

## **Minutes from YMCA Site Selection Advisory Committee, Sept. 17**

The City of Poughkeepsie YMCA Site Selection Advisory Committee held its first meeting on Tuesday Sept. 17 regarding possible future uses of the property on Montgomery Street.

Attending were Chairperson Barbara Jeter; Common Council member Sarah Salem of the Second Ward, where the former YMCA is located; city residents Tamoya Norwood, and Arthur T. Rollin; Paul Calogerakis, the city's economic development director; and John Penney, the city's community engagement director.

Sashawna Isaacs also serves on this committee.

Earlier this year, the city took ownership of the property and then released a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) for the property, with the goal of soliciting ideas for future uses of the property that will yield significant community benefit.

After introductions, the committee members gave their initial assessments of four proposals that have been suggested for this property. Those ideas are:

The 35 Montgomery Community Coalition – which includes Community Matters 2, Inc., DAY ONE Early Childhood Learning Community, Dutchess Community College, Dutchess County, MASS Design Group, Nuvance Health, Poughkeepsie Farm Project, Poughkeepsie Public Library District, Vassar College, and YMCA of Kingston and Ulster County – proposing a multi-use facility that would provide services connected to their respective missions in the community.

Andrew Gori and Ambre Kelly, co-founders of The They Co., proposing to establish a Poughkeepsie Museum of Contemporary Art.

Christopher Bledsoe, aquatic consultant at Swimming Past the Boundaries, proposing The Swimming Past the Boundaries Aquatic Center (SPBAC), a 22,000-square-foot indoor aquatic facility.

And Artist Carolyn Hutchings Edlund proposing an Art Museum that could display sculptures, host out-of-doors performing arts events.

Salem said the coalition's proposal had more details than the others, and she was impressed by the idea. She also noted that the aquatic center proposal was the only one to include a budget.

Norwood wondered if the coalition could incorporate the aquatic project in the coalition's proposal. She said coalition's plans include so many more activities than the other proposals.

Rollin said the coalition's project looked more feasible, and he also suggested applicants combine into one project.

Jackson agreed that all these proposals could be integrated into one.

Paul Calogerakis offered an outline of questions that should be asked, including: How does the proposed project meet the goals stated in the RFEI? What is the timeline for execution of the plan? What is the legal owning entity? What is the capital budget and source of capital and funding?

Committee members agreed these questions were a good starting point to convey to the applicants.

Salem wondered if moving forward at this juncture with a Request For Proposals would attract more developers. Calogerakis said the committee can submit requests for information from the applicants without doing a RFP at this point. He noted the city contracted with a firm to assess the inside of the building and that the building would not be salvable. He pointed out that only coalition's proposal makes it clear the existing building would come down.

The committee discussed holding a public information session where applicants could present their ideas. Penney said he would contact Changepoint Church to see if such a meeting could be held there in late October.

