
Hearings and Engagement Committee

Komiti Whiriwhiri Kaupapa

OPEN MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the Hearings and Engagement Committee held in Council Chamber, Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton and audio visual link on Friday 20 November 2020 at 9.30am.

PRESENT

Chairperson Cr M Gallagher
Heamana

Deputy Chairperson Cr E Wilson
Heamana Tuarua

Members Mayor P Southgate
Deputy Mayor G Taylor (via audio visual link)
Cr M Bunting
Cr R Hamilton
Cr R Pascoe
Cr M van Oosten
Cr A O'Leary (via audio visual link)

In Attendance: Sean Murray – General Manager Venues, Tourism and Major Events
Tracey Lowndes – Communication and Engagement Advisor
Raewyn Napier – Business Support Communication

Governance Staff: Amy Viggers – Governance Team Leader
Carmen Fortin and Tyler Gaukrodger – Governance Advisors

1. **Apologies – *Tono aroha***

Resolved: (Cr Gallagher / Cr Wilson)

That the apologies for absense from Crs Naidoo-Rauf, Macpherson, Forsyth, Thomson (Council b=Business), Maangai Thompson-Evans and Te Ua, and for partial attendance from Crs Ryan and Pascoe be accepted.

2. **Confirmation of Agenda – *Whakatau raarangi take***

Resolved: (Cr Wilson / Cr van Oosten)

That the agenda is confirmed.

3. **Declarations of Interest – *Tauaakii whaipaaanga***

No members of the Council declared a Conflict of Interest.

4. **Confirmation of the Hearings and Engagement Committee Open Minutes - 20 October 2020**

Resolved: (Cr Pascoe / Cr Wilson)

That the Hearings and Engagement Committee confirm the Open Minutes of the Hearings and Engagement Committee Meeting held on 20 October 2020 as a true and correct record.

The following members of public spoke to Founder site engagement:

Jeremy Myall (Creative Waikato) spoke in support of **option 2**, noting his desire of keeping elements of the building and the continuation of serving the performing arts. He advised that his preference would be to build an outdoor stage and keep the dressing rooms as required. He responded to questions from Members concerning noise control, parking, funding sources available for renovation, how to make the park look aesthetically with the inclusion of the dressing rooms, and building size required to allow for rehearsal space, dressing rooms, and equipment.

Zola Rose (Common Ground) spoke in support of **option 2**, noting the achievements of cities within New Zealand and worldwide who had focused on the natural capital, and how these areas positively impacted the community. She supported enhancing the environment in the area. She responded to questions from Members concerning cost of development of a regenerative space, inclusion within the West Town Belt plan, and conversations with Kaute Pacifika.

Lucien Nabbs spoke in support of **option 2**, noting that his main concern was in regards to the culture and identity of the site which needed to be included in the concept and design. He responded to questions from Members concerning possibilities of enabling the space to allow for expression and cultures.

Judy McDonald spoke in support of **option 2**, noting she was against option 1 as this included parking, which had a negative impact on those in the area in terms of safety, and lacked a natural space. She responded to questions from Members concerning support for shared walkways and cycleways through a natural space.

Laura Kellaway spoke in support of **option 3** TOTI's proposal. She noted that the heritage value and requested that the heritage value be further investigated. She also noted that she believed it to be a big ask to request that other companies or individual pay for the fixing of the Theatre. She responded to questions from Member concerning support for the TOTI submission.

Diana Ruri (HTown Skate Project) spoke in support of **option 2**, and supported the idea of a central city plaza. She suggested the inclusion of a skateboard park within the plans, with some potential for some local businesses to be set up around the area. She noted that this space would be an ideal space for a skate park due to proximity and accessibility. She responded to questions from Members concerning travel undertaken by people in order to access skateboarding locations.

Neil Bruce spoke in support of **option 3** TOTI's proposal, noting that a repurposed Founders Theatre Site could be used as an international space for arts and connection. He responded to questions from Members concerning, how much of the building he wishes to see retained, funding proposals, support for the TOTI submission, and consideration of other theatres in the area.

Geoff Lewis spoke in support of **option 3** TOTI's proposal and noted that it should be seen as complimentary to the Hamilton Theatre instead of being in competition. He responded to questions from Members concerning the desired amount of the building to be retained, and management of financial consequences of retention and maintenance of the building.

The meeting was adjourned from 10:39am to 11.05am.

Raymond Mudford spoke in support of **option 3** TOTI's submission. He noted his belief that the consultation and engagement was and due to this, he believed that the community needed an opportunity to speak freely and fairly. He responded to questions from Members concerning the questions asked within the consultation, attendance of the open day, the desired amount of the building to be retained, and the options of maintaining the building and restoring the building.

Maddie spoke in support of **option 2**, noting that her preference to utilise the space for a community space. She believed that the use of this area as an outdoor amphitheatre would be a waste of time and money, and suggested utilising the space as a skate park, basketball or netball courts, playground, and outdoor fitness equipment. She responded to questions from Members concerning noise concerns.

Kevin Dornauf spoke in support of **option 3** TOTI's proposal, noting that he believed that the Founders Theatre is in disarray due to negligence and lack of maintenance. He felt that the consultation with the public was flawed and he was concerned for the loss of the heritage site. He responded to questions from Members concerning funding of Council facilities.

Anne Cao and Paul Oulton spoke in support of **option 1**, noting that it was their preference that Council create a natural space utilising cherry blossom and kowhai trees. They responded to questions from Members concerning length of time required before a tree blossoms, length of blossom, noise considerations, and consideration with other options.

Peter H Bos spoke in support of **option 3** TOTI's proposal, noting that there were many buildings across Europe in which development has been made around existing historical buildings. He responded to questions from Members concerning retention and reactivation of the building.

Saffron Mitchell (Community Living) spoke in support of **option 3** TOTI's proposal, and believed that retention of the site would encourage more people into the central city and provide a variety of community needs. She believed that after the initial maintenance and renewal, that the cost of maintenance would diminish. She responded to questions from Members concerning the options of refurbishing or retaining the site.

The meeting was adjourned from 11.53am to 11.58am.

Cr Hamilton retired from the meeting during the above adjournment.

Margaret Evans (Theatre of the Impossible Trust) spoke in support of **option 3** and spoke to TOTI's proposed plan, noting the historical significance of the theatre and the inclusion of Council in funding the original site. She explained her desire to create a town hall and community hub for art, music, culture, and heritage. She responded to questions from Members concerning fitting into current existing building, cost of the project and proposal of funding, inclusion of trusts, repurpose of site, ability of a Council to make decisions which contradict a past Council, possible detractor from the Waikato Theatre, utilisation of funding which had been earmarked for demolition in previous LTP, ability to combine different options, belief from TOTI that many submitters were in support of retaining the building,

Cr Pascoe retired from the meeting (12.14pm) during the above submission.

Rudi de Plooy spoke in support of **option 3** and supported elements of the TOTI submission. He believed that the consultation was not fair in offering only the three options and noted his that the cost of \$20 million was not accurate for the revamp. He expressed an interest in changing the funding model for the theatres in the Hamilton area. He responded to questions from Members concerning desire for funding indefinitely, cost of the TOTI proposal, inclusion of a theatre trust, and wish to keep the site as an operational theatre.

Elected Members requested the following points be addressed in the deliberations report:

- further clarity on the Creative Waikato submission footprint
- inclusion of emails and letters in the support figures and analysis
- legal status and background of any previous council decisions and right to review this
- clear understanding of funding available for all options
- incorporation of option 2 if option 3 is chosen
- possible blending of options
- ongoing cost of TOTI proposal through operation and maintenance
- how timing of TOTI proposal may impact LTP timeframes
- noise monitoring
- theatre seats per population (and need based on population)
- clarity around costs of option 2, and all options
- cost of storage and operation cost for outdoor facility
- cost of keeping the theatre in the closed state vs cost of demolition
- LTP timing implications- competition or complementation of other facilities such as the museum
- further understanding of skateboarding proposal and concept
- if option 3 was not affordable, what other option could be explored
- access of traffic and connectivity through current roading provisions

5. Founders Site Engagement 2020 - Verbal Submissions Report

Resolved: (Cr Bunting/ Cr Wilson)

That the Hearings and Engagement Committee:

- a) receives the report;
- b) hears and considers verbal submissions with regard to the community engagement process that was held from 7 October 2020 to 3 November 2020; and
- c) notes that a Deliberations Report that includes full analysis from the public engagement process will be brought to the Council meeting on 8 December 2020 for a decision to be included as part of the 2021-31 Long Term Plan.

The meeting was declared closed at 1:04pm.