

Minutes of the Special Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 6:30 PM

Members present: Stephen Flanders, Chair; Christopher Ashley; Ed Childs; Linda Cook; Keith Moran; Neil Fulton, Town Manager; Nancy Kramer, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were about 15 people in the audience.

Also participating: Phil Dechert, Tom Gray, Matt Herbert, Chris Huston, John Lawe, Steve Leinoff, Chad Poston, Doug Robinson, Richard Stucker, Matt Swett.

Flanders opened the meeting at 6:33 pm.

1. Joint Meeting with Capital Facilities Planning & Budgeting Committee to Discuss Options for Fire, Police and Public Works Facilities (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Flanders said that the format of this meeting will be a workshop among the participants at the table, the Selectboard, members of the Capital Facilities Committee present and Chris Huston. Flanders will reserve time at the end of the meeting for public comments and questions. The purpose is to update the Selectboard on the progress to date and to hopefully, by the end of the meeting, have the Selectboard reach a consensus on how to proceed. Flanders introduced Huston and then introduced Gray, Lawe and Stucker from the Capital Facilities Committee. Flanders thanked the Capital Facilities Committee for its diligence.

Gray said that this has been talked about for a long time and that the decision was made to defer what to do about buying the ABC Dairy property until needs were defined. Gray feels we are fairly well along with that process. Gray then reviewed considerations discussed by the Capital Facilities Committee. The Committee believes the number of options for which detailed evaluation is done needs to be controlled in order to keep the process moving ahead. If the existing site is not used, what will be its disposition? Desirable features for the finished product are: plenty of storage including use of a basement, adequate parking, ADA access, maneuverability, cost control, comparable response time, adequate space for operations, use of existing Fire Station for cold storage, protection for costly equipment from the elements, adequate storm water control, adequate septic capacity and energy efficiency. There also is a need to plan for the transition period. There may be a need to lease temporary mobile offices. The Committee agreed that Layouts #1, #4B and #5 seemed to be the most attractive options for the existing site.

Huston then reviewed the pluses and minuses of Layouts #1, #2, #3, #4A, #4B, #5 and #6 for the existing Fire/Police site. All options remove the current Police facility. The Layouts also assume that these alternatives will not disturb more than one acre so State storm water requirements will not be triggered. Questions were asked about the connector in Layout #4B, whether square footage requirements are being met, backing apparatus in to the building and if there would be any change in response time. Cook suggested an alternative configuration to the existing Fire Station site keeping the current Fire Station.

Huston then reviewed the Event Center site saying that topography is a problem and there is no public water supply. The Capital Facilities Committee recommended that this site be put on the back burner. Bringing water to the site would cost at least \$50,000.

Next, Huston reviewed the ABC Dairy site Layouts #1 and #2. A change of use at this site would require a permit from the VT AOT for the curb cut. This site is served by public water. Both options are for a one story building with Grass Roots Soccer continuing as a tenant. Ashley asked if there were any environmental concerns with this site and Dechert replied no. Lastly, Huston reviewed the Department of Public Works existing site Layouts #1, #2, #3 and #4. Layouts #1 and #4 call for the existing building at the site to be demolished. Layout #3 uses the current Fire Station for cold storage.

Huston said he would like the Selectboard to flip through the options and point out any that do not belong in the mix and/or put up any red flags. Items discussed were: cost of acquiring the ABC Dairy site, using current Fire/Police site for affordable housing, factors that could decrease project cost or benefit functional needs, placement of the current Fire Station, what the possibility of purchasing the Grange was, the roof repair to the Fire Station, the cost of moving the current Fire Station, and whether, instead of the consolidated project currently being discussed, it would be advisable to plan for the replacement of Police, Fire and Public Works over time as sequenced projects, considering the bond burden at any point in time for either approach versus the total amount spent on replacing those facilities.

Fire Department personnel present at the meeting commented on the parking being less than ideal at the current Fire/Police site, discussed responder issues with the current site and said that the physical limitations of the current space are a concern. Leinoff said that there are loads of mitigating factors including the financial parts, but that doing nothing is not an option. When asked for a first choice he responded ABC Dairy. Robinson stated that any of the options is better than what the Police Department has now. After discussion and agreeing to have a wrap up discussion at the February 12th meeting, the Selectboard agreed that Bread Loaf should move forward with narrowing and refining the options. Fulton said a revised Facility Studies Schedule will be done for the February 12th meeting. Gray concluded with the comment that tonight's discussion was good and that the Capital Facilities Committee and the Selectboard seem to be on the same wave length. Gray added that the Capital Facilities Committee is available to assist the Board going forward.

Cook **moved** (2nd Moran) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on February 26, 2014.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Stephen N. Flanders
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – February 12, 2014 at 6:30 PM

PLEASE NOTE THAT CATV RECORDS ALL REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE NORWICH SELECTBOARD. FOR A MORE DETAILED TRANSCRIPTION PLEASE REFER TO THE DVD. DVDs ARE AVAILABLE ONE WEEK AFTER AIRING AT THE NORWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY.