



Fire Station Building Review Committee

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 27, 2017
Approved

Committee members in attendance: Selectman Kimberley Edelmann, David Hartman, Howard Kirchner, Peter Ladd, Jonathan Lord, Janice Loz, Fire Chief Ed Raymond, Peter Wyman

Apologies: Allan Brown - Committee Chair

SMP Architecture: Anthony Mento, Jason LaCombe, Eric Palson

North Branch Construction: Ken Holmes, Bruce Blazon

Also in attendance: Selectman John Dabuliewicz, Town Administrator Jim Bingham, Emergency Management Director Ed Mical, Varick Proper, John McGilvray

1. Minutes

Kimberley opened the meeting at 6:03 pm.

The minutes of September 6 were approved.

2. Updates

2.1 House

The house will be moved in October. Meanwhile, any efforts to remove plantings for later use must be complete by Sunday October 1.

2.2 FEMA Grant

Ed Mical provided an update. He has been back and forth with FEMA regarding various details. There was an issue with cutting some of the trees, but that was since resolved. The trees along Main St east of the utility pole and the big willow could be removed.

There were two things about the design of the building that were still outstanding:

- ◆ Antennae installation
- ◆ Closing of the garden well - Must be done in compliance with State regulations. Certified licensee must do the work.

Anthony asked about the antennae. Ed went into more detail, noting that the EOC and the fire station will both have an antenna.

2.3 Marketing

At the last meeting, Peter Ladd reminded everyone how important it was to market the project.

Howard asked what marketing would be done during the upcoming Warner Fall Foliage Festival weekend on the weekend of October 6 - 8.... nine days away.

Chief Ed Raymond said the fire department will be manned. He could put a sign outside.

Kimberley suggested posters, brochures, one-pagers, something people could take home and read.

Janice said she would put together a flyer. It could be a condensed version of the website.

Anthony suggested that a Q&A was always good to include.

Howard suggested members of the committee could be at the fire station to answer questions.

Anthony said the video used at the Transfer Station could be set up to run at the fire station.

The video Kimberley was working on would require a way for her to get to the fire station when it was active. The Chief said he would provide her with a pager soon.

Anthony said pricing for a site sign was requested but had not arrived yet.

2.4 Warrant Article Time Line

December 19 is when the Board of Selectmen would be reviewing all of the 2018 Warrant Articles.

Town Administrator Jim Bingham pointed out that since the actual Guaranteed Maximum Price would not actually be known until February, the bones of the article would be used and finance strategy would be discussed.

Jim added that February 28 is the last day, according to the State, for a public hearing about the budgets.

Anthony noted that at Town Meeting, if needed, updated numbers could be shared. Jim shared that amending the Warrant Article at Town Meeting should be avoided.

John Dabuliewicz wondered what would happen if the GMP was not available in time to discuss it with the budget committee. Jim said the Board would have to talk in terms of "up to \$X". However, it was hoped that would not be the case and that numbers would be firm.

3. New Schematic - Basement Option

As requested in the September 6 meeting, Anthony presented a new floor plan schematic (Option 2) which included a basement. The August 23 schematic without a basement (Option 1) came to a total of 11,087 square feet. Option 2 with the basement came to 11,666 square feet. The apparatus bay did not change in size in the September drawing, just the administrative area and the basement.

Bruce Blazon of North Branch Construction pointed out that the basement schematic came in at \$21,166 more than the non-basement schematic.

Schematics	Sq Ft	Price	\$ / SqFt
Option 1 - No Basement	11,087	\$2,798,823	\$252
Option 2 - Basement	11,666	\$2,819,989	\$242
Differences	579	\$21,166	

The committee spent some time looking at both plans.

4. Soft Versus Hard Costs

Anthony stressed that the numbers presented by NBC to date were "hard costs". These were the costs of constructing the building.

Other costs that need to be considered, "soft costs", had not been discussed in detail. Anthony said some of the soft costs included things which the Town had already done and / or had committed to doing, including:

- ◆ Surveying
- ◆ Geotechnical engineering
- ◆ Architectural design work
- ◆ Civil engineering

Some of the other things which would fall under "soft costs" and would need to be considered included:

- ◆ Demolition
- ◆ Landscaping
- ◆ Office furnishings
- ◆ Television
- ◆ Projection system
- ◆ White boards
- ◆ Computer systems
- ◆ Telephone systems
- ◆ Moving costs
- ◆ Security systems

Also an "owner's contingency", usually set to 10%, would need to be budgeted to cover last minute decisions and needs that fell into the "soft costs" category.

Bruce's number for Option 1, along with soft costs was estimated to be around \$3,219,000.

Kimberley noted that the purchase of the property was \$215,000. It was already paid, but should be remembered when talking about the total cost of the project.

Jim suggested that equipping the new fire station could possibly be done in stages. He wanted to keep the warrant article amount as low as possible. He felt pushing out some of the soft costs should be seriously considered. He added that it will be up to the Fire Department to figure out what would come later.

Anthony noted that some of the soft costs would be covered by the grant for the Emergency Operations Center.

Jason said there was roughly \$600,000 listed as "contingencies". The contingency may not actually get spent. Kimberley asked Bruce how often the contingency gets used. He said the construction market was ever changing, but added that as numbers firm up, the contingency numbers would too. The contingency numbers were high at this stage to cover unknowns. It was also noted that early January was historically the best time for sub-contractor bidding in terms of managing costs.

Peter Ladd recalled that during a committee visit to one of the other new fire stations in the area, the Chief had complained that the Town voted to a reduced budget at Town Meeting. The result was that the some things were not included in the final building. Pete asked what would happen if citizens at Warner's Town Meeting voted to reduce the bond amount. Would the contingency cover that difference? Bruce answered, "no", pointing out that the contingency was a guarded portion of the budget and was there to protect project costs throughout construction. All unused contingency would be returned to the Town after construction was complete.

Jim pointed out that Peter's question was a good one to consider. If residents had a specific number in mind and the bond was for more, they might be tempted to propose a different number. Jim recommended the committee look hard at ways to reduce costs at this stage. He added that he felt the administration side of the building was where to look first. He also recalled that the building was being designed to extend at a later date.

Janice agreed that it was time to look at where costs could be cut. She did not want to do that at Town Meeting. Peter Ladd felt that if cuts were made now, there would be nothing left to cut later. Ed Raymond also felt the committee had already whittled things down quite a bit; even the apparatus bay had been reduced in size.

John Dabuliewicz said it was obvious to him that the fire department wanted to get a minimal amount of things that they had never had and that there may not be another chance to do so. Ed Raymond said what the WFD needed was in the plan; there were a lot of things that they wanted that were not in the plan. John said he understood that, but a lot of citizens may not yet understand. John said the WFD had a lot of support, but it needed to be mobilized.

Kimberley asked what would need to be removed to get back down to \$2.5M. Anthony noted that, as an example, the kitchen was one of the higher cost components of the building. Another high cost area was bathrooms.

Howard asked about mechanical systems and whether radiant slabs across the whole building made sense. Bruce said radiant heat throughout would require expensive air circulation systems.

5. Donated Construction Time & Effort

Kimberley recalled that the NBC numbers included a breakdown of estimates showing subcontractors as being a majority of the costs. She said that somewhere earlier in the lifetime of the project, the committee wondered if there would be local contractors who would possibly want to donate some of their time and effort. She asked Bruce where that idea stood.

Bruce said that hiring local subs could raise liability issues for NBC. However, there were some opportunities for the Town to engage and welcome local help, such as landscaping. Jason noted that the committee does have some say in which subcontractors would be brought on board. Bruce said that there are challenges in bringing in small local firms which may be daunted by the scale of the project.

Kimberley said that she was trying to figure out ways to reduce costs, adding that the current fire station was actually built by the fire department.

Jason said if a local contractor had passion about helping the fire department, they should bid. But, NBC needs to be comfortable. Plaistow had this happen with a local contractor who bid very low to help the Town.

6. Discussing Cost Reductions

A suggestion was made to shuffle some of the rooms to remove the front portion of the administrative building.

Eric appreciated the effort but noted that "architecture on the fly" was not going to help get the cost back down to \$2.5 million. Instead, the budget goal would need to be reset and agreed, then a major redesign would be needed. And a change in the time line. Tinkering on the current design would not do it.

Anthony said he understood \$2.5 million was a goal, but the numbers weren't coming in that way.

Peter Ladd said he felt that it was so important to sell the project and suggested that investing \$5,000 on a PR consultant would be money well spent.

Janice wanted to reduce some of the square footage. Peter Wyman noted that reducing the size of rooms wouldn't result in big cost reductions. Instead, the price per square foot would increase. For example, reducing the size of the kitchen would not help as the kitchen would still have the appliances, sink, cabinets, special floor, etc.

Howard said he started on the project thinking \$2.5 million was right. He said he had since modified his view on that.

Kimberley asked if \$2.8 million would get the WFD a building which they can drive their apparatus into and use. The answer was, "Yes, for hard costs". It would be Option 1, as designed. The \$2.8 would not include the soft costs such as including having SMP Architects staying engaged during construction.

7. Feature / Budget Reduction Effort

Bruce showed the committee options which could be cut from the program. The committee went through the prepared itemized list, discussed each item, and voted on each item. A summary follows:

Item	Value of Item		Notes
	Keep	Remove	
Install basement \$21,166 (Build Option 2)	n/a	n/a	Using Option 1 instead
Blinds and shades		\$2,880	Covered in soft costs (FF&E)
Non ADA toilet accessories (19 items)		\$1,500	
Marker boards		\$2,000	In FF&E
Projection screen		\$800	In FF&E
Fire extinguisher monitoring		\$1,200	
Owner installs appliances		\$1,680	
Compressed air system (compressor & pipes)	\$7,500		
Truck fill (for internal water source for tankers)	\$6,000		
Vehicle exhaust changed to building exhaust		\$5,500	
Building electronic access control system		\$4,000	
Generator supplied by others		\$25,000	
Sheet vinyl with sealed concrete in kitchen		\$1,800	
2 of 3 vestibule windows		\$1,275	
3 of 7 training room windows		\$2,005	
ICF forming costs per window is \$150		\$750	
Lockers in mens and womens bathrooms		\$2,750	In FF&E
Coil door at kitchen (leave open window to training room)		\$2,750	
Replace single egress aluminum doors with fiber glass		\$6,000	
Remove sidelights / slender side windows at front vestibule	\$2,000		Too hard to add later
Replace cement siding and PVC trim with vinyl siding	\$9,000		Go for quality & looks
Barrier One at slabs (liability)	\$4,355		Concrete moisture control
Concrete aprons at truck bay	\$5,500		
Monument sign allowance		\$4,500	A definite want. Will do later
Final cleaning by owner	\$3,014		Contractors clean up
Minimum landscape allowance to grass and minor plantings		\$12,500	
Eliminate all landscape and owner furnishes complete	\$25,000		Hydroseed. No irrigation
Owner performs landscape maintenance during establishment	\$2,500		
C-channel steel at OH door jambs	\$4,000		Reinforces doors
Eliminate second driveway cut in front of the building		\$11,000	
Vertical granite curbing or cheaper bituminous curb?	\$1,800		Keep granite curbing
Rear paved area becomes hard pack completely	\$20,000		Keep some pavement
1 of the apparatus bays	\$99,774		Critical need
Sub-Totals	\$190,443	\$89,890	
	Kept	Removed	

September 6 Option 1 Schematic Estimate \$2,798,823

UPDATED September 27 Option 1 Schematic Estimate **\$2,708,933**

Abutter John McGilvray reiterated how important it was to make sure the project includes fencing and / or an evergreen barrier to prevent light from pouring into his home. Kimberley said she would keep that in focus.

The utility pole in front of the apparatus bay was discussed for several minutes. Chief Raymond felt that it was risky to keep and would be a problem to navigate around. Jim said he would talk to Eversource about it. It was also acknowledged that the State does not like curb cuts over 50 ft in width, but exceptions have been known to be made.

While discussing the paved area behind the building, David Hartman asked the committee to imagine what the recycling center driveway and parking lot would be like if it was just hard pack. Paving of the area behind the station was supported where the fire apparatus would travel, preventing damage to the area. The parking area for private vehicles would still be hard pack.

The cost of the middle apparatus bay was priced at \$99,774. Kimberley asked if the cost of 5 bays would therefore be \$500,000. Bruce pointed out that the middle bay did not have walls nor electrical wiring. The savings would be in the cost of trusses. The middle bay was the least expensive bay.

Chief Raymond pointed out that all of the bays were needed. He reviewed with the committee the WFD's 13 pieces of apparatus that the WFD planned to house in the new fire station:

- ◆ 2 Engines
- ◆ 3 Tankers
- ◆ 2 Rescues
- ◆ 1 Forestry vehicle
- ◆ 1 Side-by-side utility task vehicle & trax
- ◆ 1 ATV
- ◆ 1 Snowmobile & trailer
- ◆ 1 Boat
- ◆ 1 Lighting plant

Ed shared that the equipment was currently being stored in 4 locations. Peter Wyman noted that having fire fighters race to someone's home to get apparatus presented access issues as well as potential liability issues.

8. Possible Tax Impact

Jason said that if a warrant article were to be written at that moment, it would include:

- ◆ Construction
- ◆ A&E
- ◆ 5% owner contingency
- ◆ No furniture
- ◆ No fixtures
- ◆ No equipment

and come in around \$2,900,000.

Peter Wyman noted that if the middle bay was removed, it would cost a massive amount to add later.

Eric Palson pointed out that the apparatus area includes everything that was needed. The administrative area could be a mobile trailer, if need be.

Kimberley asked if the committee wanted to consider having two fire stations. Peter Wyman and Ed Raymond both said that was definitely NOT what they wanted to do.

Peter Wyman asked how much could be saved if the administrative side of the building were built as a shell. No interior walls, no kitchen, whatever was minimally required by code.

Eric said it was not fiscally responsible to save money and build a fire station that doesn't work.

Peter Wyman noted that some of the painful cuts agreed to would only impact his tax bill by a few bucks.

Anthony said that when planning to buy a fire truck, the Town would slowly build up a capital reserve fund. Was the Town doing that for the future fire station? Kimberley said there was a CRF, but in no way was it full of money. She added that she was not in favor of long term building of a CRF at this point, as the Town would be chasing increasing

construction costs. She felt it would make more sense to get a bond.

Jonathan crunched the numbers. He figured the impact of a \$3,000,000 bond would be 52 cents per \$1,000. He said that at the present tax rate, for a property appraised at \$200,000, the property tax would increase by \$104.

Peter Wyman noted that if the budget was cut by \$100,000, it would have very little impact.

In regards to the number of bays, Kimberley thought it would be foolish to build a new station which could not house all of the fire apparatus. Janice asked if the other locations being used could be sold. Kimberley noted that selling Ed's home was probably not an option.

9. Option 1 or Option 2? The Final Decision

The committee discussed whether additional cuts were possible. Eric Palson noted that while more design work was possible, the Town would have to possibly pay more for the architectural work.

Anthony pointed out that it was time to decide on a design. There were 12 weeks to go in the project schedule before bidding begins. The committee needed to make a decision.

Kimberley asked the committee to make the final decision regarding going with the basement or not.

Peter Wyman noted that for \$21,166, there would be an additional 579 square feet with Option 2. That was the cheapest square footage possible. Once construction was complete, a basement would not be possible to add unless it was under a new extension to the building.

Peter Ladd noted that a basement could prove useful in the future in ways no one had yet considered.

Bruce expressed concern about the possibility of ledge. Kimberley noted that the geo report was favorable. Bruce added his official answer, stating that the construction manager recommended eliminating the basement due to the unknowns.

David Hartman felt that \$21,000 could be saved by not building a basement. He did not feel the basement would be sufficient for a pellet system storage.

It was moved and seconded to vote on which plan to go with: Option 1 without a basement or Option 2 with a basement.

A vote was taken by a show of hands. The result was a tie. It was decided that Allan would have to be the deciding vote. Kimberley suspected he would want to go with the least expensive option. Peter Wyman agreed. Kimberley said she would talk to Allan and get his vote before Friday.

Minutes later, one person changed their vote. Option 1 without a basement was the final decision.

10. Apparatus Bays

Kimberley asked the committee to confirm one last time that 5 bays would be kept. David said he wanted it on the record that he would rather have 4 bays that were lengthened by 20 feet, keeping the square footage about the same. David was concerned about how the building would look from the road and didn't want it to look like Sunapee's new fire station.

Anthony noted that the Sunapee fire station looks much bigger because it is a two story building. The profile of the Warner fire station would not be as imposing.

Eric Palson pointed out that a fire station is a functional building. As architects, they would make it as aesthetically pleasing as possible. He said that putting aesthetics before function was not the way to go.

11. Mechanical Systems

Anthony said that the committee would need to make a decision soon about the mechanical systems. The current assumption was that radiant slabs would be used in the apparatus bay with a high efficiency gas boiler. Air to air heating / cooling systems would be used in the administrative area. Together, the systems would be efficient and low cost in the long run.

Kimberley asked if the building would need to be modified if going with a wood pellet heating system. Anthony said there were a few changes and a storage silo would be added to the exterior of the building.

Peter Wyman made a motion to go with "Option 3". Jonathan seconded. Kimberley asked Pete Ladd what he thought. Pete said he was concerned about the fluctuating costs of fossil fuels. He also expressed concern that with the hurricanes, obtaining fuel could be more difficult. Kimberley wondered what would happen to the wood industry during reconstruction.

Kimberley said she was surprised to see the carbon footprint figures in the various options. Option 3 showed 63 tons of CO² produced per year. The wood pellet options showed 104 tons. She noted that while the Town had a policy to use renewable energies, it also wanted to reduce its carbon footprint.

A vote was taken. 6 out of the 8 present committee members preferred to go with Option 3.

12. Civil Engineer

Anthony said that the Civil Engineer submitted a list of information that needed to be added to the survey. Jim was working to get that done. For example, information about the trees needed to be updated.

13. Presentation to the Selectmen

John noted that in the Selectboard meeting the night before, Clyde requested that a presentation be given to the Board of Selectmen at a BOS meeting. The committee suggested that Clyde should come to a FSBRC meeting.

Kimberley said she understood part of the reason for the request was that there was a different audience that attends BOS meetings.

Jason asked what was hoped to be achieved. Kimberley said she did not expect Clyde to suggest changes to the schematics.

Anthony said that SMP committed to provide 3 presentations. A presentation to the BOS would count as one of them. The committee stressed that SMP was needed for the public hearings and Town Meeting. John said he was not asking SMP to do a presentation at the Board of Selectmen meeting.

14. Next Meeting

Wednesday, October 18, 2017 at the Town Hall. 6 pm start time.

Anthony would have the Civil Engineer attend.

15. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kimberley Brown Edelmann
Recording Secretary