

Staff Report

**LIBRARY RENOVATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT
CHANGE ORDER RELATED TO HISTORICAL PRESERVATION**

April 23, 2013

BACKGROUND:

At its March 21st meeting, the Library Board of Trustees approved a resolution recommending that the City Council approve Change Order No. 1, which eliminates subsections 1.3A, 1.4A, 1.4B, 1.4C, 3.5A, 3.5B, 3.6A, and 3.6B of section 01 3591 of the Library Renovation and Expansion construction contract. These subsections (attached) relate to the requirement for a Historic Treatment Specialist. Change Order No. 1 would result in a deduct of \$13,850.

At the March 26th City Council meeting, Historic Preservation Commission Chair Sharon Wirth requested that the City Council not approve this change order. She expressed concern over the removal and replacement of the windows in the historic portions of the building, along with concern that these changes might jeopardize a future listing of the Library on the National Register of Historic Places. **At this meeting, the City Council directed the Library Board of Trustees to meet with the Historical Preservation Commission to “clarify the issues and see if they can come back with a recommendation that can respect the goals of historic preservation and the goals of the Library project without ‘bankrupting it.’”**

Overview of Joint Meeting held on April 11th

The Library Board of Trustees and the Historic Preservation Commission met as directed on April 11th. A tour was provided by the Architect, Kate Michaud of MS&R, who discussed the exterior and interior design elements and highlighted the historical elements of the building that were being retained in the current contract for the 1904/1940 portion of the building. Michaud also noted why certain elements were not being maintained with the project, including the wood windows, steel skylight and north exterior stairwell and planter.

The Board and Commission then met in the City Hall’s Council Chambers for formal presentations that included a timeline of prior Board and Commission interactions, an overview by the architect through renderings and graphics of the historical elements of the project that are being maintained, and a presentation by Dan Tindall, the individual who had briefly been utilized as a historical treatment specialist by the general contractor. He had been invited to join the joint meeting by the Historic Preservation Commission.

The Board and Commission discussed what was necessary for the listing to occur on the National Registry of Historic Places and the value of the registry. **This discussion noted that the value to the listing would be realized in the future if federal funds were**

solicited for repairs to the building, as well as if the building were later sold to a private party and renovated using state and federal historic tax credits. It was agreed that the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) would be contacted to obtain guidance on the importance of the wood windows, skylight, and north exterior stairs/planter as those elements relate to potential listing on the registry.

Ms. Michaud reviewed issues with the skylight construction, and noted that repairing the existing skylight will not stop the issue with condensation dripping onto the ceiling and causing rot and mold over time. This was only noticeable once the damage could be seen on the interior of the building. Only through changing the structure to a new aluminum style skylight will the condensation be eliminated and damaged stopped. **The project does call for the interior, publicly visible wood glass components to be retained and restored. The appearance inside the facility will not change with replacement of the roof top skylight.**

Ms. Michaud also discussed the issue with the exterior north stairs and planter. **She stated that they are so far deteriorated that the only option is to remove it and correct the structural issues that have cause the deterioration over time.** Additionally, the stairs were not constructed with hand rails, which is a safety issue for staff who are using this entrance and exit.

After the joint meeting the following steps were taken:

1) A tour of the building was scheduled with representatives from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for Monday, April 22nd at 10 a.m. After viewing the building firsthand, SHPO staff will hopefully be able to give a stronger indication as to whether or not the planned changes to the windows, skylight and stairs would negatively affect the listing of the Library on the National Register of Historic Places.

2) Library staff submitted information to David Wadsworth, of Wadsworth Construction in Decorah, Iowa. Wadsworth was recommended to the Library Board of Trustees the Historic Preservation Commission to provide information regarding restoration of the Library's wood windows. On April 18 Mr. Wadsworth was sent extensive information regarding the wood windows and other historic features. Mr. Wadsworth will have an assessment of the costs to repair (as opposed to replace) the windows by Wednesday, April 24.

April 18th Library Board of Trustees Meeting

At their April 18 meeting, the Library Board of Trustees reviewed information then available regarding the windows, skylight and stairway. They noted their continued commitment to making decisions regarding the building project based on energy efficiency, ease of future maintenance, and fiscal stewardship while maintaining the historical character of the 1904 and 1940 buildings as much as practical. **They stated that they while they do not wish to negatively impact the possibility of a listing on the National Historic Register and are willing to consider preservation of the wood windows if that is the only factor**

that would impact the registry, they do not support changes to the plans regarding other historic elements such as the skylights and north exterior stairs and planter.

The Library Board emphasized that a determination needs to be made regarding the wood windows no later than April 30 in order to maintain the library construction project schedule. Therefore, after the meeting with SHPO staff and after receiving the information from Mr. Wadsworth, the Library's Building Committee will meet to provide a recommendation to the Library Board of Trustees regarding the impacts of removal of the windows, skylight and north exterior stairs and planter.

Since the Library Board has deferred contract control to the City Council for this project, the City Council will ultimately have decision making authority on whether or not changes are made to the existing contract. The current contract calls for replacement of the wood windows, skylight, and the north stairs as well as the removal of the planter. Should the Council determine that they do not wish to see any or all of these done, they would need to take action to direct the Library Board to modify the contract accordingly.

The Library Board would like to have guidance from the Council by no later than April 30th to help maintain the schedule for the project. The Board is willing to call a special meeting to provide a final recommendation to the Council pertaining to the findings from SHPO and Wadsworth. It is possible that SHPO may not provide any findings that are conclusive prior to April 30th.

On April 18th, the Library's construction advisor, Brad Heemstra, provided the Library Board with an estimate for abating and retaining the existing windows that was not cost prohibitive. Depending on the condition of the existing windows and sills, the costs for abating and retaining could be cost neutral.

At the April 18th, Library Board of Trustees meeting, the Board also reaffirmed their March 21, 2013 decision to recommend to the Council the elimination of subsections 1.3A, 1.4A, 1.4B, 1.4C, 3.5A, 3.5B, 3.6A, and 3.6B of section 01 3591 of the Library Renovation and Expansion construction contract that requires the contractor to hire a Historic Treatment Specialist. In a memo that was part of the April 11th joint meeting packet, Ms. Michaud noted that the change order for the Historic Treatment Specialist and the wood windows are two separate issues. She stated, *"Regardless of what is decided about the wood windows, MS&R does not feel that a Historic Treatment Specialist is needed for the project."*

OPTIONS:

1. Approve Change Order No. 1 with A&P/Samuels Group, A Joint Venture, deleting subsections 1.3A, 1.4A, 1.4B, 1.4C, 3.5A, 3.5B, 3.6A, and 3.6B of section 01 3591 that pertain to hiring a Historic Treatment Specialist.

2. Do not accept Change Order No. 1 and retain the services of the Historic Treatment Specialist.

LIBRARY BOARD'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Library Board of Trustees is working to determine if preservation of the historical wood windows is possible and financially feasible. Regardless of the outcome, it is the position of the Library Board members and their consultants that the Historic Treatment Specialist will not be needed. The contract for the project provides language to ensure that the work done on the 1904/1940 portions of the building will be done with appropriate care for the historical elements. Monies from this deduction change order could then be made available for wood window restoration, should that be viable.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby approving Change Order No. 1 with A&P/Samuels Group, a Joint Venture, deleting subsections 1.3A, 1.4A, 1.4B, 1.4C, 3.5A, 3.5B, 3.6A, and 3.6B of section 01 3591, all of which pertain to hiring a Historic Treatment Specialist.

CITY STAFF COMMENTS:

Unfortunately, it appears that a difference of opinion remains between two of your City boards. While the Library Board is willing to consider the possibility of retaining the existing wooden windows based on further information they receive next week, the members do not believe there is a need for a Historic Treatment Specialist. In addition, they do not support changes to the plans regarding other historic elements such as the skylights and north exterior stairs and planter.

Because of the urgency of keeping the project on track, the City Council should decide at the April 23rd meeting whether or not to approve the proposed change order. In addition, the City Council should be prepared to hold a special meeting next week to make a final decision regarding the historic elements.