

BOROUGH OF CALDWELL
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING

April 7, 2025

A meeting was held by the Borough of Caldwell Oversight Committee at 3:30pm on Monday, April 7, 2025 at the Caldwell Firehouse Building, 30 Roseland Avenue, Caldwell. The meeting was held in-person.

PRESENT: Councilman Brown, Councilman Daniolowicz, Councilman Jurgensen, Alex Palumbo, Thomas Tucci, Mike DeCarlo, Joe Haines from Dassa Haines Architects, and Evan Jacobs from Matrix New World Engineers.

GOAL: To discuss a timeline and scope of work for the original Caldwell Library Building, 268 Bloomfield Avenue.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The original library building is composed of 3 sections: the original "Carnegie" building which is the front of the building, the first addition which consists of the portion located at the rear of the building, and the second addition which is located to the left of the original structure as you are facing the building from the street. The original library building was designated as an historical site on a local level. The Caldwell Historical Preservation Commission, at one time, was in the process of trying to have the building designated as a NJ State Historical Site but there was stringent criteria that needed to be met in order to successfully obtain that designation.

It was also mentioned that FEMA has awarded \$650,000 in funds that are currently available to start the reconstruction/renovation of the building.

Since the Committee's last meeting, Mr. Palumbo had met with the Structural Engineers and the Department of Public Works Staff had done some light demolition for investigation purposes, including removal of parts of the ceiling.

FINDINGS ON THE CURRENT STATE OF THE LIBRARY BUILDING:

- The building has suffered tremendous water damage from a leaky roof.
- There is no insulation in the walls.
- The worst damage was found in the first addition part of the structure.
- The walls are 10 inches thick and composed of brick.
- The ceilings are made of plaster, not concrete, as originally surmised.
- The plaster is approximately 1 inch thick.
- The heads of the windows have major cracks.
- The damage to the building looks to be minimal from the exterior but appears to be extensive inside.

NOTE: KSI Structural Engineers Report from 2023 notes water damage to the building as well.

PLAN OF ACTION:

- Mr. Haines suggested that prior to starting the renovations, selective demolition and mitigation plans should be prepared in order to expedite the process, allow for a clearer understanding of the project, and provide crucial information on any structural issues that would need to be addressed.

- The Committee decided to try and commission a company through a State Contract or CO-OP to do the preliminary work. Mr. DeCarlo reported that he could investigate companies on the State Contract List or within CO-OP groups and have answers within 3-4 days.
Any company commissioned to do the work through a State Contract or CO-OP group would be approved by Resolution by the Governing Body.
- The scope of the preliminary work would include:
 - a) Scraping and removal of finishes
 - b) Removal of plaster and ceilings
 - c) Testing of plaster for lead and mold contaminants
 - d) Water-proofing of the building
 - e) Closing up of the basement windows
 - f) Roof of the building should be weatherproofed and an assessment made of it's condition

PRELIMINARY SITE IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE LIBRARY:

- Survey work is currently being conducted for the site. Mr. DeCarlo will ask the surveyor to expand the work to include a 20 ft. perimeter around the building to be included in the topographical data.
- Preliminary site work would include:
 - a) Removing and backfilling the ramp behind the building.
 - b) Detaching a drain.
 - c) Waterproofing the exterior of the building.

GENERAL TOPICS OF DISCUSSION REGARDING THE LIBRARY BUILDING:

- The current plan is for all 3 parts of the building to remain in order to optimize usable space.
- Wait to replace the roof until after an assessment is made of it's condition in order to not have any delays or impact on possible structural repairs.
- The gutters and drains should be checked and "unclogged".
- Councilman Jurgensen inquired about matching the existing brick on the façade of the building. Mr. Haines stated that it would be difficult to find a perfect match. Providing a contrast, possibly stucco with a pattern and color, would be a better option for aesthetic purposes.
- The footings and foundation of the building seem to be in good condition.

DESIGN IDEAS FOR THE ORIGINAL LIBRARY BUILDING:

- For the oldest part of the building (the original "Carnegie" building), a large open space would be created to make it a focal point. The existing bathroom in this area would be removed.
- One large room would be created for crafts, with an adjacent second activity room. Both rooms could also be used as meeting/conference/event spaces.
- 2 bathrooms would be located by the entrance to the building. One would be ADA accessible.
- One structural wall in the original building must remain in it's current location.
- Storage closets and a sink area would be created.
- The possibility was posed to relocate the ADA ramp to the side of the building adjacent to the Green. The main doors at the entrance would still remain.
- It was noted that an electrical outlet would need to be installed on the exterior wall by the Green to provide electricity for outside events.
- The Committee Members mentioned that Councilwoman Hunkele should be consulted for interior designing ideas.

- The possibility was posed of having rotating displays or television monitors to showcase historical pieces and documents.
- A discussion ensued regarding the basement of the building and whether to close off the area completely or install a hallway or stairwell for access to the basement. It was noted that the basement area would need to be waterproofed, but was not to be considered part of the functional space for the building due to a history of flooding. Mr. Haines stated that he would consult with the Borough's Construction Official to see if NJ Building Code would allow for interior access to the basement in this case.

TIMELINE PROJECTION AND PLAN OF ACTION FOR LIBRARY RECONSTRUCTION:

- A Resolution for the April 15th Council Meeting to be voted on by the Governing Body to approve expenditures for FEMA funding designated for renovations/reconstruction of the library building.
- Selection of a company to perform select demolition and mitigation work through a State Contract or CO-OP group. Commencement of preliminary work should be commissioned by the May 6th Council Meeting date.
- The timeline for completion of the select demolition and mitigation work is 3-4 weeks.
- PHASE 1 of the reconstruction project:
 - a) Select demolition; finishes, plaster, and ceilings.
 - b) Select demolition and mitigation plans drawn by Mr. Haines.
 - c) Investigation of the roof of the building.
 - d) Waterproofing of the building.
 - e) Contract awarded by Resolution to a company with a State Contract or within a CO-OP group no later than May 6th.
 - f) Preliminary site work to include:
 - i. Removal and backfill of ramp behind the building.
 - ii. Detachment of a drain.
 - iii. Waterproofing the exterior of the building.
- PHASE II of the reconstruction project:
 - a) Full drawings for reconstruction designs based on issues identified in phase 1.
 - b) Project will be presented for a vote to the Governing Body to go out to bid at the June 17th Council Meeting.
 - c) After proper advertisement protocols, awarding of the contract for the reconstruction (Phase II work) will be presented for approval to the Governing Body at the August 12th Council Meeting.

PROVOST SQUARE SITE DISCUSSION:

- First phase will be centered around the lead pistol range. Samplings and testings have been taken. The Borough will need to go out to bid to hire a company for clean up and remediation. The NJDEP will need to issue a No Further Action Letter once the project is completed.
- A discussion ensued regarding the Police Garage. The consensus of the Committee Members was that it should be removed. Ideas were presented on how to differentiate the DPW Garage and work area from the rest of the site. Some possibilities posed were creating bin blocks as depositories for DPW materials or planting a line of shrubbery.
- Creating a new space for the Water Department Office was discussed. Potential locations could be designating an area behind the DPW Garage with an internal access door or creating a loft space within the DPW garage.
- Councilman Jurgensen inquired if a plan could be created to provide a better space for the DPW Staff? He reported that at the moment, the DPW does not have a working bathroom or a proper place to take their lunch breaks. It was mentioned that Jake Pohlman has been cleaning and clearing out space in the

DPW Garage. The Committee noted that Jake Pohlman should be consulted for ideas and feedback with any possible solutions.

- Mr. Palumbo reported that the DPW Garage does need a roof replacement.

CALDWELL POLICE DEPARTMENT DISCUSSION:

- There has been no definitive location designated for a new Caldwell Police Department Headquarters.
- The Caldwell Community Center Building would meet the seismic requirements for a police headquarters.
- If located in the Community Center, an idea was posed to divide the police department area on both levels with the Courtroom and Violations Office on the upper floor and the offices, cells, showers and sallyport located on the lower level. This design concept would allow for easy access to vehicles for officers since police vehicles will be stationed in lots/parking areas on both levels.

Committee Members agreed to hold their **next meeting at 3:30 pm Wednesday, April 30th** at the Caldwell Firehouse.

The meeting adjourned at 5:26 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Conlon

Deputy Clerk