



## BENTON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes Friday, September 16, 2022

Members Attending: Kate **Porsche**, BC Economic Development Manager; Jessica **Hougen**, Benton County Historical Society Executive Director; HCAC Vice Chair: Jill **Van Buren**, Courthouse Preservation Committee representative; Roz **Keeney**, Preservations Works; HCAC Chair: Chris **Wesfall**, Oregon Judicial Department, Trial Court Administrator; Bob **Richardson**, Senior Land Use Planner OSU; Peter **Betjemann**, Director of Arts and Education, College of Liberal Arts OSU; Scott **McClure**, representing the Historic Resources Commission

Advisory Staff Attending: Erica **Ceder**, DLR Group; Shannon **Bush**, Benton County Community Development Coordinator; Lynne **McKee**, Director of Benton County Natural Areas, Parks & Events; Commissioner Nancy **Wyse**, Liaison; Cynthia **De Le Torre**, Benton County Community Outreach & Engagement Coordinator; Paul **Wallsinger**, Benton County Facilities Manager; Nick **Kurth**, Benton County, JSIP Manager

Others Attending: Recorder: Lizz Gustin, Benton County Natural Areas, Parks and Events Administrative Assistant II

- I. Meeting called to order 1009
- II. Approval of August 19, 2022 minutes – Wesfall requested correction of “suds out” to “suss out”.
- III. Citizens call to order – Wesfall – none present; Board of Commissioners (BOC) has requested to see the inclusion of citizens for each meeting going forward.
- IV. Board of Commissioner Expectations and Timeline – Wesfall –McKee and Wesfall met with the Board of Commissioners (BOC going forward) as a shift was done and this committee was never on a clear goal of the timeline; Wanted BOC to advise on certain questions such as What is expected? What could we offer? Are the BOC looking for a specific option on the table or is going the suit, private/public on the table? After meeting with the commissioners our current timeline is variable and has been extended to March 2023, a preliminary report not with public comment until after the bond measure for JSIP as nobody wants to throw confusion to the public. A final report will be looked for by the BOC about this time next year. Demolition of the courthouse is NOT an option. BOC does want a suite of options vs a specific option. This is all lining up with what we have started currently with this committee; Final report will include the reasoning as to why we did not go with a particular option; Kurth – asked what the direction on ownership is? Wesfall – County wants to maintain ownership but could be leased; the option of sale was not

brought up with the BOC. Wyse - being that the BOC wants to maintain that would be a big ask "keep the building as is". Bush – Does the BOC want a re-use dedicated to social or county? Wyse – I can am not speaking for the board at this capacity today but yes we would want to see a comprehensive review of each possibility; Wesfall – foot traffic is important broadest impact of the community a one use for the whole building may not draw the community; we will need to set clear pros and cons for each recommendation; Wesfall felt better after the discussion with BOC over all scope of assignment would be

V. Development of the Project Plan – Wesfall - what is the tenure of the group – optimistic but confused – the timeline being moved around we went frantic and looked for something to shove in a bag and run. We should take a pause at this time and look at a final goal and build back from there when, who, what. How do we as a body come to a consensus to arrive to the BOC – “popcorn sessions” have been very creative – would like to spend some time on mapping out to get to our end goal so we have the time applied equally.

VI. Timeline – Wesfall – what are the bench marks, an attainable plan of what do we take to public engagement. Open to any comment McClure – what does public input look like; Kurth – not the authority on public input currently working the “talk trash” a preliminary in March I feel we will need to come back in April – we come back to 3 options feel right in April will need about 2-3 months of community engagement April May June is a good time frame – typically completed before summer or after labor day – appears that maybe no later than June typical engagement 2-3 events 1 a month maybe with a target group – this is just one view.

- a. A timeline construction displayed on board by Bush – County PIO Travis can help establish virtual and in person a Double whammy – summer is a bad time I heard – preliminary draft public engagement revision then final report  
AUG/JULY – finalize  
MAY/JUNE – public engagement (MAY 16)  
April – respond to feedback to BOC  
March – incorporate  
Jan/Feb draft of preliminary report

Bush – what is the vision? Wesfall/Kurth – we will need to still define that; Bush - most efficient will be visually based 10-12 executive style personal experience on more pages more not being read – Paul – ya do a go no go like a sports bracket; Bush asked Wyse what is really the BOC wanting for the report?; Wyse – no discussion of this; Wallsinger - we could do a word clouding get the most traction; Kurth – research analysis consensus by end of Dec is a little tight; Bush- so four options by Dec?; Wesfall agrees; Kurth and Wesfall both feel that this timeline may be a little tight Wesfall would like more input; Richardson terms of research component if analysis was.... I did not get this deep dive into feasibility due to movement within the room; Wesfall – is there a capacity within this committee to divvy up some feasibility – we have about 2 months to do this work; Kurth is shaking head no -I think what I was looking at is an architecture coming through to help the decision; being we do not have that time we look into the values we defined is the BOC looking for a lot of public or can a single use nonprofit move in; guiding principles we may offer then we can say our values of the building use line them up over the 2-3 months – Wesfall agrees we have done a lot of work already does not feel the report in march will need the

feasibility yet will need most likely at the final report so we can wait on the full feasibility discussion; Bush - really difficult on a multi-use need to narrow down preliminary report in March will need to be identified 2-5 ideas to present to the board –social here are some samples housing – things like that social justice type – another bucket of private/public partnership – a tourism bucket and pros and cons; Bush reiterated Wesfall on presenting; Richardson - yes we did this last time; Wyse - agrees with Bush maybe place an appendix S = indicating as to WHY we crossed it off the list; Keeney – agrees as this happens in the past so it will happen in the future; Wesfall – we need to develop that plan for this timeline – does all feel there is enough architecture in the time line; Kurth -agreed and reiterated same comments as Bush great time frame to start with but we have other elements of this plan like budget; the team who is going to do this work; do we have dedicated county workers; Project plan will need to be solidified; Wesfall agreed and stated this is important; Wyse – nick is correct ask formal so that this is very clear with motions being made; Wesfall to clarify nick suggesting this to be fluid and as Malone stated final timeline is a “give or take” is this functional?; Betjemann - I am itching to get into these discussions and hopes this will be done during this timeline to include the stakeholders.

- VII. Other - Wesfall- make sure we have a plan before time runs out; a lot of work on that whiteboard with a lot of resources needed; utilize methodically, how are we going to get to that plan; let's talk about the details and positioning into a preliminary report; we struggle on the dwindling down with no consensus on the proper ranking; what is within the big buckets Peter? ; Betjemann - I would love to hear from the colleges in the room as he still has the same thoughts devoting 2 categories per meeting and the 5<sup>th</sup> on the final meeting; Keeney – to clarify you want us to go around the room and tell what we think of government – individual issues are? ; Betjemann -stated not necessarily around the room as much as throwing out a category and the next 25 minutes this is discussed; Wesfall clarified to on line persons; to spend some time on exploring each of the big buckets pros cons perspective wide open discussion next 25-30 min.; Wallsinger -really glad to hear that, as that is what he does; if someone hands you an elephant how do you eat it; breaking down chunks; yes each meeting we should tackle those chunks; Bush wrote and sent out an idea with PRO/CONS; Wesfall agrees feels we had done this earlier; Wesfall wanted any input from on liners; Kurth - stated we need to be consistent; Richardson - I was thinking same thoughts concerned on a ranking process; if we know what we value should come out in the pros and cons; which of these use types are ones we go forward on; if we were to all agree building open to lots of foot traffic; Wesfall - Bob suggesting a scattered chart vs absolute value; Hougen – maybe we need to stop discussing how we will discuss and dive into this at this time, we have 25 mins we could get a process done; Wyse - agreed but in her experience it is really helpful on knowing what will be discussed.; Wesfall - We have a time line we know what the next step is; Wyse – I suggest that we do high level today so we have more time to reflect for next meeting; Richardson - government/public use vs office use; this could all include offices an ownership thing maybe we need to refine these categories; government is civic use; not repurposing just a slow ease of another tenant without triggering major issues vs public that will trigger issues.; Bush – ownership, this is what I need to be educated on little knowledge on how county/government works here, square footage for government use

sufficient or not; expensive building to maintain 31K sq. feet very difficult to segment foot print what ya have is what ya get. Historic restraints

Due to technical difficulties Wesfall repeats all discussion to those online.

Keeney – in the Gmail account has a blueprint of how it is; Betjemann- government offices currently homeless? Kurth – repurposing became our objective knowing there is no compelling need as there is new build and movement to Kalapuya suggested for restorative justice a new concept between county/city; city wants little to nothing with building. Keeney - preservation law has to prioritize historic resources if available no fed office in Corvallis; one on campus but I know there are some laws relating to use fed resources if need we have illuminated city/county so fed would be the most likely government to go into here;

Wesfall reiterated to online persons

Hougen- state would be an option; Keeney we do have several offices here in Corvallis (state) we need to get someone to find out what they are; Richardson- government to be taken off as a category as it will only default to offices not a research lab; Bush- but you have civic owned by county but public use of some sort; Richardson - does ownership matter at this time as it would be run by government or not; Wyse prior to CoVid there was a lack of meeting spaces; Hougen meeting spaces in museum the building across planning meeting space for the public; not discounting this need but other groups are in the process of helping this need; Bush - what about wedding rental space; lets' not get hung up on the umbrella categories; McClure – the main reason this has been so long as it has a definable use; how long will a wedding event space pan out as those come and go – sustainability; Jessica - a variable need; Kurth - under government category list restorative municipal drug court this could be the place for a catch all courts or specialty court; Wesfall - yes drug court is located here home for an Aid and assist private attorney a long term diversion program for alcohol/driving issues. Western Oregon university was reached out to come in the fall possibly as they have a restorative justice building; Cedar – a lot of restorative justice accessibility is a key feature as that population requiring those services has a high accessibility need requirements/expectation of privacy confidentiality; lots of those challenges arise in current lay out; do not want to feel “on display” confidentiality separation; Kurth - to clarify this is one category of 12-15 million dollar require a seismic upgrade; Cedar - a seismic upgrade should be vital in the safety of the persons inside the building and not a factor to dismiss.; Betjemann - con and pro – we don't know what we need; do we want to use in an aspirational way or repurposing itself; I see a bunch of answers to this; Kurth – Wyse could you get clarification on the seismic upgrades are they a requisite a solution would need immediately gives county time to fund the amount of 12-15 million; this is a game changer for me, if need immediately or not; Wyse - a little conversation was done not too deep a pro/con criteria; couldn't do a daycare; do not foresee the county having that type of money any time soon; Kurth- this will change our projections if we need these millions up front we need to look at that; Betjemann - feels this is a pro; the con is the cost and pro the need for time to get said money;

Wesfall - there is a continuum on seismic upgrade; Bush reiterated Wyse comments identify who works in this realm in this state building renovation knowledge of what's available should be on this committee; Keeney worked with OSU engineering department there are experts/specialists there i.e foot-wise building; huge issue not just the building will be gone the whole downtown will be destroyed all know of this elephant in the room; Balboa who is out of country is someone I worked with most I can pull in – Wesfall- asked for her to reach out to Balboa; Wyse – preservation of life not the building; Ceder – utilizing a courthouse for those that have had past bad dealings may keep those away due to the bad experience; Wesfall- restorative justice is a big label; we currently do this now with our drug program, ADR, small claims mediation, family law mediation; variety we do not have space for currently; Betjemann - comment to Jessica hopefully we will see change over the years it's strange to say N Corvallis to be normal justice then downtown we wave a flag of alternative justice center – is this future proof? Kurth– new campus will be nice but you will know you are on a law enforcement campus – Keeney really likes the restorative idea; a traditional use for justice having lady justice outside; can it have more than one purpose, do you see this co-existing? Wesfall – not mutually exclusive – paul – consistent funding for government use.

Multiple people multiple discussions as the meeting was concluded at 1143