

MAYOR'S SPECIAL SENIOR CENTER STUDY COMMITTEE

May 16, 2000

9:00 AM

Chairman Shea called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Alderman Shea and Lopez, Ira "Jack" Royer, Irene Robie, Penny Sconsa, Fred O'Connor, Rita O'Connor, R. MacKenzie, B. Vigneault

Messrs.: T. Wallace, A. Clark, T. Somers, P. Ramsey, A. Kelley

Alderman Shea addressed item 3 of the agenda:

Discussion relative to site selection.

Mr. Wallace stated I would like to do a brief introduction and then have Alan Clark address the analysis of the sites. The overhead slide that we put up here shows the sites that were suggested to us is identified. There was roughly 35 sites give or take a couple. In some cases we had a little bit of difficulty identifying specifically what the site was and in some areas there was a site mentioned and there were two or three possibilities there. We have tried to identify to give you an idea of the locations of them. There are quite a few clustered near the center of the city. After we compiled the list then we started to go through and begin to evaluate them. The first thing we needed to do in order to do that was to come up with a rough idea of what we thought the minimum size of the site should be. We made some assumptions on the building. The first was that the building should be or at least be capable of expanding to 24,000 square feet. That was as a result of the meeting that we had three weeks ago. For the purposes of this analysis, we would assume that the entire building would be on one floor rather than on multi-levels. That does not mean that we would not consider multiple floors but for the purposes of this exercise we thought that would give us a little bit of cushion in terms of sizing the site. This did not directly relate to the size of the site but sometimes the topography of it and the layout was that handicap parking and actually all of the parking should be close to the entrance. We found some sites where in order to configure the parking it would have had to have been removed from the building and that seemed to be a problem. Also related to that, was that there should be a drop-off area where the buses could come up and drop people off

and pick people up and so the site should be able to accommodate that. The next thing is that we have used 100-car parking as the minimum size and translate that into area. Another thing was that we needed to stay away from areas that would be wetland area. Some of the sites that we considered that would have been a problem. Using those assumptions, we just did a very quick size of the minimum size that the site would have to be. We have the building footprint of 24,000 square feet, the parking and drives for 100 cars is another 35,000 square feet and then just some open area of another 15,000 square feet which gives us a total of 74,000 square feet as a minimum site size. That is about 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres. That is what we used for a first evaluation of the different sites.

Mr. MacKenzie asked Tom Wallace, do you have any handouts for these couple of sheets that you showed us as the criteria.

Mr. Clark replied in the affirmative and stated based on the information that we worked on with Tom we realized that we are looking at a fairly substantial site. 1.7 acres in the City of Manchester is not a site that there is a lot to choose from. However, we did consider over 45 different sites. Some we dismissed without a whole lot of analysis. But we did analyze 34 sites in some detail. We visited all of those sites, we gathered information from the city records. We included in those 34 sites, any suggestions that were made to us by either a board member or the public at-large. We considered an awful lot of sites but we just dismissed them as we did some level of interpretation in our own brief analysis. We did narrow it down to 34. The goal today is to get that down to six. The reporter asked me earlier it seems like you are spending an awful lot of effort to get to an answer that everybody knows. My comment was, in real estate anyway it has been my experience, that what is obvious is not always obvious. We went through this analysis. Those red dots are the 34 sites that we considered. We have done some analysis on the demographics. What do we mean by the demographics; where does the majority of the population that would utilize this facility currently reside. We used as a criteria those people 55 and over. It should not come as a big surprise that analysis indicates that the majority of the population not only of the population over 55 but the population in general resides within one or two mile radius of City Hall. Then we analyzed where is the majority of the population for those 55 and over and again it is within a two-mile radius of City Hall. What you find is when we get out into more of the outskirts just because of the nature of the development that took place (Bodwell Road, Wellington Hill) we discovered that you have more family-type population. That told us that we needed to make this as accessible as possible. It needs to be somewhere within reasonable proximity to downtown. It does mean that it has to be downtown but a site out here on South Willow Street would be a long way away from the population. Based on the information that we worked on with Tom to determine the size, that size of roughly 74,000 square feet is a pretty good size. That would include the building,

parking and 20-feet of green space around the building. It is not in excess of green space. The number one criteria knowing that you need to have a site of around 70,000 or 74,000 square feet, was to make sure that the sites that were evaluated were of adequate size. If they were not, we discarded them. The next thing that was of concern to us was what was the shape, the configuration of the site. If it were long and narrow and contained 74,000 square feet, it would not work, as well as something that may be square or rectangular. Location was an important consideration. If it was out at South Willow Street, we felt that was probably not appropriate for the seniors. Because of the nature of the building 24,000 square feet on a single floor (at least the majority of the building) we thought it was important that the site be relatively level. It did not have to be perfectly level, but it needed to be relatively level and that eliminated some of the sites that we were looking at. Keep in mind, a building that is 24,000 square feet think of a football field, this is a big building. Ease of access, we needed to keep in mind that it had to be easy to get to. You also wanted it to be in a location that was safe. That meant safe to get in and out of, safe from visibility we thought it was important that the sight be visible. Then last we wanted to make sure that it had the available utilities necessary to properly develop it; water, sewer and the other utilities that would normally be done. We were able to narrow that down to six sites. We recognize that is a lot of detail but let me identify them for you if I can. The first site, and it seemed that there was a lot of discussion at the committee level, is Singer Park. We had looked at three sites at Singer Park. Another site that we looked at was up here at Livingston Park. Tom has had conversations with Parks and Recreation and under certain circumstances a location in a park is not totally out of the question. We then looked at a site up at Derryfield Park opposite Trinity High School. I will get into more detail on each of these but I wanted to give you an overview. We looked desperately over at the West Side and identified a parcel of land over by the West Side Ice Arena that would be of sufficient size and meet most of those criteria. Then those were all city-owned sites. Then we came up with two privately owned sites of which we have not had any discussions with owners. But we did identify them as locations that needed to be considered. One is a building site owned by Public Service Company up at the northerly end of Commercial Street. It is currently a parking lot right near where the Overlook Falls is. Then finally there was a building we looked at and we tried desperately to find a city-owned building that would work. We looked at Brown School but it is too small and does not meet the criteria both in lot size for adequate parking as well as the building. We looked at it and from the road it looks like one big building but when you measure it you find out that it is not quite as big as you thought. We did find one privately owned building that we wanted to consider and that is the former Sears building 1415 Elm Street, which satisfies the criteria. I am going to go through each one of these and I will answer any questions but I want to caution you that all we have done at this point is analyze the 34 sites and have narrowed them down to these six so we know that there is a lot more work.

That is the reason we have six weeks in our schedule. We are halfway through process but there is a lot more detail that needs to be done before we are going to be in a position to make some recommendations. With the building there is renovation work and there is a lot more that has to be done. I do not want you to think that we are here trying to make a recommendation on any of them. We are trying to fulfill our obligation of analyzing what is available in the City and part of those criteria was to look not only at city-owned sites but also privately owned sites as well as buildings that might meet the criteria. At Singer Park, this is the current soccer field, the current parking lot, in here is the current little concession stand. We looked at three sites at Singer Park. We looked at what we call site A which is adjacent to or just south of where the concession stand is. It is a mound and it is my understanding on one of your tours you drove the van in and you were able to look at that. We looked at another site that I consider the "Hobo Jungle" that is on the other side of where the railroad trestle cuts across. Then we looked at a third site that would be in front of and to the east of the current parking area. We spent quite a bit of time down at Singer Park. We were down there with David Fang and with an engineer from CLD and looked at quite a few things. At Singer Park, this is the topography and this is the new section of the Riverwalk that comes down through. If you have not had an opportunity to walk it, it is quite nice. This is the existing soccer field, concession stand and I just want you to know that concession stand is 3,000 square feet. Remember in your mind how big that building is, it is not a small building. This is a proposal by somebody in the City.

Mr. MacKenzie stated it was the Highway Department that put that parking plan together.

Mr. Clark stated there is a parking plan here, there is an access road that would ride down through the middle next to Bedford Street and then there is this parking configuration that I have super-imposed. We find a couple things; this is that site that you looked at. Here is the concession stand we find is this site, before you get over to the wetlands, is around 25,000 square feet to put a 24,000 square foot building does not cut it. To further compound this, it would appear that this has been all filled in with a lot of different debris. It was filled in with materials that came from Singer Park and there is evidence of bricks that are exposed and we are not quite certain what is in there. Needless to say, to put a building on that kind of debris is not easy to accomplish. There is this big area here by the concession stand which I know for when the Phantoms play the team buses park there and the players park there. That site, even if you were able to utilize it, there is only another 22,000 square feet. If you added the two together it is conceivable that site could work but your parking would be 900 feet from here to here. If you remember in our criteria, we talked about buses and vans need to be able to pull up and drop off easily, handicap parking needs to be relatively close, and all of the

parking needs to be close. Because of that, we felt that this site did not work really well. We also talked to the Riverfront people and they would love to have you is the feeling that I have. They do have plans of some sort for this area here. This is the southerly site, you have the railroad trestle that cuts across here, you have wetlands in here, but you only end up with about 40,000 square feet of usable area that actually in a depression. You have the railroad much higher and you have a sewer easement which would be an extension of the Riverwalk which is higher it sets down in. You might have some wetlands to cross to get to it. It would be a long road to get to but there is not enough area. We were concerned about safety, it is really isolated and we did not think that was great. We have to look at everything so we then went over here and said what about where they are putting all of that parking. It works out that there is 100,000 square feet so that could work. There is a bit of a slope that raises up. There are plans to put parking in there. But we need to do more investigation. We do not know exactly what is going on as far as that parking. Maybe there is a way to incorporate it but at least there is a site there that is big enough to work with.

Mr. MacKenzie asked we are looking at what might be an optimum size facility 24,000 square feet. Did you do any analysis if we went to 16,000 square foot building that would fit on either of those sites.

Mr. Clark replied that would be in Tom's work.

Mr. Wallace replied the number one site that we looked at there were some possibilities of doing some things. The building does not have to be one floor. I do not think we want to say squeeze the building down to 15,000 square feet and then have the site squeezed around it because there would be no capability of expansion but there are some things you could do to squeeze it in there. What is concerning me is the parking at that particular site because the Riverwalk people have lease rights for twenty years to that site. They did not seem to be real keen on us taking that entire little bit of area that they have for parking. The drawing we got from them showed some future development in that area related to them. They have financial commitments and are looking at those things to help them meet those.

Mr. MacKenzie asked you have not ruled out those sites at this point.

Mr. Wallace replied they do not seem to be working unless we can get some kind of a concession on especially that one. The access to it is somewhat of a problem. You would have to come down near that parking drive is going to be that has got to be developed. It just seems that it had some problems there.

Alderman Lopez asked the parcels of land where the ravine goes down are you indicating that none of that can be filled in to pick up more square feet.

Mr. Clark replied if you do you will have to...you are talking about eliminating significant wetlands.

Alderman Lopez stated I have invited Tom Somers and Peter Ramsey from Riverfront because I knew that Tom was going to make that statement and I wanted to make sure that everything was on the record so that we get the right answers.

Mr. Somers stated that ravine is a brook, not the most pristine in the world. It would take some effort to do it but part of it could probably be filled. In fact we have considered that, Alan, in terms of the ideas we had for the master plan at the Riverfront. What it comes down to is money. I would recommend that we further investigate it to see what it would take to do it. Maybe even a partial filling, maybe a retaining wall type of thing like they did over on the West Side with the fields. It is not flat meandering wetlands - it is a ravine that goes down into it.

Mr. Wallace stated I just get concerned with lowlands and wetlands. There are going to be all kinds of issues.

Mr. Somers stated we are working with a core of engineers on this project. We are working with the State being very much in favor of the Riverwalk. It may be an opportune time to have some trade-off that is the only thing I suggest to you.

Mr. Royer stated it is a brook only because there is sewerage going through there. Where does it start. It is already piped in someplace.

Ms. Robie asked does that precede the soccer field.

Mr. Clark replied in the affirmative and stated it is northerly of the soccer field.

Ms. Robie stated they have a large possible parking place there and also the entrance to the boat landing.

Mr. Clark stated that is way down there and it would not interfere with the boat landing.

Ms. Robie asked you mentioned something about a possible one floor.

Mr. Wallace replied that is at site number one. When we went out there on the bus trip he said maybe put the building one level at the same level as the soccer field and then have a lower level that would go down overlooking the river.

Ms. Robie asked is there going to be a basement to that.

Mr. Wallace replied not below that lower level but it would be possible to get a building that was one level up above and then put a second level underneath it. That would be one possibility there. We would have to use a good portion of this for parking to do that.

Ms. Robie asked if you were going to be using the one before it would you put a basement in that.

Mr. Wallace replied I do not know at this point, that is certainly a possibility. We saw the one in Chelmsford that had a basement with areaways to get light down to it. That would be a possibility it might be just as well to go up at that point.

Alderman Shea asked Bob, that site over there is that going to be a possible parking lot.

Mr. MacKenzie stated that is what is called the Rubenstein site. The City has just recently acquired that parcel and the intent for acquiring was for long-term parking. The City has also been working with the State to see if we could get a multi-million dollar grant to put a parking garage there. However, it is always a policy question for the Board of Mayor and Aldermen if they feel it is more important to use this site for a senior center, they can make that decision but then they will have to wrestle with where to put the parking demands of the future. The Board is looking to that to have a full parking because parking is always an issue in the millyard and downtown so it is likely going to go towards parking but that does not totally rule it out. This Board could change that policy.

Alderman Lopez asked looking at what you are explaining there the area is big enough to make it into 20,000 square feet instead of 25,000 square feet or maybe make an overhang or underground whatever the case may be. It is just a comment that I wanted to make. I do not want to leave the impression that we are saying 25,000 square feet is the ultimate and we might not find 25,000 square feet it might be 20,000 square feet if it is going to fit there. With the walkway and the bridge coming from the West Side and being close to the West Side it is very important that we take a good look at it.

Mr. Wallace stated I do not see a reason we could not include that as we move forward. What we have to do when we get down to a handful of sites is come up with a specific design for each one. There is no reason we could not consider that.

Mr. Fang stated we would probably have to ask Alan to re emphasize from the beginning you have certain criteria for the site selection.

Mr. Clark stated one of those criteria was the wetlands issue. If you want us to keep that on we could do further analysis. We will work with CLD and see but you do have the Riverwalk right up against it there are some severe constraints. I am not certain but we will do some more analysis. Even if you fill in the ravine that you are going to have the right configuration and inadequate size. We will include that on the list.

Mr. Somers stated I see what you are saying and my only thought was the Riverwalk has been designed through there to meet handicap accessibility requirements so that should be kept in mind. The positive of it is that you can use the Riverwalk as part of getting from upper to lower through the Senior Center. I am just suggesting that you look at a number of configurations here because it fits extremely well into a location close to downtown, near to West Side, there is lots of areas to walk, it is going to be developed into a nice landscaped area. It is near activity, you are not remote. All of those things, to me, fit. There are some constraints here in terms of how you make it go but if you take a look at that real hard in terms of putting retaining walls in to make all those things go.

Alderman Shea asked on the combined sewer overflow is that in any way in that general area.

Mr. Somers replied in the negative.

Mr. O'Connor stated I cannot understand that his opening statement said that it required 74,000 feet for the building, parking and so forth why are you bothering with an area that is only 48,000 feet. That does not make sense to me.

Alderman Shea replied I would say that they are considering different options and because of the interest generated by the fact that there are certain amenities there like a Riverwalk and other types of areas that he is trying to say is we should not say that it is a sound site, which he has indicated but it should be considered as a possibility because he is limited to different proposals from 34 to 6. Peter Ramsey is here and I am not sure if he wants to add anything because of Singer Park.

Mr. Ramsey stated to give you some background I was one of the co-founders of the Riverfront Park Foundation, which is a group of eight Manchester citizens who

serve on this non-profit board that created Singer Park. I spent more time down there than almost anybody in the City did in the last three years. It is the most beautiful piece of land in whole City. If you design a building with some creativity in it and had a glass front there is no more beautiful spot in the whole City than to watch the river, it is simply beautiful. The other reason to consider that site is because it would be free. I cannot speak for the Riverfront Park Foundation but they talked about it I have been in their meetings and they would be proud to have a Senior Center down there. It is in the original master plan. David Fang, two years ago, had created the vision of a beautiful Victorian greenhouse. This fits in with this concept having a place where people in Manchester can spend time and enjoy the river. I think your expert has a good point, if you want to build a 25,000 square foot block building that is not the place for it. If you want to use some creativity and imagination maybe have it round maybe two levels. Down there at the bottom where the current Riverwalk is I can imagine parking down there a road in by the back. I can imagine an odd looking building that would have a glass front. That would maybe be two stories, have an elevator. If you use your imagination and use some creativity I cannot imagine a more beautiful spot than when I get to be a senior citizen to spend some time at. You have a place to walk around the field now, you have the Riverwalk to walk, and you have crossways. Two years ago when the Aldermen came back from Peoria, Illinois one of the things that impressed them most about it was they created right in the middle of the city, a facility for wellness where people would go to exercise, spend time in the indoor tennis court, a place to exercise. It was sponsored by the local hospital. It was a place where people got well where they worked on their health. I cannot only speak for myself but I cannot imagine a more beautiful spot in the whole City of Manchester.

Mr. O'Connor stated I was trying to bring out the fact that we started off the criteria with 74,000 square feet for the building and parking. This is only 47,000 square feet it does not make sense to me that you start out with one but then you cut one-third off of it.

Mr. Ramsey stated I do not know anybody at the Park Foundation that has ruled this part out. This could be parking, the Aldermen at the meeting last night voted to have the Highway Department create parking here. There is going to be parking all the way down. If you are talking about a square building do not put it there. Put it up at Derryfield Park. If you are talking about a square building that is the cheapest easiest thing to build put it somewhere where you have 74,000 square feet. If you want to be creative and create something beautiful that is going to be here for one hundred years that we are going to be proud of I cannot imagine a more beautiful spot in the whole city.

Mr. Royer asked does that land go way beyond the gully over to where Jac Pac is.

Mr. Clark replied it narrows down significantly and it is low. Your access problem is the cost of putting in an access road would be significant. We did look at this site here which would be on the other side of the gully, the other side of the trestle. Even that, for a buildable site down there, unless you are going to fill in some wetlands it would be around 40,000 square feet. This would be a more preferable site than anything further down we saw.

Mr. Royer stated 20,000 square feet with a bottom floor would be plenty of room.

Mr. Wallace stated if you take the 24,000 square feet and put it on two levels you could cut that roughly in half and you might be able to fit on that site. It is going to be tight to get it in there.

Mr. Royer stated the lower floor could be used for functions that we have.

Mr. Wallace stated when we went there on the bus trip I agree with Peter that the view looking off at the river was just gorgeous and you could see all the activity on the river and the water flowing. You have an opportunity for a couple different levels to look at the waterfront from several different perspectives. It had some possibility, it is just a squeeze but I would not rule out that particular site because it does have so many advantages. If you look at the map, it is certainly the closest one to the center of town and it is right at the edge. It is just going to need some studying and as Peter said some creativity to use it.

Alderman Lopez asked how far could we go over in the ravine. That has to be looked at.

Mr. Ramsey replied Tom and I have spent a lot of time down there. If it is possible to fill in the ravine to put piping in there, Tom is absolutely correct, it is a small water basin or stream that comes down from up near Elliot Hospital. I have seen quite a bit of water in there at times but you could pipe it. If you did fill in that ravine then that solves your space problems and will have a lot more space. That ravine could be a beautiful place to spend some time. You could put benches out there; it is really beautiful down there. Again, it is going to take some imagination. If you are going to build a cinderblock building then I do not think that is the space for it. Put it out my Industrial Ave. or something if you are going to build a block building.

Mr. Royer asked that knoll that we parked the bus on is stuff that was taken out when they built the field. What if that was leveled off.

Mr. Ramsey replied I was there when they did that and the dirt was taken out of the ground because they dug down to build drainage. It is not hazardous waste or anything like that it is just construction debris. You could use it as fill because it is just a pile of dirt.

Mrs. O'Connor asked are we going to be sharing parking with somebody else or are we going to have private parking of our own.

Mr. Clark replied these are all questions beyond what we are prepared to talk about today. We are here today to try to narrow it down to six sites and then go do further analysis. We need to do the rest of our work. This is not a process that we can just run through. We wanted to present to you our six final sites, get feedback to see if there was anything that we wanted to add or eliminate and then continue forward through the process. We do not have that answer. There is a lot more questions than there are answers today.

Alderman Shea stated that is a very good question, Rita, because that would have to be resolved.

Mr. Royer asked in regards to Lakeshore Hospital could you tell me why that was eliminated.

Mr. Clark replied it is not for sale. We talked to the owner and he does not want to sell it.

Mr. Royer stated there is a big sign "For Sale".

Mr. Clark stated we chatted with him and he has somebody under agreement to buy it. We also thought it was too far away.

Mr. Royer stated this is not too far away when you have bus transportation.

Mr. Clark stated you asked why we eliminated them, those are the reasons.

Mr. Fang asked at the beginning Alan mentioned along this south portion you have sites A, B, C, I agree with Peter this is a lovely site and I agree with Tom that from an engineering point there are ways to solve different kinds of engineering problems. We have to re-think from the beginning Alan mentioned a couple of criteria and nobody wants to talk about running into issues but I have to mention to everybody that no matter if it is site A, B or C are near the railroad tracks. On the East Side of the railroad tracks we are going to have the silos that everybody has read about in the newspaper. Last week, when Alan and our group visited the site, it just happened the train was at the train yard and we have to look into the

noise and vibration. We know the site is very close to the concession we have to understand that there are going to be different functions happening at the same time. Maybe we can say all the ballgames are in the evening and all activities for the Senior Center is during the daytime but if we have events that simultaneously happen on the same area how are we going to handle the situation. From the programming part, we have to look into it. That is part of the environmental impact to our site and project. I just wanted to bring that to everybody's attention at this point.

Mr. Clark stated the next site that we identified is at Livingston Park. They just signalized this intersection at Red Coat Lane. There is some parking used for Lacrosse. There is a new soccer field and track. You have the ice-skating warming house over in this area. We identified, working with Parks and Recreation, that there was potential. This is a beautiful site on Dorrs Pond. This would show you that a 24,000 square foot building could lay in over where there used to be an old ice rink. It could be done without having a lot of trees. That is all open. That is a site under consideration. Tom Wallace met with Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Wallace stated they did not express any real objection to that site. The plan is to develop that for parking. The part on the left-hand bottom is being done currently. We could work with that to appropriate the parking with some of ours as well. That site is a little bit on the tight side for fitting in the building. We definitely would want to think a two-story building on that site.

Alderman Lopez asked are you going to utilize the existing parking lot.

Mr. Clark replied the concept would be to try to utilize some of the existing parking.

Alderman Lopez asked would you consider looking at the congestion of Daniel Webster Highway and at 2:30 in the afternoon that place is jammed with high school students.

Mr. Wallace stated it gets a lot of use with practices now.

Ms. Robie stated we were up there last week and there seems to be a lot of untouched land north of the park.

Mr. Clark stated you do not have to go very much further and you run into wetlands.

Mr. Wallace stated the pond extends out that way.

Mr. Clark stated if you were standing in that parking lot next to the warming hut what is cleared is not wetlands. Just beyond what is cleared there is a bit of a small hill. On the backside of that you immediately get into wetlands to come all the way out real close to the Daniel Webster Highway. You would be in a very environmental sensitive area.

Ms. Robie stated those parking spaces are up tight in the summer.

Mr. Clark stated there is a lot of use there.

Ms. Robie stated it is a lovely place but we would need more parking spaces.

Mr. Clark stated it is a great facility. You will find, as we go through these sites, every site has some problems. There is no easy answer here. That is the reason we need to continue to go through the analysis.

Alderman Shea stated Mayor Baines has joined the meeting.

Mr. Royer asked do you plan on having us eliminate some of these today. No one seems to be for Livingston Park.

Mr. Clark replied that is not my intent. My intent was to narrow it down to six to do further analysis and then to bring that back to the committee and would expect that the committee would sanction one of the sites as being their recommendation. My understanding is that it goes to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for their final decision.

Alderman Lopez asked could we eliminate a site that we do not like.

Mr. MacKenzie replied this committee is overseeing the site selection process and if the committee is unanimous that it does not want a particular site then it can direct the consultant to eliminate it.

Jack Royer moved to eliminate Livingston Park from the site selection process for a Senior Center, duly seconded by Rita O'Connor.

Mr. MacKenzie stated finding a good site in the City of Manchester right now is very difficult. If you could perhaps listen to all six sites. I would be concerned if you eliminated a possible site. Livingston Park is a beautiful site. It is a little bit far east for West Side people but maybe just listen to all six sites and if after listening to those six, there are going to be difficulties with each one, then you could perhaps considering eliminating some of these sites.

Mr. Royer stated I withdraw my Motion.

Alderman Shea asked Mrs. O'Connor would you withdraw your second.

Mrs. O'Connor replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Clark stated the third site that we have identified as a possibility is up at Derryfield Park. We looked at a number of different sites there and eliminated several of them either because of terrain or because it would have too much of an impact on the park. We looked over where there is a soccer field and other place where it was too steep. There is a site that is at the intersection of Mammoth Road and Bridge Street that is currently all wooded and backs up to the Red Cross building. There are wetlands there but looking at it at this point we were trying to identify sites to do further analysis. We felt this was a site that could have some potential to at least be looked at again. Access to it is not ideal. Coming off of Bridge Street you probably would have to look at signalization of that intersection. There are a lot of factors but it is a nice wooded site that is relatively level. I am little concerned over the extent of the wetlands but it appears that it would be big enough.

Alderman Lopez asked how many square feet.

Mr. Clark replied it appears to be 100,000 square feet of buildable land. I am a little concerned whether or not...we talked about one of our criteria would be a regular configuration...because of wetlands it may not be regular. These are not as prime of wetlands as we were talking about Livingston Park. There may be ways to work around it.

Mr. Wallace stated I went back up and looked at that again yesterday and there are wetlands. I could see a couple of streams coming from it. There is a walking path that goes all the way down and around. It is quite nice. When you walk it you are not even aware of that intersection being there. It is pretty level. It has some possibilities.

Mr. MacKenzie asked I am curious what is your reaction to this site as a West Sider, do you consider this site too far east.

Mrs. O'Connor replied in the affirmative and stated the people will not drive there. They have already told us that it is too far away. There are a lot of them that are not driving now that they would not go this distance. They have already specified that it is too far.

Mr. MacKenzie asked Livingston Park as well.

Mrs. O'Connor replied we go there a lot to soccer and things our grandchildren are in and getting in and out of there at any time. We get out on the street by Dunkin' Donuts and you have to walk the long way because there is no parking over there and it is congested and crowded. We do mind but talking with the people that are down around there they do mind that. They do not want to get into a congested area. They will not go to South Willow Street unless it is between 10:00 and 1:00. At certain times, they are very particular about the driving. There are so many who do not drive anymore.

Mr. Clark stated site 4 is over on the West Side. We looked at a number of different sites on the West Side to try to identify a location. We looked down at this park off of Precourt Street, up near the West Side Arena; we looked at a lot of different places. What we found was a site of around 80,000 square feet close to the arena and close to the river. Just adjacent to where the bridge is there is a pretty nice site relatively level and all open. Looks like maybe they had removed gravel at one point in time. It has issues and you are not going to find your perfect site. Access is through a residential area to come down. We thought that it was important that we at least discovered something that had the potential on the West Side that we could do some further analysis. It does not seem to have any specific plans for future development at this time. This master plan states to restore it to its natural landscaping.

Mrs. O'Connor asked is that City-owned.

Mr. Clark replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Clark stated Public Service Company of New Hampshire privately owns site 5. It is located near Amoskeag Bridge, Canal Street, Commercial Street; Singer Park is down at the other end. At the northerly end, there is quite a bit of land that PSNH owns and it includes an old power plant that is on a separate lot. The parcel that we have identified...the overlook is up here...is apparently mostly paved parking. It is around 75,000 square feet. It is level. It appears to meet all of the criteria that we looked at. There is no wetland problem. It has good accessibility. It needs to be further analyzed. It may or may not be for sale. There would be an acquisition cost because it is privately owned. The development cost would be relatively inexpensive because of the nature of the site. It is located on the northern end of Commercial Street next to the overlook of the river. Public Service owns approximately twenty acres right there.

Mayor Baines stated I have reason to believe that site may not be for sale.

Alderman Lopez stated even if it was for sale, economically it would be more valuable to put parking for downtown and the millyard.

Mr. Clark stated site 6 is an existing building. The building contains 18,000 square feet per floor. It is the former Sears building. It is available for sale. The parcel of land is around 100,000 square feet. It is all paved with the existing building on it with three floors; a basement level that is fully finished, first floor which is at grade and a second floor with an elevator. Those were the six and to briefly go through them again; we have Singer Park, Livingston Park, Derryfield Park, over by the West Side Arena, those four would be city sites. Then the Public Service parking lot and then 1415 Elm Street existing building. The concept with the existing building would be that it is too big for simply the seniors and we know there was some expression of concern about sharing departments. But we felt it was important to at least look at an existing building.

Mayor Baines asked did you look at the parcel on Queen City Avenue adjacent to the old AAA, across from Bakersville playground that has been basically an undeveloped site for a long time. They looked at some commercial development that was rejected.

Mr. Clark replied in the affirmative and stated it used to be owned by a family right behind Stoneham Insurance. That is a possibility. It is privately owned. Our concerns there were Queen City Avenue. It is of the right size and it is relatively level. We had done some work with the Stone Family on that property.

Mayor Baines stated you have multiple access. If you head south on Elm Street and pass the old Blessed Sacrament school, take a right on Baker Street you have access that way as well to come into that sight. That is in my neighborhood and I have been looking at that parcel for a long time. I understand it has some commercial development problems but you look at the type of access that this kind of development would be. In terms of location to the East and West Sides it might be worth looking at.

Alderman Shea asked is that the old Ashooh property.

Mayor Baines replied in the affirmative and stated on Brown Avenue and Baker Street. The old Queen City farmstand used to be on that corner.

Mr. Clark stated if we eliminate one of the others we would be looking to add another. It is important that we analyze these six.

Mayor Baines asked is that parcel for sale.

Mr. Clark replied it was but I do not have a price yet.

Mr. MacKenzie asked were there any other pretty good sites that did not quite make the grade.

Mr. Clark replied the size whittled them down.

Alderman Lopez asked what about Massabesic Circle did you go up there.

Mr. Clark replied we did but part of the problem there was some of the land was in Auburn. The other was that we felt that it was a long way away.

Ms. Robie stated it is pretty much owned by the Massabesic Lake.

Mr. Clark stated most of that land is Water Works land.

Alderman Lopez asked what about Youth Development Center.

Mr. Clark replied we thought YDC was a possibility. We eliminated it because we thought there was going to be difficulty in trying to negotiate with the State on it. We thought there were better options.

Mr. Royer asked do you have handouts on those.

Mr. Clark replied we have handouts on everything we talked about today.

Alderman Lopez stated again I want to stress that in all of the sites whichever one we prefer, if it is 20,000 square feet it has to be taken into consideration. Whether there are one or two floors. Like the one we saw in Chelmsford where the guys play pool downstairs. We will put in an elevator if necessary. I do not want to leave the impression that we are starting off with 74,000 square feet and we are talking about a 25,000 square foot building that we might conceivably say maybe we better go for a 20,000 square foot building and do something different. I want to make sure you understand that when you are doing an analysis.

Mr. Wallace stated these sites are not going to be cast in stone. They are assumptions. The biggest one is the parking and the drives. My feeling is that even if we change this to 12,000 square feet (just to say) this is kind of tight for parking and drives. That basically is the paving area it does not give you a lot of cushion so when you add them altogether they are an average size. It puts us in the ballpark.

Alderman Lopez stated but if they build a 20,000 square foot building or 18,000 square foot building with the capability of putting on a second floor in later years, that is the expansion that we talked about originally. We might not expand like a football field but at least we have room for expansion. We can always go up.

Mr. Wallace stated that is true. The Brown School, for example, seemed like it was going to work when we first came up. The size of the site and the building on it...even if we leveled the building...there is just not enough area there. This immediately told us that it was not going to be big enough. You can only fit fifty cars on that sight.

Alderman Lopez stated looking at the six different sites; number one seems to me is the most impressive and the most beautiful one that we could get through. It is on the riverfront. Livingston Park; I have found a congestion of traffic there. I have been told that many senior citizens will not go where there is traffic. They will not even come downtown during the daytime because there is so much traffic. Derryfield Park can be a possibility but it has a lot of traffic too being a major artery of the city. The West Side Arena; I do not know if people want to go down that hill. The area is nice down there but it is isolated because there is no activity there other than what you have. Number five, the PSNH parking lot basically you can almost rule that out because even if we did get it I would have to look at whether it would be a good parking lot for the City of Manchester for economic development more so than all of the other places that we have. The Sears building is an option but there is also consideration for consolidation of departments and whether or not you want mix that with senior citizens. I have not visited any senior citizen center where I have seen a mixture of mental health or youth services or welfare being all in one where the senior citizens are. I do not think it is conducive to what we are trying to accomplish. I do not think there is too much choice, in my opinion anyway. You could be wasting a lot of time. Whatever the committee decides to give some type of direction with Bob MacKenzie's guidelines that even if you went with all six sites and they went before the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, it just would not "fly" we are just wasting time.

Ms. Robie stated Bob MacKenzie's question to Rita O'Connor was important. If they are going to plan a particular site we should find out first of all if we will have bus service. People pay forty-five cents to get on the bus to go downtown. If they are getting bus service to whatever site we have they will go. They are afraid to drive but they will take a bus.

Alderman Shea stated no matter where the site is, there is going to be problems with traffic because no matter which road you drive on there is traffic. We have to understand that is something that people have to contend with. Once they get in their car there is traffic, whether it is Donald Street or Second Street, Queen City

Avenue, Granite Street so that is one of the considerations that we have to bear in mind.

Mr. MacKenzie stated when he was reviewing the six I was just thinking we should wait until he reviews them before the committee starts knocking off sites. It is reasonable now, if there are sites listed in those six that the committee just is not comfortable with, now is the time to tell the consultant. Would there be any potential on that site, if the City did acquire that long site and use the Elm Street site for offices, is there any potential to build a new structure perhaps near Chestnut Street.

Mr. Clark replied if you are familiar with this site, there is a drive-up facility that is under lease. However that lease is not for long-term. It is my understanding but I have not seen the lease. Without that driveway, there is more than adequate space for a very nice facility. There is a house next to it for sale. If you acquired that house, you would pick up that corner as well. Even if the drive-up were there, that would give you a good buildable site that would face Chestnut Street.

Alderman Shea stated the problem is that we would take that particular property off the tax role.

Ms. Vigneault stated we need to consider the programming aspect because we do coordinate with a lot of other agencies that provide human services. This is going to impact upon their food delivery systems that will affect what they do. If we are too far east or south and we are not central to downtown we do have a problem with some of the people on the west getting home delivered meals. You have 150 people out there who are homebound that currently get meals for the West Side that we are doing now. We have to look at how that affects those agencies that already deliver services that coordinate with us and how does that affect their plans for food service delivery. I am getting a lot of communication from them about where it is going to be because it is going to affect our delivery services to seniors. That is a caution and fear they have on how this is going to impact upon that human service network. They need to make it accessible for people downtown.

Mayor Baines stated we are not a very big city geographically. I am not sure how pertinent that is. Transportation becomes the issue. When you go south in Manchester...if you were talking about down towards the airport that is something else...but within the geography of this area...we are not talking long distance.

Ms. Vigneault stated in my discussion with St. Joseph's, they are already delivering homebound meals from the West Side Center. They are saying if it is too far out for us it is more of an expense for us to have all of our volunteer

drivers...administratively it would be more difficult to have them go too far east to make all their routes.

Mayor Baines asked are any of the sites that we are looking in that concern area.

Ms. Vigneault replied in the negative and stated but we are talking about as Rita O'Connor said about Bridge Street you are getting a little bit east. If you stay more in the downtown area but if we go further to Bridge Street and the West Side might be harder for the transportation routes coming from the east. People have to transfer on buses. If you are living too far east and you have to go west it means doing a transfer to get to the West Side. It takes them longer and it is harder for them to get there. It is all about accessibility.

Mayor Baines stated but in the downtown area you have parking issues no matter where you go which is extremely negative to anybody trying to access it.

Alderman Shea asked how many people now visit the center that ride the buses. Do most of the people bring a car to the West Side.

Mrs. O'Connor replied most of them do but a lot of them walk from the two developments. As they are getting older they cannot afford a car. They also are getting their licenses taken away.

Mr. Royer stated I know of a couple who take buses to go over to the West Side center because I have given them a ride home and they live in my area.

Alderman Lopez stated without making any type of Motion, I was wondering if we could go down the list and get a general opinion from everybody whether they like the site or not.

Alderman Lopez asked Singer Park would be number one, how do we feel about that.

Ms. Vigneault replied Singer Park is a good site because it is so neutral. The east and west issue seems to go away. It is a good site because it is so close to the river.

Mr. Royer stated I am all for Singer Park.

Ms. Robie stated the whole City of Manchester knows that I like Singer Park.

Mrs. O'Connor stated Singer Park is perfect but we would have to do something to make parking available for the seniors so they would not have to walk.

Alderman Shea stated there are three sites there, A, B and C.

Mr. Royer stated the third site has 100,000 square feet on the corner.

Alderman Shea stated that is where the Rubenstein parking is.

Mr. MacKenzie stated the City of Manchester and the State of New Hampshire are heading towards a parking garage there. I would not rule out the site but I would keep both sites A & C alive as two sites at Singer Park.

Alderman Lopez asked how about Livingston Park because I think there is too much congestion.

Ms. Robie asked I read in the newspaper that there was going to be a train that would be going through there near Singer Park. Would it be close to us and noisy.

Mr. Royer replied where I live, I am not too far from the railroad tracks and it is not that bad at the present. The only time is when they bring 100 coal cars and you can feel the vibration.

Ms. Robie stated I know there is one that goes by once in awhile but apparently this is something else.

Alderman Shea asked do you mean transportation from Nashua to Boston.

Mr. MacKenzie stated they would be delivering to Cement Quebec but that is maybe once a week. Potential traffic is a passenger train to Manchester, which would come through here but that is several years off.

Alderman Shea stated one of the things we have to consider that we are not just building this senior center for people who are seniors now. We are building it for people who will be seniors in the next several years. We have to have that vision in terms of different types of decisions that we may make in terms of transportation, accessibility and development.

Ms. Robie stated we cannot be thinking about building it just so big now with a possibility of building it bigger later on. You should build it big now because the baby-boomers are right on our heels and there are a lot of them.

Alderman Lopez asked Livingston Park. I have been up there and have been on the Parks and Recreation Commission for eighteen years and the traffic is unbelievable.

Alderman Shea asked how does everyone feel about Derryfield Park.

Alderman Lopez replied it is a site that they still have to look at. There is 100,000 square feet.

Alderman Shea asked the other two sites are the West Side Arena area and also the area up at the Sears Building.

Ms. Robie asked the West Side Arena has a very steep incline. How is that in the winter.

Alderman Lopez replied they take good care of it.

On motion of Alderman Lopez, duly seconded by Jack Royer, it was voted to eliminate Livingston Park and the PSNH property (north Commercial Street) from the list of six potential sites for the Senior Center.

Alderman Lopez stated there is no sense in wasting time on Public Service. It is going to cost too much money and again for economic development it would be better utilized for parking. Livingston Park is too congested with the complex they have there.

Mr. MacKenzie asked because the Singer Park "A" site is not on the list right now could we add that back on and whether we should look at the Queen City Avenue site that the Mayor mentioned.

On motion of Robert MacKenzie, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to add to the list of potential sites for the Senior Center; Site "A" at Singer Park and also the property on Queen City Avenue.

Mr. Wallace stated I just want to remind everybody that at the next meeting we should bring back those sites and let you know what we found on Queen City Avenue and do a little more work on it. Once we have it narrowed down; my job will be to start designing the building for the options. That will not be at the next meeting but it that is what we would move into as the next phase. Maybe a couple of weeks to get the rest of this pulled together and present it.

Mr. Clark stated we should probably come back in a week on Singer Park because I am still very concerned that even if you cut the building footprint in half to 12,000 square feet you are still talking a site that is going to have to be 60,000 square feet. We should work with CLD but that site "A" still may be very tight. We should meet with Peter Ramsey and his foundation and CLD and spend a good

week on that site "A" and come back and give you some more information about that.

Alderman Shea asked do you think that if we allowed you another two weeks because we do not need to have a meeting every week or every other week at this stage in terms of your situation. I would like to give you enough time in case these people are tied up with something else.

Mr. Wallace stated if we do it two weeks from today it would be the day after Memorial Day, which is not good. Could we go to June 6, 2000 and that would be right on our schedule anyway. Is Tuesday a good day.

Alderman Shea stated the meeting would be June 6, 2000 at 9:00 AM.

Mr. Clark stated I do have a concern that if the two sites at Singer Park do not work out then we may want to add another site. You have eliminated Livingston Park and PSNH. The Mayor's site has a pretty good price tag on it. We are going to be sitting here wondering where we are going to site. I am concerned about waiting that long and I do not mind the pressure of trying to investigate Singer Park, I am just afraid that we are going to get off schedule but it is Tom Wallace's call but in my mind it is a long time away.

Alderman Lopez asked you seem so hard on Singer Park. I do not understand the reason you are so hard on trying to rule out Singer Park. That is what your impression to me is.

Mr. Clark replied if I am giving you that impression then I apologize because I am not. I am concerned with, Alderman, is that there are a lot of factors that effect this site. One is the extent of the materials that have been filled in. Peter Ramsey told you that might be suitable for fill but it is not suitable to be built upon. We do have the wetlands issue which will be addressed and that may offer some additional space. We need to get some further clarification whether that is an issue. I am not negative on the site, I am just thinking that it is not a "slam-dunk".

Alderman Lopez stated I am sure that the Riverfront Foundation is willing to work with you whole-heartedly in terms of accomplishing this. Peter Ramsey's remarks that it is the best location scenic-wise and everything else is truthful. Maybe 25,000 square feet is not suitable but we could put an 18,000 square foot building with a story on top eventually in order to meet the criteria down there. I do not want to let this go and say because we are looking at a 25,000 square foot building with a total of 74,000 square feet maybe it could be 54,000 square feet if we put a second story on. To make it work, like Peter Ramsey said, it would be a vision to

try and make it work. I got the impression that you were putting obstacles up left and right.

Mr. Clark stated if I am then I apologize. I want to concentrate solely on the Singer Park site and come back with you working with Tom Wallace, working with those building site assumptions so that if this is the site there is no sense spending a whole lot of time on the other ones. It is very clear, from this committee that this is where you want to be. There are some extenuating circumstances in particular the issue of parking. What happens when the Phantoms are playing there. What happens when the high schools have a soccer game. What happens when there is a rock concert there. Not all of those occur at night, some of that occurs in the afternoon, some occur on the weekends. It is very loud and clear that this is the preference of this committee. I would like to concentrate our efforts very quickly, in working with the engineers and Tom Wallace and his creativity and working with the Riverfront Park so that we can come back here in a week and a half or so and say we have looked at it and tell you this is the maximum that you can have. This meets your criteria. It is your criteria. We serve you. Based on the criteria that I was given, I did not set the criteria this is what we were given, and this site does not work. If we change the criteria and if we look more deeply in trying to maybe utilize some of that then it is very likely that something can be built on it. Whether or not it will meet your criteria we do not have enough information yet.

Alderman Lopez stated maybe that is the point. We are looking at 24,000 square foot building. If you come back to us and say the best we could do is 18,000 square feet or 16,000 square feet with a second story then that is it. But we have to know that. That is what Tom is talking about. I do not want to walk out of this room and say it is going to be a 24,000 square foot building because it might not be in the budget to accept that.

Mr. Wallace stated the size of the building is not going to rule out the site. Parking and some of the other aspects are what is really controlling this.

Alderman Shea stated parking is what you are concerned about and this is probably as much a concern as the building itself because one is related to the other.

Mr. MacKenzie stated after looking at the sites, it is going to be difficult to find a site in Manchester, none of the sites meet our ideal criteria. At Derryfield Park you could probably fit the building and parking but it may be too far east for the West Side. If you look at every one of these sites none of them could meet the ideal criteria. We have to look back at the sites again and decide what is most important to us and what is going to work for us.

Mr. Wallace stated that is the reason it is important to have things to compare. It is a lot easier to evaluate when you compare. If you only have one then you can say that is the best we can do. It is hard to make a decision.

Alderman Shea asked Mr. Clark would you prefer to meet within a week and a half to two weeks rather than later.

Mr. Clark replied it is really Tom's call but my concern is that time is moving away and there are a lot of questions that we should give answers.

Alderman Shea asked how about the 31st of May.

Alderman Lopez stated I would suggest that you could call a meeting anytime you want. As soon as you have the information to coordinate with the Chairman and he can set the meeting within twenty-four hours or forty-eight hours.

Mr. Wallace stated we should have some idea to inform you of the result when we would be ready.

Alderman Shea asked who is going to call me.

Mr. Wallace stated I would get in touch with you directly.

Ms. Robie asked I do not understand graphs and maps. I like to stand on the land and look at it. How could I identify Singer Park sites "A, B and C".

Mr. Clark replied call our office and we will bring you down there.

Mr. Wallace stated site "A" is the one we went to on the bus. Site "B" was south of that down by the railroad. Site "C" we did not see but it is between where the soccer field is just the other side towards Elm Street.

Mr. Clark stated site "C" is if you stood in the existing parking lot and looked east towards Elm Street there are woods there. I would be happy to bring you down to show you.

Alderman Shea stated you have been down there, Irene.

Mr. Fang stated maybe Allen and Tom could help everybody next time is it possible to get figures for the old Sears Building what is the asking price and for this specific site south of Singer Park in terms of the soil conditions if we have to

remove all the debris and bring in some fill and what it will cost, is that a trade off so that would help everybody to decide.

Mr. Wallace stated I am not sure if we can get that. We know the asking price for the Sears Building. As far as the soils, it is going to take some analysis of the material and it could actually take some designing of the building that is what the task is going to be is getting into specifics about the building design and specific costs for those. The renovation cost for the Sears Building. We will be getting to that but I do not know if we have enough information to come up with a meaningful answer at this stage on some of those things.

Alderman Shea asked we have a couple of other people here do you have any concerns.

Ms. Kelley replied the only thing at Livingston Park what is the reason nobody wants that site.

Alderman Shea replied because of the traffic.

Ms. Kelley stated but there is a red light there.

Ms. Robie stated the seniors would drive from here to go to Nashua to their Senior Center because this is what they want. If they can drive to Nashua then they can drive to the Daniel Webster Highway. We have to share the parking with the people who are using the park.

Ms. Sconsa stated I like the Singer Park and there is a lot of traffic there too. It is horrendous but because of the lights is that going to help us. It is different from Livingston Park there are no lights in between.

Alderman Shea stated like I said before no matter where you go there is traffic.

Ms. Robie stated we should look into having bus service at certain times.

Mr. O'Connor stated everybody in the City's concern is the location. PSNH property would be the ideal location.

Mrs. O'Connor stated the Mayor stated it was not for sale.

Alderman Shea stated I would be remiss for not thanking Allen Clark and Doris Duhamel for their work and help and also Tom Wallace. It is not an easy job and obviously you have people who are quite interested and we appreciate your efforts.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, On motion of Alderman Lopez, duly seconded by Irene Robie, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee