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LB 594

SENATOR WARNER: Specifically the justification of the Elks Building for the...

SENATOR FITZGERALD: No, I want to know how come we spend \$180,000 for a study, blueprint study for this building and we are not using the blueprints.

SENATOR WARNER: I think, Senator Fitzgerald, you bring a point that has from time to time concerned me and that is the tendency to put in planning money for a variety of projects and there are a number of them that we have done over the years in which construction has not taken place. In keeping with that, the committee cut down the amount of planning money this year substantially. I think there is only two projects in there, one project in which there is not a total cost included in the appropriation itself but in the case of the Elks Building specifically the reason the committee went the route that they did and it is true that about \$180,000 has been spent in the development of the plans but that total structure which would be built just east of the Governor's mansion has a projected cost of \$6,000,000. In the case of the Elks Building the size of that building is about 73,000 square feet. There would be 80,000 square feet in the building that would cost \$6,000,000 and it was felt that because of the purchase price it was possible and the particular way that the Elks Building is constructed with no windows which is a necessity for a museum and it is adaptable for a museum that a substantial savings in overall cost could be accomplished, somewhere between \$3, up to \$4,000,000. The range we are dealing with for renovation of the Elks Building, the minimum has been about \$400,000 not counting display cases. The maximum has been \$1,900,000 which included the acquisition of some space for parking as well as surfacing for that parking but even if we took the maximum cost you are still talking about roughly just half the cost of what the facility over here east of the Governor's mansion would be and there is one additional problem that we discussed in detail and that is the fact that I think there is two hundred and sixty-five parking spaces over there where the Historical Heritage Center would have been built and we probably would have to be looking for other areas to find parking. So those are the reasons that the committee recommends the acquisition of the Elks Building. It is a very sound building and basically it was a cost saving of about \$3,000,000.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Fitzgerald, you have thirty seconds.