

The Pueblo Chieftain

Your print and online news source for Southern Colorado

February 04, 2008

Council to review police building progress

By Jeff Tucker

Durrant and Associates will make its first appearance before the Pueblo City Council since council members called for a second opinion of the architectural firm's work on the new police building nearly a month ago.

Durrant's Bill Baker is scheduled to meet with council tonight to provide a status report on the plans for the police building.

Council awarded the peer review contract last week to Kenny Davis Architects.

Council has been upset with the project's cost, which has jumped to \$32 million.

Last month, council was set to hear an update on how the building will meet the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards. But the meeting wound up being more about why the cost of the building continued to increase.

Since then, council delayed approval of the final phase of Durrant's contract until the peer review is completed.

How much of the LEED additions will stay in the building remains to be seen and how much of tonight's meeting will be devoted to the subject is unclear.

According to a list provided by the city's planning department, it could cost the city between \$300,000 and \$1 million to make the changes.

All the prices are estimates.

The list includes the following extra costs:

\$30,000 for high-efficiency heating and air-conditioning units.

\$64,800 for additional insulation in the roof and walls.

\$54,000 for high efficiency triple-pane windows.

\$52,000 for enhanced control of lighting.

\$24,000 for solar shading.

\$20,000 for light shelves to bring natural lighting deeper into the building.

\$62,400 for basic commissioning.

\$11,250 for water efficient landscaping.

\$2,500 for waterless urinals.

The list includes options to add solar panels to the building for \$500,000 and replacing the high-efficiency heating and air-conditioning units with a geothermal heat pump for \$316,000.

Other costs include additional design fees for \$20,000 to \$60,000 and reviews, and documentation fees that could cost between \$90,000 to \$120,000.

Baker could not be reached Friday to comment on the estimated costs.

In order to get a building LEED-certified, the structure must meet a laundry list of requirements set forth by the U.S. Green Building Council, said Bob Hart and Amy Hurtig-Smith of Hurtig Gardner and Froelich Architects.

HGF is working with Durrant, but Hart said he couldn't comment on the police building.

But the company designed the new Pueblo City-County Health Department Building and included additions in its design to meet green standards.

Hurtig-Smith said they hope to meet the building council's Silver standard, meaning that the building must meet at least 33 points on the council's 69-point certification scale.

Hurtig-Smith said HGF put enough additions into the health department that it could earn 44 points, but because the evaluation of the building is subjective, it's safer to go for more points than you need.

Hart maintains that adding green features to the health department increased the cost of the building by approximately 12 percent.

But again, the costs are just estimations. Hart said the real costs won't be available until the county picks a general contractor for the building.

Some of the additions to the health department building include:

A green-grid roof, where tiles of native grasses provide extra insulation and retain more stormwater runoff for \$150,000.

Additional stormwater filters on the property for \$15,000.

Water-efficient landscaping requirements for \$32,000.

Low-flow toilets and other plumbing fixtures for \$24,000.

Energy-saving mechanical systems for \$250,000.

Efficient electrical systems for \$160,000.

Construction management to divert 75 percent of the construction scrap to recycling for \$50,000.

Indoor air monitoring systems for \$26,000.

Environmentally friendly glues, carpets and paints for \$38,000.

Light shelving for \$70,000.

For any green building, the goal is energy efficiency. The argument is that adding energy conservation measure at the front end of construction will reduce ongoing utility costs in the long run.

Hurtig-Smith said the subject is still new.

Colorado has the second most green building projects in the country behind California. Pueblo and Colorado Springs each have three projects either built or in the works.

But demonstrations have suggested that green buildings can be as much as 30 percent more efficient than their traditional counterparts, said Hurtig-Smith.

"The whole idea here is that you're not going to realize the savings until you start using the building," Hart said. "Over a period of time you will start to realize the payback."

The council work session is scheduled at 5:30 p.m. today at City Hall.