

# Meeting Notes

## Introduction

In December 2009, City Council approved a resolution directing the Elder Citizens Advisory Board (ECAB) to perform a needs assessment for a new senior enrichment center. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was issued in May 2011 with 11 area architectural firms meeting the June 23<sup>rd</sup> submission deadline. Of these 11 firms, 3 were selected for interviews. Studio 4 Design was selected by ECAB and approved by the Oak Ridge City Council. The first public meeting to solicit public input was held on September 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. at the Oak Ridge Civic Center. A second opportunity for input was on September 23<sup>rd</sup> at a specially called meeting of ECAB. The second public input meeting was held on October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9 a.m. at the Oak Ridge Senior Center in conjunction with the ECAB's regular monthly meeting.

During each of these meetings, Studio Four Design led a public input session with senior center needs broken into the following categories; General, Educational, Recreational, Social, Wellness.

The following comments were expressed during the public input meetings:

## **First Public Input Meeting September 20, 2011 7:00 – 8:30pm Oak Ridge Civic Center**

### General:

- Will the City review current demographics for the project?
- Possibility of combining Oak Ridge Senior Enrichment Center into a regional facility to include Anderson County, Roane County and Oak Ridge
- How will construction be funded? Many club/groups currently pay for use of rooms
- Will a new Senior Center compete with other amenities and services provided by churches, etc.?
- Needs ample parking with plenty of site lighting, including from streets to make entering the site easier
- Entire facility needs to be accessible for disabled persons
  - Proper lighting, A/V integration, security, no-door restrooms, etc
- Current HVAC too loud to be able to hear speakers during presentations
- Consider current/future location as a big part of the needs discussion
  - Comment that current facility is too far away from the biggest demographic
  - Issue of access into the site – some don't come due to traffic concerns
- A new Senior Center should be built for the next generation of seniors and not only the current generation
- What will be done to reach the younger groups (50-60-70 year olds)?
- Noted that Boys/Girls Club adapts to changing trends in their services and that a new center should be adaptable for new generations of seniors

- WI-FI (wireless Internet) connection is a must
- More would use the facilities if it wasn't as "depressing"
- Incorporate more comfortable furniture to promote socializing after coming to center for a specific activity
- Should be LEED Certified (sustainable design and building)
- Open, airy and inviting with lots of natural light
- Need a Lobby with atrium for check-in, general information, public phones, etc.
- Clearly labeled or identified rooms (coordinated wayfinding system throughout building)
- Plenty of Office and Storage spaces related to specific functions

#### Educational:

- Meeting Rooms for 10 – 20 people and 50-60 people, which could be both for educational and social functions
- Could include screen/projector for PowerPoint presentations and slideshows
- Could incorporate Internet connection for satellite learning /seminars through educational partnerships
- Include stage for performances, lectures and presentations (i.e., lunch-and-learn programs)
- Computer Lab
- Rooms to accommodate educational 'lifestyle' activities (i.e., guitar, music, woodcarving, quilting, crafts)
- Consider need/impact of ORICL (Oak Ridge Institute for Continued Learning)
- Current Driver's Training and Tax Preparation classes through AARP

#### Recreational:

- Billiards Room (6 current tables adequate), but increased room size (by 20%-30%) could alleviate having tables located near exits, vending, etc.
- Larger Billiards Room could allow for tournaments or expanded amenities such as Table Tennis
- Multiple entrances into Billiards Room would be helpful (suggested room size ratio of 2:1)
- Dance Group has at least 90 attendees and uses their space once/week
- Small rooms that could be used for card-playing groups (Bridge, Pinochle, Canasta, etc.)
- Swimming Pool
- Wii and other video games to promote physical activity
- Garden for plants and vegetables
- Outdoor Area: patio, picnic, walking, horseshoes, bocci ball, putting green

#### Social:

- Expanded kitchen and dining facilities to better support in-house and outreach programs (i.e., mobile meals)
- Dual purpose spaces which could accommodate seasonal dinners (up to 100+ attendees)
- Lounge Area with TV, library space and general 'home' feeling

- Movie Theater Room
- Concession Area

Wellness:

- Exercise Room (dedicated area) with equipment and computers w/ Internet access

Clinic Area for periodic health screenings

- Taoist Tai Chi group would benefit from a space that is approx 1,500-2,000 sf with soft floors and plenty of air (moved from Recreational to Wellness category)

**Public Input at Special E.C.A.B. Meeting**

**September 23, 2011**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Oak Ridge Senior Center**

General:

- Covered drop-off at entry
- Referencing Barbara Gunn's Oak Ridger column, comment that we "need a facility that Seniors can be proud of"
- Include some type of Emergency Notification system throughout the building (panic buttons)
- Incorporate a news/information kiosk in the Lobby area or other public space for distribution of community resource information (screenings, scams, events, etc)
- Blackboard for listing of daily activities, events and messages.

Educational:

- Cooking Classes (maybe a dedicated room/area that doesn't interfere with primary kitchen functions)
- Comfortable, flexible seating for extended meetings, presentations, etc.
- Meet with ORICL to discuss impact of their needs and how it might tie into new ORSEC

Recreational:

- Bingo
- shuffleboard, cornhole
- Daycare for grandkids while attending events and meetings
- Include kitchenette style counters in multiple areas (both localized and centralized) to support coffee-makers, microwaves, sinks, etc.

Social:

- Meet with ETHRA to discuss impact re: kitchen size, function and regulations

Wellness:

- nutrition / blood pressure
- Make sure equipment in Exercise Room is “senior-safe”. Comment about mechanical failures and maintenance of equipment and the potential for accidents in an unsupervised room.

**Second Public Input Meeting**

**October 3, 2011**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Oak Ridge Senior Center**

General:

- Provide a security system in the building
- Provide a way to display and/or sell works of art produced by seniors

Social:

- Integrate senior nutrition program into food service

**Other public comments are still being collected. Please feel free to drop comments off at any of the city’s recreation centers (Civic Center, Scarboro Center, Senior Center) or they can be emailed to Senior Center Manager Linda Jackson at [ljackson@cortn.org](mailto:ljackson@cortn.org). Comments can also be called in to the Senior Center at (865) 425-3999.**

**Please join us at our next public meeting at the Oak Ridge Senior Center on November 15<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.**