

*"Cities have the capability  
of providing something for everybody,  
only because, and only when,  
they are created by everybody."*

Jane Jacobs, urban design activist

***Brian Hines' proposed 5 minute presentation at January 28, 2014  
Salem Community Vision forum that ended up being dropped from the  
program.***

Point to PowerPoint slide above. Read aloud.

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Absolutely.

Salem is *our* city. Everybody's. We have a right and a responsibility to speak out about how Salem grows, changes, develops.

Especially when public money and public spaces are involved.

We need to be heard by our public servants. Not rarely and late. Often and early.

Unfortunately, this didn't happen with planning for a new police facility.

In November of last year, after the City had finally revealed its \$70 million proposal, now \$80 million, a Statesman Journal editorial said:

*"So far, one flaw is that officials, despite their good intentions, did not do enough to get the public involved from the outset."*

For sure.

So far citizen involvement with this project has been minimal. Especially regarding the big question:

Where should a new police facility be located?

In 2009 that decision was made by a City Council subcommittee. Not the whole City Council. A subcommittee.

This was backwards planning according to how the International Association of Chiefs of Police says it should be done.

Seeking community support for a new police facility should be a *first* part of planning, not one of the last. Evaluating alternative sites for a new police facility should be a *last* part of planning, not one of the first.

But in 2009 City staff, and then a council subcommittee, decided on their own, with no citizen involvement, that a new police facility should be at the Civic Center.

Then proceeded to plan for it with the aid of University of Oregon students who were part of a 2010 Sustainable Cities Initiative focused on Salem.

After getting ideas from the students, a new City Council subcommittee worked away with city staff and two large architectural consulting firms on developing more detailed plans for a Civic Center police facility.

In near-secrecy. Even City Council members were kept in the dark about what was going on.

By April 2011 the closed-door planning led to this statement appearing in the subcommittee minutes:

*“[name of project staff] reported Councilors’ expression of concern regarding their lack of awareness regarding the status of the Civic Center/ Public Safety Facility project, culminating in a request for a work session on the topic.”*

Amazing.

City Council members were unaware of what was happening with planning for a \$70 million city project. Not to mention ordinary citizens.

After being better informed, the Council funded a \$40,000 site search for alternative police facility locations. Two years too late.

After the study was done, the same council subcommittee that had been planning for a Civic Center location said, let's keep doing what we're doing.

Once more, no public involvement.

It wasn't until late 2013, *four years* after City officials decided on their own to plan for a new police facility at the Civic Center, that Salem citizens were truly let in on the secret.

In October a Salem Weekly story said that city officials were about to launch a web page to inform citizens of progress toward making an expansion of the Civic Center possible.

A Statesman Journal story mentioned the belated attempt at public involvement. Four years too late.

*"City officials have started a public outreach campaign."*

Hmmmmm.

Public outreach. Not really. Not even close.

Not in the sense Jane Jacobs means it [point to screen]. As engaging citizens early on and often in the process of creating our city.

This isn't genuine public outreach. [clench sheet of paper; hold it out toward the audience]

Here. This is our proposal. We want you to reach out and take it.

That's a sales job.

The City of Salem never asked citizens what kind of a police facility they wanted, or where it should be located. Five years ago a council subcommittee decided that on its own.

Real public outreach is with an open hand. [gesture] And an open mind.

Tell us your ideas, citizens of Salem. We haven't decided what to do yet.

When the \$70 million proposal was first reported on last October, a Statesman Journal story quoted people now involved with Salem Community Vision.

*"This is a big investment for Salem and I think the people should have a say," said Geoffrey James, a Salem architect. For the past two years, he said, the city has worked in a "secret process" to create one design without considering other possible alternatives.*

*"We have a right to be part of the decision making -- not the outreach after the decision," Salem resident Claudia Howells said. The city's critics say other locations might be better suited for a newer, much larger police station than the civic center site. "We never had that conversation," Howells said.*

Well, now we are. Don Russo of the Northgate Neighborhood Association will talk about a Portland Road location. There are other possibilities.

We want to hear from you in the next part of this forum. There's been enough talking from the stage. You might be thinking, *way more* than enough. So I'll shut up.

With a last thought. A Beatles lyric.

*Oh, I get by with a little help from my friends.*

So true. I see us all as friends here, even if we disagree.

City Manager Linda... Police Chief Jerry... Salem Community Vision and everybody else in this theatre are your friends. We're trying to help you build a new police facility and renovate the Civic Center.

Together we'll not only get by.

We'll get *high* with a little help from our friends. On life, I hasten to say, given the presence of at least one Salem police officer.