone over to the West Side to speak to them and to get petitions. At that time, they said that they were very happy staying on that side of the river. We could build our own on the other side of the river at that time. But then Claire explained to me that they felt very secure there and they were afraid to move. She said that now they have a different feeling about it. If somebody wanted two, don't you think they would have come forward by now.

Ms. Vigneault replied in the questionnaires that we had done for folks, they will come out and say a nice new facility would be nice and they agree to one place but according to the questions and how the questionnaire was drawn up, it is nice but if it is in my neighborhood. Site selection is important in that it is neither too east or west if you go with one. If it is way on the flats on the West Side, the East Side people are going to have a harder time getting there. If they take a bus, they have to do a transfer or they have to get a ride. Some of the folks said in the questionnaires that we have done, that they walk now but then they will not be able to get there and they will have to stop going. It is an issue and that is what we talk about when we mean accessibility. It has to be accessible for most people, as many people as possible. That was an important part of the feasibility study because the study is important in getting it past the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. You need the professional people like this to say this is the best way to go. If you have just ideas from people about what they want and about what they think will be a good idea and if you do not cover all of the bases. That is what these people do for a living and this is what they would recommend, it is an important thing. This group is in agreement that it should be one but we should still do the homework on the two just because it may an issue in the future.

Alderman Lopez stated that he disagrees with that totally. We are at a junction point in the City of Manchester and I do agree with Irene Robie. With the two thousand signatures that she received, this committee is saying one period. You are always going to find that small percentage of people that want to have two of everything. Two of everything is very costly.

Ms. Vigneault stated it is just to look at the facts.

Alderman Lopez stated it is just to please somebody to do a long-time procedure. This has been going on for a long time. I have all the comfort in the world that the citizens of Manchester, to have one senior citizen center that is first-class, will be acceptable to it. There is going to be a small percentage of people out there that are going to disagree. We build everything on two things in this city and it is

costing us money. People from the West Side would walk over to the East Side and go to a first-class senior citizen center other than going to a place that they have now. The committee is saying one.

Mr. Fang stated that he would like to make a suggestion. Definitely I do see the group consensus here. Can we say that we all agree upon is that we are going to help the elderly services group and the architect to pave the ground to go back to the community to talk to our committee members to convince them to have one top quality senior center that is going to give us so many good things. Then the architect and his consultant can still do their job to go into the community if we pave the road for them. The process is going to have an end result similar to what we are talking about today, that we want one large site, one top quality product. I am concerned about the process and maybe if we can allow the professionals to have their road to help us also. Then we carry the burden first to pave the road for them.

Mr. Royer stated we have two sites that the City owns, Hackett Hill and down here at Singer Park. Both of them are more accessible to the West Side than they are to the East Side. If we picked either one of those sites for one center, I cannot see it as two centers. The one on the West Side is not costing the city anything because the City owns it. The one of Hanover Street is costing us an arm and a leg with no place to park. Nobody goes to the center for that reason.

Alderman Gatsas asked how many people go to the Hanover Street location on a daily basis.

Ms. Vigneault replied we probably have about twenty-five or thirty. We have a lot of in-home programs that come out of there for people who do not go. I do not disagree about the one center, but we need to make sure that we reassure everyone else in the public that we have looked at it. That it has been studied. It may come as a snag later on. They will ask why that was not looked at and it will get the process bumped back. Because of the hospitals and the two libraries, we need to still look at the east and west issue.

Chairman Shea stated one of the factors is that Alderman Hirschmann brought up a very important consideration. Before anything is built, he said that we should look at the expenses involved in any kind of enterprise. From the mere fact that you have two possible sites, you are adding to the expenses of that particular project. That in itself is obvious.

Ms. Vigneault stated and that is the reason I feel that it should be documented in the study.

Chairman Shea stated before a senior center is built we really have to come and say in addition to the building of it, whether it is a million or two million, we have to consider how much it is going to cost to open that up. Right now your budget has a certain amount of money and is it going to double, triple, quadruple to open up this center. This is what is going to be necessary in order to get a handle on how much it is really going to cost the City. In discussing the possibility of two sites it seems a waste of time. But to satisfy a few of the people that may object to the fact, since we have a study, we can put that in and say we did consider two but it was too costly.

Alderman Gatsas asked could you tell me who drew up the RFP for that study. Did this committee draw it up.

Mr. Fang replied in the negative and stated that Bob MacKenzie and the Planning Department.

Alderman Gatsas asked did this committee have any input on it.

Mr. Fang replied that Bob MacKenzie had a conversation with a couple of the members.

Alderman Gatsas stated to go through the exercise or the study because we study things to death in this City. The consensus is that it is financially infeasible to do two centers. If you build a new one on the East Side, you are going to have to build a new one on the West Side. That feasibility is just not there for the City. From the time I was a youth, we had one library. Everybody went to that library whether you were on the East Side, the south end, the north end or anyplace else. You went to the library on Pine Street. There are issues that we have to start looking at from a City point of the impact of two centers. Does Barbara Vigneault stay on the East Side center or does she go to the West Side center. Do we hire an assistant now that is a little bit more wages over the two people there. We need to send a directive so that we do not study the thing to death. If there is a brand new senior center in the City, the seniors are going to respond and go to wherever it is at to a limitation. If it is bright, clean and accessible with parking, they are going to participate. The ones that are not, they will not come even if you put it in their backyard.

Ms. Vigneault stated the reason that it was put in the feasibility study to begin with was so that it would alleviate some of the problems and snags along the way of the process and to prepare it for final Board of Mayor and Aldermen approval. If the aldermen are acting on the recommendations of the feasibility study and they get calls from their constituents and they say that they want it in their ward and they do not want it over on the West Side. They will ask the reason for your decision

that it should be over there when I have had it accessible for me for most of my later years, they do not think it is a good idea. The alderman has to represent his constituency and then those aldermen will have facts on which they can answer these constituents to help them with this.

Chairman Shea asked how involved do you want a second site to be.

Ms. Vigneault replied we should not just limit the architect. He needs to address it in some way so that it does not prevent any snags in the process. That is the reason it was put in the contract.

Alderman Lopez stated that he has already addressed it and Alderman Gatsas has already addressed and so did I. It is going to cost more.

Ms. Vigneault stated that it is not just the cost, he needs to look at what we had said about the east and west issues.

Alderman Lopez stated to Barbara Vigneault that you are going to have people say that they want a senior citizen center on the East Side as well as the West Side. You are going to have those types of people but not the majority. The majority of people around here want one senior citizen center, period.

Chairman Shea stated Irene Robie, Rita O'Connor and Fred O'Connor are representing the people. I can see your point but how extensively do we want to get involved in a process that we are saying is one site versus two sites.

Ms. Vigneault stated that it does not have to be that cumbersome but it does need to be addressed in the contract. It needs to be addressed as far as the demographics because he is going to be addressing that anyway with finding a site and the accessibility part. But he also needs to address the east and west issue only because it has come out with the location. We want this to go through, the passing of the senior center.

Chairman Shea asked how extensive are you talking about.

Alderman Gatsas stated it is a very simple issue. If you come to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen with any suggestion of remotely thinking of two centers we are not even going to get off of square one. You people are going to be talking about this for the next twenty-five years and I cannot support that. I am going to make a Motion tomorrow night to take this to a fast track. The fast track is going to be for one senior center. I will take whatever calls from whoever calls because it is time that the aldermen start to look at this City as an entirety and not as a ward.

Mr. Fang stated that he has to put the architect on the spot because if I am in his position, this contract is my responsibility and I have to fulfill the obligation. Even this committee is going to give me an instruction today. This is the highest priority but I am still going to fulfill the obligation because I have signed a contract. That is the issue, we are going to go through this just to convenience them. If we take that route, the architect with his consultant are going to go into the community and I can guarantee you that they are going to fulfill the obligation as has been assigned to them. They are on contract. If I am the architect, I have to fulfill that. If you give me a time limit and I have to do it. I have to make it happen. The main purpose of this committee is to help the architect. We go into the community to convince everybody to agree with us. The most important thing is a program. Once we have a solid program like the 2.5 acres, is that really 2.5 acres good enough for this City of 100,000 population. In five years, how are we going to handle it. That is the architect's responsibility because that is the contract that they have signed. They have to go through all kinds of research and have no conflict with what we are talking about here.

Alderman Gatsas stated that we should resolve that tomorrow night at the Board level. Obviously that contract has come from Mr. MacKenzie who is an employee of the City.

Mr. Wallace replied in the affirmative.

Alderman Gatsas stated if the Board tells him tomorrow night or directs him to amend that contract to one site.

Mr. Wallace stated it is not a problem that we change the contract terms.

Alderman Lopez asked is that something that the Planning Department and you, the architect, could work out anyway.

Mr. Wallace replied in the affirmative.

Alderman Lopez asked does it have to have Board approval.

Mr. Wallace replied that it does not need to have a Board meeting. You can change the contract.

Alderman Lopez asked is that something that you could agree to.

Mr. Wallace replied in the affirmative.

Alderman Lopez stated if that is the consensus of the committee to look at one site then work with Bob MacKenzie and redo the contract.

Mr. Fang stated that politically, we should all understand the process to the community is quite important. For one example, the Riverfront Development Project, if we did not have Harvey Industries come out to give this presentation last year. If the architect and the consultant did not go through the community and see the people then I believe that the project would still be at the beginning.

Alderman Lopez stated if that is the consensus about doing that and he wants to put it in his report building two senior citizen centers is going to cost twice as much. Aldermen Gatsas and Shea and myself would not vote for two senior citizen centers.

Ms. Robie stated that she sympathizes with Barbara Vigneault. She has been living through a nightmare for the last twelve or thirteen years. She knows what it is to be stuck in a spot and depend on people to straighten her out. Thirteen years she has lived there with that. People like me yelling and screaming at her about that center. It has been such a waste of space and money and talent. We can just put something in the newspaper that we have had a meeting and is there anyone who would consider coming forth and saying that they would like two centers. Is that possible. Have a public hearing.

Ms. Vigneault stated that this committee does not have that role when the City has already given it to the architect to find that out. That is all that I am saying and I do not know if he has to spend ten minutes on it or half an hour. But it should be included in his report so that everyone is covered.

Chairman Shea stated that no one is disputing that.

Chairman Shea addressed item 6 of the agenda:

Any other business which may come before the Committee.

Alderman Lopez stated that he would like to try to work out something that it would not be processed this long is to develop friends of Manchester's Council of Aging for the Senior Citizen Center. We can get a lot of money for this particular program.

Mr. Royer stated that we are having a meeting tomorrow of the commissioner's at 5:00 PM. Alderman Shea will be there.

Alderman Lopez stated that he would try to be there and have information for you then.

Mr. Fang stated that one suggestion he has that is if we are very sure in the future that the City is going to have one senior center we should start right now in helping the east and west side communities senior citizens to understand by creating an opportunity. For instance this month we are going to have an event and everybody should come to the West Side. Next month we are going to have the event and everybody should come to the East Side. That will get the people to travel back and forth and they can gradually get onto the right track. Eventually when they see the Senior Center no matter if it is east or west they are used to this already.

On Motion of Jack Royer, duly seconded by Penny Sconsa, it was voted that Mr. MacKenzie tries to take care of using the land that the City already owns.

Mr. Royer stated the City owns the land on Hackett Hill, the one at the Singer Park is owned by the City. If the City owns the land then we will not have to pay for land.

Alderman Lopez stated that he would not mind if the Motion were to first look at that.

Mr. Royer stated that is my Motion, try to concentrate on using city owned land first.

Alderman Gatsas stated that he has given a location and forget about size for a moment, and told you that it was on Elm Street would that be more acceptable for travelling purposes, drop-off and pick-up purposes, accessibility to seniors than either Singer Park or Hackett Hill.

Chairman Shea asked that Alderman Gatsas pass that information on to Mr. Wallace.

Alderman Gatsas asked if you had a choice of a parcel on Elm Street that is on the busline versus something else that gave you identical to what you are looking for at another location. I am not telling you that you would have to go here with two thousand feet and the other place is going to give you fifteen thousand feet. I am saying apples to apples on a comparison basis.

Ms. Robie replied that would be very tempting.

Ms. Sconsa replied that she thinks it should be taken into consideration.

Chairman Shea agreed and stated that Alderman Gatsas brought that up privately and I told him to bring it to the meeting. You can pass that information on to where that site is located.

Mr. Wallace stated that kind of information would be better to go through the Planning Department to me.

Chairman Shea stated to submit the information to the Planning Department. Anybody else who might have any locations also. We are open to thoughts and ideas. Your suggestion is just a thought that is all.

Mr. Royer stated to try to utilize city-owned property to cut down on the cost.

Chairman Shea stated that it was a very good suggestion and Alderman Gatsas' suggestion is very good too. We should be open to all suggestions including Mr. Girard's suggestion. Not that we are going to accept it.

There being no further business to come before the committee, on motion of Penny Sconsa, duly seconded by Irene Robie, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee