

Minutes – January 10, 2017

Fire Station Building Committee Meeting

Present: Selectman Russ Austin, Wes Staples, Clyde Simino, Bob Bartlett, Tom Finnegan, Scott Talbot, Graham Gitchell, Bill Campbell. Also Dan Scully and Dave Bergeron from Dan Scully Architects.

Russ clarified the respective position of the Board of Selectmen and the Fire Station Building Committee. The Board recognizes that something needs to be done and are leaving it to the Committee to make a recommendation. Various members of the Committee requested that a member of the BOS attend each meeting so that there was a more productive line of communication, and Russ offered to present that plan to the Board members. Russ also shared that the BOS is working on the land problem. There is slow progress. Dan Scully noted that there can be no design without a site plan, and offered to give his professional opinion on any site that is up for discussion.

Dan Scully shared a prepared (draft) assessment report of the current station. Among the items of major concern: bays are too narrow for the equipment; there is no proper exit from the building; upstairs is not ADA compliant; there is no storage or cleaning facilities for turnout gear; hose racks are inadequate; the walls lack insulation; there is no adequate fire alarm system; toilet/shower facilities are poor or nonexistent. To this, Dave added concerns regarding the site. The front apron is too short for the trucks, and the site distance along route 63 is acceptable to the north, but too short to the south. The topography hems in the building on both sides and the brook to the rear. There is a concern about the moisture created by the high water table, and there is not sufficient parking for firefighters responding to a call. The general opinion of Dan and Dave is that presently both the men and the equipment are at risk in the building.

Regarding renovations to the present building, renovations that run 50% of the value of the building require that all facets of the building must be brought up to code. Also, as pertains to the cement block construction, the building structure could not support the needs of the town should there be an emergency.

The Scully Architect draft report concludes with the good and the bad of the present building, and a recommendation that at least 7800 square feet is feasible to meet the needs of the department. It presently has 3700 square feet. A site of at least 2 acres of land is recommended.

The basic consensus of the committee present is that the present building poses too much of a risk and should be replaced.

Russ reiterated that the BOS has charged the Committee to make a recommendation regarding the existing building.

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Discussion from there centered on the next steps to be taken. The BOS will pursue available sites, with the hopes of presenting a site plan to the Town Meeting, and further hopes of presenting a building plan to the 2018 Town Meeting. He also thought an informational presentation at this year's Town Meeting might be helpful in keeping the townspeople informed of the project. Dan offered to do the site plan as soon as a prospective site is secured. Tom mentioned that there are grants available at different times which may be helpful. Russ reminded those present that there are two major capital projects facing the town: the fire station and the bridge near the jail.

Meeting convened at 8:25 pm.

Minutes – January 31, 2017

Fire Station Building Committee Meeting

Present: Tom Finnegan (Committee Chairman), Wes Staples, Clyde Simino, Bob Bartlett, Graham Gitchell, and Harry Nelson.

Meeting convened at 7:00 pm.

This was a work session to discuss the Scully Architects draft report on the condition of the existing fire station.

Among the points of discussion:

- Other than several typographical errors, no changes should be made to the draft report. The Town hired Scully Architects to make an independent assessment.
- Scully Architects was hired to give an unbiased impartial assessment.
- If the Town is to build a new station, it must be built to code.
- Going forward, will the committee request money for design work at the next town meeting? If not, the project will lose a year.
- The suggested site may not work.
- Concerns were raised regarding the septic system at the present site.
- Is it conceivable that volunteers could handle some of the construction work? If so, that may preclude any grant money. Also, the project must be shovel-ready in order to apply for grants.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bartlett

Minutes – February 2, 2017

Fire Station Building Committee Meeting

Present: Tom Finnegan, Wes Staples, Bob Bartlett, Graham Gitchell, Harry Nelson, Douglas Oatley. Also Dan Scully from Dan Scully Architects.

Meeting convened at 7:00 pm.

Minutes of the January 10 meeting were read and accepted.

A letter from Scott Talbot, who was unable to attend due to illness, was read and filed.

Dan Scully acknowledged editing changes to his draft report, and read a summary recommendation for his report. There followed a discussion regarding confusion between the Emergency Medical Service and the Emergency Management offices, so Dan offered to amend the information under Functional Spaces in the report and include roughly 150 ft² of office space as well as 150 ft² for storage. Further discussion ended in an agreement that the storage space for EM could be combined with other office space. It will be so amended in the final report. Dan will edit the report and send a corrected report, with electronic copies to be sent to Tom. Dan also repeated his offer to look at any property being considered for purchase for its feasibility.

Doug Oatley, attending as a citizen at large, questioned the status of building plans, perhaps even a footprint. He offered suggestions that the new building should be as energy efficient as possible, looking to the future. He was encouraged to gather information and bring it to a future meeting when the construction is being considered.

Discussion followed regarding the next phase of the committee's responsibility. The BOS will meet again on February 16, at which time the report will be presented for acceptance. The question was raised as to the option of posting the Scully Architect report on the town website, and the suggestion was also made to have a handout available at Town Meeting in March of the summary page of the report for townpeople.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bartlett

Minutes – March 28, 2017

Fire Station Building Committee Meeting

Present: Tom Finnegan (Committee Chairman), Wes Staples, Clyde Simino, Bob Bartlett, Graham Gitchell, Scott Talbot, and Harry Nelson.

Meeting convened at 7:03 pm.

Minutes from the January 31 work session and February 2 meeting were read and accepted.

Tom opened the meeting with a discussion regarding the acceptance of the Scully Architects feasibility study by the Select Board on February 16, 2017. The mission of this committee now becomes one of making a recommendation to the Select Board on the location of the future fire station.

Reasons to locate the fire station at its present site, using the land approved for acquisition at the Town Meeting include:

- The location is centrally located within the Town.
- The site was tentatively regarded as acceptable by Dan Scully.
- The issue of sight distance along Route 63 can be addressed by moving the driveway further north.
- A septic system could be constructed to serve the needs of both the Fire Department and the Town Hall.
- Placing the building with a western exposure would allow greater width to accommodate the equipment doors.
- The location allows for timely firefighter response to calls.

Concerns regarding the present site include:

- The location is too small for the several suggested uses (septic system, well, town parking) in addition to the new building.
- The existing water supply is insufficient to support a sprinkler system.
- There is a concern as to whether the State will approve the site.

The issue of the water supply at the site was discussed. Harry suggested that an underground storage tank could be installed under the parking lot (saving land space), with a pipe to handle the water that comes from across the road and an overflow valve to control it.

Three alternate locations were discussed, but final agreement was on the present site. At this time, it will be an engineering decision. To that end, the plan is to have Dan Scully revisit the site for his evaluation. Following that visit, there may be an open department meeting to encourage input from the firefighters regarding the building construction. Tom will check to see if Dan Scully will expect a fee for this visit before arrangements are made, or, if so, whether there are any funds remaining from the feasibility site evaluation funds.

3/28/17 CRT

The question was raised as to whether it would be premature of committee members to research different manufacturers and ideas regarding the construction. Three companies were mentioned (Kistler Buildings, Morton Buildings, and Rick Young). The general feeling is that a custom building is not necessary, and that a building plan to suit the town is most likely available without starting from scratch.

Tom will draft a letter to the Select Board advising them of the committee recommendation to build the new station at the present site, pending a favorable opinion of the Scully Architect site walk.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bartlett

Minutes – May 11, 2017

Fire Station Building Committee Meeting

Present: Tom Finnegan (Committee Chairman), Wes Staples, Bob Bartlett, Graham Gitchell, Scott Talbot, and Harry Nelson.

Meeting convened at 7:06 pm.

Minutes from the March 28 meeting were read and accepted.

Tom opened the meeting by sharing copies of a letter received from the Select Board dated April 28, 2017. In response to the letter, the main issues which the committee addressed pertained to the site location choice, the pros and cons of the three known town-owned properties, and possible construction options.

Pros and cons of the present site are listed in the minutes of the March 28 meeting. Another pro of the site that was mentioned was the fact that by being in the center of town on a main road, townspeople are able to view the day-to-day activities of the department.

Regarding locating the station on the McAdams property, the pros include:

- The land is already town-owned.
- The fuel source is nearby.

The cons of the McAdams property include:

- The site is not centrally located.
- There is a history of flooding in the area.
- The site does not allow visibility to the public.
- There is the possibility of land contamination at the site.
- The site would place the station further away from Town offices in the event of an emergency.
- The site would create longer response time.
- The issue of the gated highway facility would present conflicts.
- The station might be in further risk of vandalism.
- The access road is a right of way, not a public way.
- The site presently received large traffic vehicles from private businesses.
- A call involving response directly up the McAdams hill could slow response time.

Regarding locating the station on the school property adjacent to the school, the pros include:

- The land is already town-owned.

The cons of the school property site include:

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- There are wetlands to the rear of the property.
- The town would lose the tennis courts for recreational purposes.
- There is a short sight line of visibility exiting the property.
- The area already experiences traffic congestion during school functions.
- Student safety during school hours is at risk when firefighters respond to a call.
- The topography of the site is too uneven.
- The wet land would hinder a septic system.
- There is a history of flooding in the area.
- There is insufficient acreage to the lot.

For the next meeting, scheduled for Thursday, May 25, members of the committee will research construction companies for approximate square foot prices in building a 8000-10000 square foot facility. The prices will cover a stick construction, a steel building, and a pre-fab construction. The point was raised that companies should have familiarity with the specifications that would be required in construction a fire station.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20. pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bartlett

Minutes – May 25, 2017

Fire Department Facility Advisory Committee,

Present: Tom Finnegan (Committee Chairman), Wes Staples, Bob Bartlett, Graham Gitchell, Scott Talbot, Clyde Simino, and Harry Nelson. Also John Iveson of Package Steel Systems.

Meeting convened at 7:00 pm.

Minutes from the May 11 meeting were read and accepted.

The evening involved a presentation by John Iveson regarding construction of a metal building fire station. John explained that he was representing his manufacturing company; he is not a contractor. From there, he covered many subjects regarding his product, answered many questions regarding its suitability to Westmoreland's needs, and offered many suggestions.

Topics covered included

- Federal funding rather than public funds
- Feasibility of a metal building
- Longevity of building (roof, insulation, paint)
- R factors of various panel options – energy efficiency
- Foundation requirements
- Options for exterior
- Scope of his company's involvement
- Roof pitch
- Variety in cost of panel options
- Feasibility of solar roof panels

Discussion then proceeded regarding the actual needs of the building. There was agreement on a building with 6 bays each 20 feet in width, 14 foot wide equipment doors 16 feet in height, and a building depth of 60-64 feet. At this point, a shed roof is thought to be best. While a stick construction will be considered, the anticipated span of the building might make that a difficult choice.

A rough floor plan will be drawn and brought to the next meeting, scheduled for Thursday, June 8, 2017. Bensonwood in Walpole will be invited to make a presentation at that meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bartlett

Minutes – June 8, 2017

Fire Department Facility Advisory Committee,

Present: Tom Finnegan (Committee Chairman), Wes Staples, Bob Bartlett, Graham Gitchell, Scott Talbot, Bill Campbell, and Harry Nelson. Also Doug Reitmeyer of Bensonwood

Meeting convened at 7:05 pm.

Minutes from the May 25 meeting were read and accepted.

Doug Reitmeyer began the meeting with an introduction of himself and Bensonwood, where he is Senior Engineer/Designer in charge of project development. He presented himself as a neighbor and made it clear that there are several employees at Bensonwood who reside in Westmoreland who are very interested in this fire station project.

Scott had created a 1/2" scale of the basic structure according to the guidelines discussed at the meeting of May 25, which served as a good visual and object of discussion. Questions covered a wide range of topics, and Doug was very interested in the ideas, plans, and status of the project. Among the topics,

- Bensonwood does have experience constructing large buildings, including one in CT (approximately the size of five football fields) and two in MA (each about 15,000 sq ft).
- Several options for the roof load were discussed. The structural integrity of the span can be dealt with.
- Radiant heat in the floor can be more productive than overhead heating vents. The number of heating days is greater than the number of cooling days.
- The shed style is a very good idea.
- Energy efficiency is definitely worth its cost.
- Bensonwood is a full service operation and can handle the project from initial contact to completed construction, or any part of the project.
- It was advised that the committee determine (1) what was needed then (2) what would be nice.
- Functionality is the key issue.
- Energy requirements can be determined using technology.
- Isolate the site development costs.
- Water runoff from the roof can be used as a water supply source.
- A three foot overhang extension on the front shed roof is recommended.
- The basic construction could be that of a timber frame barn, with reliance on the jacket to support the frame.
- According to an internet source, the national average cost of fire station construction is \$200-\$250 per sq. ft.

6/2/12 cont

Doug offered to research the shell package cost of their recent construction projects, and suggested that committee members visit fire stations in the area that have recently been completed to gather construction cost estimates for comparison.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 13. Harry will arrange to have a representative from Morton Buildings make a presentation at that time.

The members of the Fire Department Facility Advisory Committee continue to be disappointed in the lack of representation from the members of the Select Board at their meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bartlett

Minutes – July 13, 2017

Fire Department Facility Advisory Committee

Present: Tom Finnegan (Committee Chairman), Wes Staples, Bob Bartlett, Harry Nelson, Clyde Simino, Scott Talbot. Also Keith Holloway, Sales Consultant and guest speaker representing Morton Buildings of Westfield, MA.

Meeting convened at 6:30 pm.

Keith began his presentation by explaining that Morton Buildings uses its own employees for the shell. They have the architect, the design engineer; they install the integrated shell, the doors, windows, etc. He was interested in knowing whether a performance bond or prevailing wage laws pertained to the job.

Among the topics discussed:

- The process involves determining what is most cost effective.
- A straight box construction can be done for a better price.
- The structure should represent the town; it should be presentable, with enough embellishment at a low cost.
- A bid package is provided with full specifications for the job, generic to Morton standards, with regional variations.
- A 60' x 120' shell can be completed in roughly four weeks.
- Morton Buildings specializes in energy efficiency.
- Solar panels can be placed on the roof.

Following the presentation, a discussion followed among the members. Among the items addressed were the bay configuration, roof styles, local contractors who may be available for the interior finishing and the lot configuration. Harry offered to obtain a copy of the surveyed lot plan. The Select Board will be approached to discuss the need for money to hire a site plan engineer so that the building footprint can be determined.

Next meeting will be on Thursday, July 27. Bob will contact Doug Reitmeyer from Bensonwood, who would like to return with more specific information on the project.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bartlett

Minutes – July 27, 2017

Fire Department Facility Advisory Committee

Present: Tom Finnegan (Committee Chairman), Wes Staples, Bob Bartlett, Harry Nelson, Clyde Simino, Scott Talbot, Bill Campbell, and Graham Gitchell. Also present were Randall Walter, resident, company steward and architect at Bensonwood; Dave Raabe, resident and former employee of Bensonwood with design and construction background.

Meeting convened at 7:05 pm.

Randall Walter spoke at length about the station project. Above the details, he had two over-riding concepts:

1. This is a civic project which will take leadership and planning.
2. Start with a site plan that involves both the Fire Department and the Town Hall.

Within the frame of these concepts, topics included:

- With a NetZero plan, the building can generate as much electricity as it uses. Create a self-sustaining building.
- Westmoreland has a very interesting population of talented trades people. Get the people rallied around the project, involve as many as possible.
- Septic and parking should be addressed, but that may not be the responsibility of this committee.
- Bensonwood does like to be involved in local public projects. They have purchased an automated wall builder that brings down construction costs. Wood is a natural resource that takes carbon out of the atmosphere and stores it in the building, which is called “carbon sequestration”.
- Make the public aware of the costs that are being born by the present building.
- This committee needs an outline of the steps involved in the process to move forward.
- There are certain things that will be required, such as a fire detection/suppression system and exhaust/ventilation system.

The discussion that followed covered ideas and questions. The concept of making this a community project, of making the case that it would be a project where the town would pay upfront to build a solid building that was cost effective and energy efficient was often repeated. There may be integration with the Town Hall of the well/septic situations, as well as parking. The immediate need is for a conceptual site design. Tom will contact two local companies to get cost estimates so that the committee can go to the Select Board for funds. Key question is “How can we get more for less money?”. Both Randall and Dave are willing to help the committee where they can. The goal is to go to the March town meeting with a plan.

Next meeting to be determined.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bartlett

Minutes – September 5, 2017

Fire Department Facility Advisory Committee

Present: Tom Finnegan (Committee Chairman), Bob Bartlett, Harry Nelson, Clyde Simino, and Graham Gitchell

Meeting convened at 7:05 pm.

The meeting began with Tom distributing correspondence from Dave Bergeron of Blackstone Land Use Consultants of Keene and from Brad Sanderson of Stevens & Associates of Brattleboro. Both companies had submitted price quotes for a conceptual site plan for the proposed fire station location.

The main questions for the site plan involve just what can fit on the property, and will the plan address the issues of our projected square footage, storage, etc., as well as drainage, parking, water, and sewage. It is a very important next step in the process to secure this information before the committee progresses further.

Financial issues were discussed, with questions regarding available funds and whether a RFP would be necessary or would that need to wait until Town Meeting in March of '18. It was also suggested that an article requesting funds for an architectural design be included in the March '18 warrant.

The motion was made for the committee to attend the Select Board meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 7. The motion was seconded. Harry will request that the committee be placed on the 9/7 agenda and, if that is approved, will inform Tom who will in turn notify all members of the time.

Minutes of the July 27 meeting were read and accepted.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bartlett

Minutes – October 26, 2017

Fire Department Facility Advisory Committee

Present: Tom Finnegan (Committee Chairman), Bob Bartlett, Harry Nelson, Scott Talbot, and Graham Gitchell

Meeting convened at 7:10 pm.

The minutes of the September 5 meeting were read and accepted.

The meeting began with a discussion relative to the joint session with the Select Board and the Committee after the Select Board had adequate time to review our previous meeting minutes. The Select Board was in agreement that a site assessment was indeed needed and encouraged the committee to prepare a request for proposal in order to get estimates of cost for the March 2018 town meeting. It was stated by the Select Board that no funds would be available until voted upon at the next annual town meeting. Although there may be funds available, no exact figure mentioned, they could not be used without prior town meeting approval. The committee briefly discussed the possibility of requesting the available funds be moved to a capital reserve account whereby all or a portion thereof could be used to offset the site assessment cost. It was highly recommended and agreed by all to look into the possibility of getting volunteer professional advice/ assistance in preparing an RFP. Chief Nelson agreed to contact Randall Walter and or Dave Raabe to see if either would be willing to sit with the committee and guide us through the RFP preparation. It was also discussed to include the needs of the town hall, i.e., septic, water supply, parking issues, etc., in the site assessment. Input from JoAnn will confirm the Select Board's desire to include these issues. As for the committee's input toward the site assessment, an area 8000 to 10000 sq feet minimum will be needed for a fire station. Tom will contact JoAnn relative to the proper RFP form and preparation of a town meeting article to address the request for necessary funds.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bartlett