

**CITY HALL TASK FORCE/COMMUNITY CENTER
MEETING SUMMARY**

A joint City Hall Task Force/Community Center Subcommittee meeting was held at 9:30 a.m. on September 16, 2020 at the Fire Station. The joint group met to receive a presentation from Willmar Ten Investors and Terwisscha Construction for a new joint City Hall/Community Center concept.

Members and staff present and virtually were: Kathy Schwantes, Julie Asmus, Audrey Nelsen Brian Kath, Jan Dahl, George Christensen, Jeff Jagush, Dan Drevlow, Helene Behrends, Brian Gramentz, Sarah Swedburg, Sean Christensen, Britta Diem and Janell Sommers. Others present were Shelby Lindrud, Journalist, and representatives of the Willmar Ten Investors and Marcus Construction.

City Hall Task Force Chair and Council Member Kathy Schwantes called the meeting to order and stated group members will have the ability to share their thoughts both pro and con following the presentation.

A brief history and background was given of the investment group formed forty years ago known as “The Willmar Ten Investors.” Three of the current members have ownership in “Uptown Willmar” formerly known as the Kandi Mall.

Dion Warne of Willmar Ten Investors presented a concept created by Terwisscha Construction to the membership. Their proposal consisted of the remodel of the current JC Penny portion (52,000 SF) of the mall into a joint City Hall/Community Center. The presentation touched on the location being in the center of the community, the building having a new roof, its own HVAC, parking lot and “walkers” would have access to the entire mall. There would be available space for a community garden on city-owned property across 5th Street. Possible design features for the facility included a shared common space with a skylight, windows on at least two sides of the building and green area outside. Their proposal for the site/structure consists of designing the building with input from the City Hall Task Force and Community Center groups. Upon completion of the facility, it would be leased to the City for three to four years with an option to buy.

Mr. Warne assured the group they would be using the competitive bidding process. He promoted cost savings as the shell of the building is structurally sound and site development completed. Although this floor plan is 20,000 more square feet than currently planned, it was noted there is always use for more storage and multi-purpose space including a nice reception area. The group projects by having the facility at this site, there would be development of the 5th Street SE property, subsequently generating additional real estate taxes.

Council and Task Force Member Audrey Nelsen expressed her concern about moving forward without knowing the cost to the City. The City Hall/Community Center project is currently paused due to financial concerns.

After completion of the presentation, Chair/Council Member Kathy Schwantes asked the group if this was a serious contender and they wanted to move forward with exploring the option. The consensus was to discuss the option further. At this time members were asked to write down and bring forward the advantages and disadvantages of the site. Results are listed in the table below:

Advantages	Disadvantages
More space with opportunity to expand and hold larger events	Cost is unclear Garden location

Location – proximity to businesses Ample parking Access for vehicles and pedestrians Green space Internal layout – separation of City Hall and Community Center External layout – parking – awning Cost? Willmar Ten Safety with access No train crossing Southeast exposure Mall walking	Design input Don't already own the property Open up discussion again Current community center location is liked Physical shape of building Location tied to mall? – Future?
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Following discussion on the advantages and disadvantages, upon a show of “thumbs up” it was the consensus of the group to ask the City to move forward with exploring the concept presented by Willmar Ten Investors for the JC Penny property.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Janell Sommers
Administrative Assistant