

**CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: May 4, 2009

Reviewed by: BP

SUBJECT: Authorize Design, Preparation of Plans, and Calling for Bids for Repair and Modifications to the Community Center Tower

FROM: Ann Chaney, Community Development Director
Barry Whittaker, Project Manager
Jeff Bond, Planning & Building Manager

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council maintain the tower as designed, incorporating repairs and changes suggested by WJE, project architects. The Commission also expressed support for weather-proofing the top of the tower with the installation of divided light windows in the opening in the side and a roof on the top, to the extent that the schedule and budget can accommodate the additional changes.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That Council authorize preparing final plans and specifications and calling for bids for the repair project, incorporating the installation of windows and a roof as suggested by the Commission, if the project architects concur that this could be a structural and/or water-proofing benefit to the tower or building, if it does not significantly delay the project schedule, and if that modification does not exceed \$50,000.

BACKGROUND

The Community Center was built in 1992. In 2002-03, the City performed extensive rehabilitation work on the exterior of the Community Center due to water intrusion and damage, particularly on the stair tower and south (Marin) and west (Evelyn) walls. At the beginning of 2006, it became evident that there was a new leak problem. Since that time, the City has spent approximately \$260,000 on this project. In performing that repair work, damage of a much greater scope than originally anticipated was discovered, and since that time, the focus has been on analyzing and exploring the water damage, and designing and preparing plans for effective repairs.

At its meeting of April 20, 2009, the Council referred the tower design portion of the item to the Planning and Zoning Commission for consideration.

DISCUSSION:

Wiss, Janney, Elstner (WJE) has prepared plans and specifications for use in reconstruction of the tower, and we are approximately ready to solicit bids. The most important proposed change is to incorporate a “drainage & ventilation” fabric into the wall section, between the new stucco and the building paper and structural plywood underneath it. This material creates a ventilation cavity between the vapor barrier and the stucco exterior. A second change will be to eliminate the existing insulation from the exterior walls of the stair tower. When water has gotten into these walls, the insulation holds it. The interior of the stair tower is unheated and uncooled.

At the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting of April 28, 2009, the Commission recommended that the City Council maintain the tower as designed, incorporating repairs and changes suggested by WJE. The Commission also expressed support for weather-proofing the top of the tower with the installation of divided light windows in the opening in the side and a roof on the top, to the extent that the schedule and budget can accommodate the additional changes. The Commission agreed that administrative design review by staff would be appropriate level of review for the final design.

Given the repeated failure of the tower, there has been some desire expressed to consider removing at least portions of the tower to reduce the likelihood of further failure in the future. WJE believes that the tower can be successfully repaired without further modification, but also recognizes that there might be some benefit in the elimination of the difficult tower-top construction details. Staff has been using a range of \$25,000 to \$50,000 over and above the general cost of repairs as the magnitude of the potential structural changes to be considered.

The tower structure provides an enclosure of the fire exit from the basement to the main entry lobby. Above the main building roof level, however, the tower’s function is largely decorative. It does provide access to the roof, but that access could be provided more conventionally from a ladder and hatch. The Planning & Zoning Commission discussed elimination of the flying beams and their support posts, reducing the height of the tower, and concluded that they could not support a reduction in the height of the tower.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The repair project is estimated at \$327,000, plus the potential additional expenditure of \$25,000 to \$50,000 for any structural modifications, and plus Contract Administration. At this point, the lawsuit against the repair contractor has not been resolved, so

proceeding with the repairs would require the City to use other funds at this time. The overall cost estimate is as follows.

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| 1. Estimated repair contract: | \$350,000 |
| 2. <u>Construction soft costs @ 15%</u> | <u>\$ 52,500</u> |
| 3. Total Construction costs: | \$402,500 |
| 4. <u>Project soft costs, pre-construction</u> | <u>\$270,000</u> |
| 5. Overall estimated project cost: | \$672,500 |

Attachment

Photos of existing tower and alternatives presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission