

MINUTES
Sanbornton Building Construction Committee (BCC)

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, October 29, 2020 at 1:00 PM

Meeting Place: 19 Meetinghouse Hill Rd (Old Town Hall).

Nina Gardner called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

Roll Call of Members Present in person at the meeting

Regular Members present: Nina Gardner (Citizen Rep-Chairman), Brendan Morrison (Citizen Rep), Ken Carleton (Employee Rep), Jim Dick (Selectmen's Rep), Steve Cobb (Citizen Rep-Vice Chair)

Regular members absent: Chuck Flanders (Citizen Rep)

Others Present: Members of the public (Abby Howe, Justin Howe, Paul Dexter). Chief Steve Hankard,

Design Concept Presentation

Nina Gardner welcomed the members of the public who were present to hear the Committee's presentation on their two design recommendations for the Police Department and Town Office. There was a total of three residents present. Justin Howe requested to provide the Committee with an overview of an alternate proposal he had developed. Nina Gardner asked Paul Dexter, the only other resident who hadn't attended a previous session, if he had any objections. Paul said he had heard the presentation to the Board of Selectmen so he had no objection to Justin presenting his proposal.

- a. Justin provided the Committee with a floor plan and site layout that he said was a variation on Option 3. The proposal positions the new PD directly behind Old Town Hall and connects it to the structure. He pointed out that the planned PD building is exactly the same width as Old Town Hall, so the new building would be "hidden" behind the historic structure and not interrupt the historic skyline. Justin listed what he believes are the benefits of this approach, including reduced infrastructure (septic system and parking), ADA access with manageable elevation changes, additional storage in the eaves of the new structure to house mechanical systems, reduced site work costs over a location further up in the field, and the ability to reuse the gravel excavated on site for the building and driveway to reduce cost. He pointed out that Old Town Hall could be used as the PD training room, which addresses one of the shortfalls with Option 3b. He noted that the capacity of the existing septic systems needs to be checked to see if it could handle the PD. His plan included building an entrance drive from the parcel of land the Town owns adjacent to Old Town Hall (Map 26, Lot 67) that would eliminate the challenges the current driveway presents and make for easier access. He believes this approach could reduce the cost of the proposed standalone building to as low as \$1,395,000. With that amount, the current Highway Garage bond payment should allow it to be built with zero change to the current tax rate. He pointed out that he believes the cost for proper drainage for Option 1 to address water issues is underestimated and will increase the cost. He also pointed out that Option 1 provided no possibility of any future growth – while his proposal provided for future expansion for both the PD and Town Office.
- b. The layout he presented was a reconfiguration of the H.L. Turner proposal to move the entrance to the side of the building rather than placing it on the gable end. He provided a very professional drawing of his proposal. He noted that the side elevation of the proposed building would look very similar to the existing Life-Safety Building profile.

- c. Jim Dick commented that if Justin's proposed savings were in fact "real", that would allow an option to add 1000 sq ft to the current Town Office for the same proposed price as Option 3b - which did not add any space, just performed some renovation. Justin asked if the voters could be provided an option at Town Meeting. Nina said that the bond has to be for a specific amount – but the Town could ultimately bond a different amount as long as it was lower. Justin asked about trying to plan the project in phases – starting with the new PD this year and performing the renovations on Town Office in the future, the minimize the impact on the tax rate. Jim Dick pointed out that delaying actually increases the impact on tax rate, because inflation raises the cost of any potential project every year. So while delaying may result in a lower overall tax impact this year, ultimately it would cost tax payers more.
- d. Paul Dexter said that he was concerned that a delay might result in losing the support of a Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee that seem favorably inclined to consider projects for the Town's infrastructure needs now. As the membership of those bodies change, so could the support. He said he liked Justin's idea of placing the PD directly behind Old Town Hall, and he shared concerns over the footprint proposed for Option 1 and the water issues.
- e. Justin said that if we can put forward a project now that addresses 90% of the needs with zero tax impact, that would be a "win". He noted that the Town has tried to do this for 20 years with no success. He brought up the tax rate impact from the School District (an additional \$0.70/\$1,000 of assessed value starting with the December tax bill) and said it will have a big impact on people. He believes that any project that suggests any additional tax increases will get shot down at Town Meeting – but if we can get some critical work done that has zero impact, then it will probably pass. Jim Dick agreed that the tax impact was a serious issue, and that we need a real source of feedback from residents on their feelings about it before a proposal is put forward. The Committee discussed various ways to get feedback, including online surveys and social media. Nina Gardner pointed out that any survey has to wait until the new tax rate is set and the bills are sent out – that will be the true test of how people feel.
- f. Paul Dexter commented that while the building issues had been studied for 25 years, there was only one attempt to get a project approved – and that was in 2019. He didn't feel that plan clearly differentiated between the "wants" and "needs", which is one of the reasons it was defeated. This plan needs to make that difference clear.
- g. Nina thanked Justin for his efforts and the presentation. Jim Dick asked him to provide electronic copies of his proposal and perceived benefits so they could be shared with both BPS and H.L. Turner for evaluation.

Review of Minutes

A **motion** was made by Brendan Morrison and seconded by Steve Cobb to approve the minutes from October 22 and October 26 with any changes. There was no discussion. Motion **passed** unanimously.

Committee agreed the next meeting will be November 9, 2020 at 7:00pm. It will be an in-person meeting at the Old Town Hall. 19 Meetinghouse Hill Rd.

A **motion** was made to adjourn the meeting by Ken Carleton and seconded by Steve Cobb. There was no discussion and the motion **passed** unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.