



Fire Station Building Review Committee

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 11, 2016
UNAPPROVED

Committee members in attendance: Allan Brown - Chairman, Kimberley Edelmann, David Hartman, Howard Kirchner, Peter Ladd, Janice Loz, Ed Raymond, Peter Wyman

Also in attendance: Town Administrator Jim Bingham, Selectman John Dabuliewicz

Others present: Varick Proper, Ed Mical, Charlie Albano

1. Opening

Chairman Allan Brown opened the meeting at 3:33 pm.

2. Samyn D'Elia Architects

Ward D'Elia and Chris Salomon introduced themselves and started the interview with a presentation. The interview evolved into an interactive Q&A discussion.

- SDA have been in business since 1980.
- Done projects all over the State of New Hampshire.
- 9 person firm.
- Have designed many fire stations and police stations.
- Very interested in Warner's project.
- Team would be lead by Ward, Chris would be project manager and a few people in the firm would be doing the drafting.
- SDA would be partnering with engineers from Yeaton Associates. Yeaton does the heating and plumbing. They also do LEED projects. They aim for LEED Silver, but do not usually go for the plaque because it costs a lot. Resumes provided. Tight team, usually the same group of people working together.
- Ward and Chris would be the ones attending meetings and public hearings.
- Recent projects shown include the Bureau of Marine Patrol building in Gilford and the new I-93 rest stops.
- Want to focus on what Warner needs.
- Showed the design of the new Atkinson fire station. 10,000 sq ft. The Town is very happy with it. Letter of reference from the Fire Chief. Drive through design. It was designed ready to expand upward, leaving space for an elevator. Wood frame, vinyl siding. Designed to match Town square.
- Chris showed how a modified version of the Atkinson building could be placed on the Warner fire station site, going with the assumption that Split Rock Road would not be the primary driveway and that some of the trees currently in place could be saved. 40 parking spots.

- Chris wants to meet with the committee to come up with options in preparation to talking with the public.
- Initial process: Meet with committee, discuss the program (building requirements). Then hold a charrette to get the public engaged.
- Listening is important! For Hampton, a few public meetings helped bring everyone around.
- Why is a fire station needed? It is obvious to the committee, but the public needs to understand as well. Education is key.
- SDA will not sell the project for the committee. However, they will stand up along side the committee and provide information & marketing tools.
- Towns people need to be convinced by the committee that there is a need for a fire station.
- Construction Management (CM) is the smart approach. Most of the SDA projects use the CM approach.
- Ward referenced the FSBRC minutes.
- The CM is part of the Town's team along side the architect. The CM can do estimates throughout the project, aiming to keep costs within the desired budget.
- At Town Meeting, the committee needs to sell the need; SDA will talk about how to solve the problem.
- The design of the building will be done with the FSBRC with revisions until everyone is happy the design is good.
- Previous design: SDA see that as a huge effort to be successful. Some of the programming for that building may be applicable to the new building. Reviewing that work, SDA will want to know what is worth keeping going forward. Looking at that former design, SDA may gain more information about what the Town is thinking about.
- Every Town has similar features in their fire stations; every Town has specific unique features. SDA will learn what Warner wants.

There was a Warner fire department call out at this point. Fire fighters left the meeting.

- CM: Ken Holmes from North Branch gave the Town good information. He is one of the best CMs.
- Pricing a building can not be done in advance. The market is constantly shifting. The costs of materials in two years time can be very different depending on the economy. Quotes at this stage would have contingencies.
- For Town Meeting, the numbers need to be fairly accurate, as best as possible.
- For Town Meeting, the tax impacts needs to be shared with citizens.
- The Atkinson project, not a CM project, from start to finish took 18 months. However, the Town already had the money allocated.
- At the 1st Town Meeting, the Town will vote to have the architects design the building. At the 2nd Town Meeting, the Town will vote to get a bond to construct the building. Some Towns vote for both at a single Town Meeting.
- What happened in the previous design? The site along the river was questioned. Also, mention of dormitories did not go over well. The design was never voted upon. The current committee has new members.
- Impression of the current proposed building site? Much more favorable. One member of the FSBRC is nearly an abutter. Neighborhood wants to ensure the building fits well.
- Allan likes the design plan SDA brought along. (The drawing was given to Warner to keep for reference.)
- Allan talked about landscaping and shared the concerns of the neighbors / abutters. He does not want fire apparatus headlights shining into homes.

- How was the fee for the conceptual reached? Experience with prior clients, number of meetings used, time in meetings, time with consultants, whenever working towards a feasibility or concept design finishing with schematic design. Usually works out to \$20,000 - \$30,000, sometime \$15,000. Looked at historic data, but lowered it because they really want the Warner project.
- If SDA gets the full project, the fee would be built into the following phase.
- Process will include a kick off charrette with the Town, design reviews, presenting to the public, producing designs with which the CM can get a price for the building and contingency.
- Energy: SDA designs the envelop, the mechanical engineer on their team designs the mechanical, the heating systems. Calculations of return on investment will be done. Pursuit of energy grants will be done. SDA often uses air-to-air heat pumps.
- Energy: Fire stations can use radiant heat in the apparatus bay floor; helping for drying out hoses quickly. It is more expensive.
- Time available for the the Warner project? It would be SDA's primary project. Chris lives in Henniker.
- SDA would stay involved until the ribbon cutting.
- SDA will review current program in detail and discuss further with Warner.
- David Hartman: Population of Atkinson? Ward didn't know, but believed it was a small Town like Warner.
- David Hartman: In regards to the first design by Warner River, the project was being driven by the Fire Department. It was designed to be useful for 50 years. DH wants to replace the current fire station with something suitable now, but not for 50 years. However, designing for future expansion was important. Ward agreed that a committee driving such a project needs to have wider representation, like being done now.
- Jim Bingham: How do you approach preconceived notions that limit options when meeting a committee? Ward: That's a common issue. We will make sure the program really solves the problem. We need to understand why things are needed, well enough to be able to explain it to others. Education is important. We are all going to be equally smart about Warner's project. SDA is there to help achieve the goal of completing the project. Need to keep within the budget while providing the services and addressing essential needs. Interactive discussion is key.
- Chris: A successful bond vote is achieved with a transparent collaborative teamwork. Failure is achieved by designing within a bubble. Townspeople need to know why they should vote yes on a bond.

The interview closed at 4:24 pm.

The committee took a break while the next candidates arrived and set up.

Fire trucks started to arrive back to the station at this point.

3. SMP Architecture

Eric Palson, President, and Anthony Mento, Project Manager, arrived at 4:30 pm. Allan asked Anthony to wait a few minutes to see if any of the fire fighters would be joining the meeting. Anthony said they saw Chief Raymond directing operations at the fire on I-89.

Peter Wyman and Peter Ladd returned to the meeting. Charlie Albano joined the public.

Eric and Anthony introduced themselves. SMP has 6 employees and are located in Concord. They have over 30 years experience. He has been Principal of SMP since 1998. Eric lived in Warner 30 years ago. Anthony has been with SMP since 2000.

SMP is primary a commercial firm. They do a lot of municipal projects: Fire, police, town halls, libraries. The qualification packet submitted lists many projects. They understand the budget process, the get-out-to-vote process.

The Meredith Fire Department needed SMP's help marketing the needs of the department. Citizens didn't know how tight the building. SMP held a charrette. Brought in citizens and firemen and set up teams to help design. Skeptics were turned around. Strong opponents became firm supporters. One in particular, an abutter, helped changed the dynamics of the mood within the community.

SMP will hold as many meetings as needed, do analysis and keep certain groups informed.

Jim Bingham: Since Anthony understands the situation in Warner, what are things that we must do?

Eric: Anthony will be assigned the project.

Anthony: More community awareness and involvement is needed. The committee has done a good job of identifying the needs. The group needs to be more proactive, setting up events, marketing the needs and listening to the community. Further development of the program will be needed. A full presentation at Town Meeting should be after the momentum has been built; everyone in town needs to be talking about the fire station before Town Meeting. The community needs to know the proposed station is not the Taj Mahal.

It's possible people in the community will have great ideas.

Language and definitions used at the beginning is important. For example, on one project, the client wanted something "rustic"? Eric interpreted that as meaning something with bark on it.

SMP is usually the meeting facilitators, driving discussions through community sessions.

SMP will employ PowerPoint presentations, videos and graphics to convey concepts.

The role of the architect in Phase I:

- Solve the technical problem for the Fire Department.
- Meet with the community; build consensus towards an appropriate solution.
- Work with a Construction Manager who will put together a budget based on the marketplace information.
- Write the RFP for a CM, help evaluate CM proposals. Do the interviews and critique the CMs.

SMP hopes to continue into Phase II.

Once drafting begins, more SMP employees are engaged in the work.

SMP likes to have two employees attend meetings so that they can share ideas once back at the office.

Jim Bingham: The qualification packet submitted lists many projects, which is better? Design first, then construction or both at once?

Anthony: At past Town Meetings, people will not be surprised to hear about a fire station. It would be very tight, but a warrant article to cover both could be written. The team is in place and can mobilize. However, there would not be adequate time to engage the public.

Eric: The construction market is hot right now. Prices may go up 6 to 8% each year. Firms are stretched thinner and are in a position to cherry pick jobs. What you want to do is reduce the construction time; that saves money. Don't rush into that phase.

Anthony talked about the Meredith project where they worked to a specific budget. At Town Meeting, they had the guaranteed maximum price to construct the building. At bid, it came in lower. The vote passed overwhelmingly. Eric noted that not every town can take that approach. Meredith successfully took that approach with their police station prior to the fire station.

Allan: Can we go to the 2017 Town Meeting with the price for both architectural efforts (conceptuals and full construction documents)?

Anthony: The construction documents would probably not be ready by then. There is time to do them, but the Town would have to pay the firm to go through that effort and I'm not sure there is money to cover that.

Peter Wyman: What would be the cost to do that effort?

Eric: 65% of our costs are in preparation of that set of documents. 20% covers the conceptual. Most of our work is done before the shovel goes into the ground.

Peter Wyman: What is your cost for Phase II?

Anthony: We don't know yet. That is what this process will define. It will depend on the building.

Peter: Is it based on a percentage?

Eric: We've done it all sorts of ways. That is something we negotiate with our client. Percentage. Flat fee. Lots of ways.

Anthony: We can talk about that after we are hired. We need to determine what the building is. Then we sharpen the pencils and calculate the hours needed, drafting time, meeting time and more.

Eric: We can always share the final costs of projects we have done in the past. The information is in the public domain.

The scope of work that will be done at this first phase was outlined in the proposal.

- 3 public meetings
- Series of sessions with the FSBRC
- Meetings with the Selectboard
- Assisting with selecting a CM
- Providing graphics for Town Meeting
- Marketing according to the demographics; use of FaceBook

Eric noted that SMP won't say "no" if a group wants them to come talk about the project. Ex: The Men's Club.

In response to a question from Peter Ladd, Eric recommended Warner visit the Canterbury complex. It has an 8 vehicle apparatus bay. Hooksett is another.

Energy: Priorities regarding energy vary from town to town. SMP designs what the client wants.

Energy: 60 or 70 years from now, the energy world may be very different. SMP provided a case study of a fire station in the northwest. When the doors were opened, the heat would escape. The heating system, no matter how efficient, needs a well insulated envelop. SMP has designed buildings with geothermal solutions among other things.

Energy: Discussions about return on investment will take place when designing the building. The up front cost needs to be compared to the long term operating costs to help convince voters that one solution is better than another.

Energy: Sustainable design is not additive; green solutions is an approach. The Town's goals / directive need to be established ahead of time.

Energy: Most SMP projects now surpass the energy codes. They do energy analysis and wall assembly analysis. They look to the Town's energy committee to set the goals.

Energy: Once a building is designed, an energy model could be done to obtain hard numbers regarding ROI of one mechanical system over another. In Phase I, the view of the building is still from 5,000 feet.

Fire stations are held to a higher standard. They need to be the last building standing in a hurricane or disaster. So when one bolt may do, three may be used.

The only way the FSBRC committee can make thoughtful suggestions to the Town is by having SMP provide options. SMP will try to be as broad as possible. The citizens should see that every option was considered and how decisions were made.

Wood vs metal vs insulated concrete form (ICF). There are various options available. There are multiple insulation solutions. Each comes with different costs. These are examples of information for energy efficiency discussions. During Phase II, that is when the energy consultant is actively engaged.

A well designed structure is now standard practice at SMP, no matter what. Earning the plaque is no longer a goal.

Eric spoke about collecting run off water from washing trucks on the apron. Allan noted that both the Highway Department garage and Police Department buildings have collection systems.

Consultants: SMP has done about 30 projects with WV Engineering Associates in Keene. They are very well established and have done an impressive number of projects. They do mechanical, electrical, fire protection and plumbing. NorthPoint Construction Management LLC in Concord is another firm SMP has done 4 or 5 projects with. They are civil engineers. They can cover geo technical work and landscaping. SMP does not involve consultants during Phase I. They won't be at Phase I meetings.

SMP would prefer the Town contract civil engineers directly.

Anthony knows of a local landscape architect who would like to be engaged for the fire station project. That can be arranged by the Town. In Phase II, the Town can dictate which services they want provided by SMP. There will be sketches of trees on the conceptual drawings, but no Latin plants names.

4. Next Meeting

3 pm Wednesday, October 12, 2016 at the Town Hall. The committee members will discuss all four architects interviewed and come up with their recommendations to present to the Board of Selectmen.

5. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kimberley Brown Edelmann
Recording Secretary