



Fire Station Building Review Committee

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 24, 2018
UNAPPROVED

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

SMP Architecture: Anthony Mento

Also in attendance: John McGilvray, Ed Mical - Emergency Management Director

Excused: Jonathan Lord

1. Meeting Start & Roll Call

Kimberley called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Roll call was taken.

Kimberley noted that someone had left behind a set of large black fleece winter gloves at the previous meeting. The gloves have "Humane Society of the United States" stitched into them. No one had claimed them yet.

2. Meeting Minutes

The minutes of December 6 were approved. **Peter Wyman made a motion, Janice seconded.** All approved the minutes.

David Hartman noted that there were a lot of things that needed follow through. He recommended everyone review the minutes as there were a lot things promised; a lot of questions that needed to be answered.

3. Energy Consultant

After several requests from the Warner Energy Committee, the Town engaged the recommended energy consultant, Margaret Dillon, to look at the building plans. Margaret wrote a report, which was sent to SMP. SMP and Margaret discussed her findings. SMP updated the report to include their responses. Everyone received a copy of the report.

Peter Ladd was given extra copies of the report to take back to the Energy Committee.

Anthony said Margaret Dillon was very knowledgeable, very thorough, and a pleasure to work with. She was one of the consultants that the Energy Committee had recommended a year ago. The project was at the point where it was developed enough to be able to provide her with a set of documents that was about 80%, 85% complete.

On the report, Margaret's comments were shown in **red** in a serif font. SMP's responses were shown inside boxes with **blue** borders and **red** text, but in a sans serif font. Anthony noted that Margaret pointed to certain components in the system. SMP concurred with everything she said. They replied. Most of the comments she made were folded into the drawings. Some were not as SMP was dealing with things differently to achieve the same outcome, such as use of foam blocks versus spray foam.

Anthony said the review was very thorough; Margaret was right on point on many items. The majority were resolved

in the drawings or were sent out in later addendums. Peter Wyman asked if all of Margaret's suggestions were met. Anthony confirmed they were.

Anthony noted that Margaret did not weigh in about wood pellet boilers. She didn't focus on the mechanical systems. Kimberley said she did not want to try to relay what Margaret told her, other than that the approach the committee was taking was the right one.

Janice asked for specifics; what did Margaret look at? Anthony said, for example, on the first page she talked about the vapor retarder. She wanted additional language added about the importance of the vapor barrier and air tightness of the building. The only way to test for air tightness of a building is with a blower door test. That was already written into the specs, but Margaret didn't have the specs. The blower door test is done at the end of the project, typically, to determine the integrity of the building envelop. Margaret recommended having the requirements be more stringent than required. She also recommended having the blower tests done both during construction and at the end of the construction. Anthony noted that shortcomings found in the blower tests and corrections to the building are covered by the builder.

Janice asked if the architects and builders know whether the building will be airtight. Both Peter Ladd and Peter Wyman answered, noting that contractors can have bad days where the quality of work is not quite as good as it should be; the test shows that. Peter Ladd noted that waiting until the end makes it harder to fix problems deep in the walls. Anthony said that ICF (insulated concrete forms) walls won't have holes in them. Leakage would be along windows, doors, at the top of the walls, and at the roof.

Anthony stressed that SMP will be walking around the site during construction, looking at, for example, the flexible flashing being used and the installation techniques at each of the penetrations. It's the stuff that's outside of line of sight that's more likely to be possible problem areas. The blower test finds those. Again, it's up to the contractor to fix the leaks.

David asked if the Construction Manager has some say regarding the extra cost, if there is some. Anthony noted that the costs to pay a third party company to do a day long blower test, which may slow down the schedule, are added into the total costs.

Janice asked if anything was learned by the energy review. Anthony said that Margaret commented about how the density of insulation settles over time. As a result, SMP modified the documents to reference settled density. In the documents, SMP specified the minimum R-value and minimum density they were looking for.

Anthony said it was a very good thorough review and of value to the Town. He believed it would show the Energy Committee that the big picture items were already dealt with, corrected, or caught. Margaret's input was requested after SMP presented the drawings at an Energy Committee meeting.

Howard asked about the insulation under the floors. Anthony said the plans showed two inches of insulation under the apparatus bay; none under the administration bay. A possible adder for the project would be to add two additional inches of insulation under the apparatus bay and to put two inches under the admin bay. Pricing would come later.

David asked how much the Town paid for Margaret's time. Kimberley said it was \$75. If the Town wanted more in depth work, there would be additional costs. Kimberley added that Margaret was very nice to work with.

4. Informational Session / Meet & Greet

The committee had talked about having an Informational Session in addition to the Public Hearing.

The Selectmen would be meeting with North Branch in two days time and would hear an updated price at that meeting. Kimberley noted that the Selectmen had earlier agreed on a price of \$2,700,000. That was \$2,500,000 for construction and \$200,000 for soft costs.

Peter Ladd pointed out that \$2,800,000 was talked about in an article in the Intertown Record. Kimberley had not seen that article yet.

Kimberley asked Anthony if he would be able to attend an Informational Session, in addition to the Public Hearing. The Public Hearing would have to be held between 60 and 15 days before Town Meeting.

The question on the table: Should the events be combined? Ed Mical felt that the Public Hearing should be about the finances. Peter Wyman felt that some people would go to one meeting and not the other. Peter Ladd felt the more meetings, the better. David felt the Public Hearing could be part of the Selectmen's meeting, as an agenda item. They had done that many times in the past. He felt a big special deal wasn't needed.

Peter Wyman noted that SMP had done a ton of work since the last Informational Session, but it was focused on the design. What people are going to ask about is the costs. John McGilvray added that the impact to the tax rate and amount of debt is key.

Anthony said he could talk about the design all day long, but the project was at the point where people would want to know about the costs. However, he often gets people asking him, "Why". Why so big for a small Town? Why so much equipment? Ed Raymond said he had good answers for those questions. Anthony said he knew that, but the public still needed to hear it, too.

Howard felt any sessions about the fire station should be separate from the Selectmen's meetings. Peter Ladd agreed. The committee agreed that both an Informational Session and a Public Hearing would be best.

Kimberley shared that another idea that came up during a meeting of firefighters was to have a "Meet & Greet" with Warner Fire & Rescue, especially since they were not likely to be having any Sunday Open Houses before Town Meeting. Kimberley said it was a firefighter who had made the suggestion.

Chief Raymond shared how there was an event once where citizens had come to the fire station but the firefighters were on a call. The building looked nice and roomy without any vehicles in it.

The "Meet & Greet", a different approach, could be used as a less formal Informational Session. Chief Raymond felt the more education done would be beneficial. He added that they could have an Open House before Town Meeting, but being winter, he felt they would not get a lot of visitors.

David felt the fire department had done a good job of inviting the public to visit.

Anthony noted that the messages about the building would be well presented at an Informational Session. History about the project, the earlier architectural work, reduction of the scope of the project, removal of the fluff, the final design, what the Town would be getting. Anthony said residents want to know the value of what they were buying.

John McGilvray said the people he talks to always talk about the size of the building. He also said they refer to the population, the needs of the Town now and in the future.

Peter Ladd noted that the demands of Warner Fire & Rescue had greatly increased while the population had not.

(Fire pagers going off.... Warner rescue call.)

Chief Raymond said he could show a report of the number of calls per Town. Canterbury, another smaller Town, also has to deal with an interstate highway. Bradford does not. Ed added that Warner has to cover Kearsarge Mountain. He said every Town has its own little quirks about what they have to cover.

Ed added that you have to have at least two engines. Often, when WFD is out on a mutual aid call, there would be a call in Town. They also have two rescues. The heavy one was purchased 20 years ago. Since then, they've downsized to use a Suburban which was more practical. The heavy rescue carries life saving tools, the jaws of life, water safety ropes, chainsaws, and other things that can't go on a fire truck.

Peter Wyman noted that the Town was not building a big fire station so that the fire department could add more equipment. It was sized to be able to house all of the equipment they currently had, equipment that was being kept in multiple locations; to get everything under one roof.

John mentioned New London as one of the Towns some people compare Warner to. Peter Wyman noted that New

London actually had less equipment than they were supposed to have. Ed Raymond said New London had just ordered a brand new pumper engine. Also, the New London fire station was closer to other fire stations in the area; four miles. For Warner, the nearest fire stations were in Contoocook, which was seven miles away, and Bradford.

John added that New London had a college, a hospital, more businesses, and more condos. Peter Wyman shared that New London Fire did not have an ambulance or rescue operation. That was provided by the hospital.

Ed Raymond said that Warner also was much larger in terms of square miles. Warner has 56 square miles; New London only had 26. John commented that New London also had more fire hydrants. Ed said that 80% of New London homes were covered by hydrants. Warner only has 54 hydrants. And New London has three lakes. Warner has the Warner River, Pleasant Lake, and some dry hydrants around town.

Anthony commented that all of the points in the conversation were helpful and exactly the kinds of things citizens needed to know.

Janice said one of her neighbors visited the New London Fire Department. While there, they were told that what Warner was planning to build was what was needed; that it wasn't over built.

Anthony said the conversation about population size should be nipped in the bud. The size of the building is not related to the population.

Ed Raymond shared some history about the current fire station. He said that in 1962, when the original building was built, there were only two fire trucks. He believed any firefighter from that time would tell you the building was already too small. In the early 1970's, when he joined, they built a water tanker out of an old fuel truck that was donated to the department. They needed to have "water on wheels". They called it "The Coffin" because it was dangerous to drive. They had to take a wall down where a meeting room used to be so that they could back the tanker into the building. However, they had to move the truck out of the building every time they had a meeting. As time went on, they replaced a pumper engine with a bigger one. All four quarters of the fire station were full. In the 1980's, they added a two story addition. They moved what was left of the kitchen upstairs with a meeting room. That provided two more bays for a truck that they bought with grants and no Town money and a fire truck that they ordered but was too tall.

Ed said that one of the current fire trucks was due to be replaced in 2016. Since they put so much work into it, they had delayed replacing it, trying to keep it going. If they were to purchase a replacement right now, it would cost 20% more than a standard fire truck. The length and height of standard vehicles was more than what it used to be.

In response to a question posed by John, Ed talked about the fact that New London's ladder truck has a pump on it. Most don't. Soon NLFD would have three pumpers.

Anthony asked how much money had been invested in the current apparatus owned by the Town. He thought that would be a good number to know. Ed said one truck, Tank 2, was received via grants. The new Engine 2 was around \$440,000.

Peter Ladd spoke about how some of the work WFD did had trickled down from the Federal Government. They had been trained on how to with meth labs, radiation emergencies, and medical epidemics. He felt there were incrementally more demands made on the department. He added that when he started on the department, the firefighters would hang on to the back of the truck on the way to a call. That was no longer legal. Trucks have to be able to carry firefighters in the cab, which in turn mean bigger trucks. He added that by having a nursing home and a medical office, they also have more medical calls.

Ed Raymond shared that in the Capital Area Mutual Aid Fire Compact report, it showed that Warner had 121 calls when they first joined. This year, the annual report showed that Warner had 438 calls.

Peter Wyman said that the medical call that came in earlier in the meeting was Call #38 for 2018. That was 38 calls in 24 days.

Ed Raymond said that the population of Bradford was 1,000 less than Warner and they had 161 calls. That was how many calls Warner had 25 years ago.

Kimberley said she would forward the Capital Area Mutual Aid Fire Compact annual report to everyone.

John suggested that a question that people might ask is, "Why is Warner was not putting money towards a medical response team instead of a fire station?" Ed Raymond said that a full time medical response team and ambulance would cause a massive increase in the operating budget.

Ed Mical said that without a fire department, home insurance rates would increase.

Peter Ladd said people may think the new building is huge in comparison to the current one. However, they may not understand that the old building has been inadequate for 20 or 30 years. The addition was built with volunteer labor. They've been keeping trucks in people's yards and sheds.

Kimberley said part of the problem is that people only see the one fire station. They don't realize there's equipment in other locations, they don't know where everything is kept. She said if all of the apparatus was parked at the Post Office, people might take note.

In terms of protecting the investments in apparatus, Ed Raymond said former Chief Dick Brown did a great job putting in a sprinkler system in the building. Ed didn't know how the cost was covered, but it was. The investments at the fire station are protected.

Ed Raymond said there were other issues. For example, you can't leave a truck on the apron outside; it's not good for the equipment. If you want to stretch the life of a vehicle for 20 or 25 years, you have to protect it. That's how you save money. The big rescue is 20 years old. Because they take care of it, it's still going strong.

Janice saw the value of a "Meet and Greet", but wondered how would people feel about meeting with a lot of firefighters? Would they feel comfortable? Kimberley said it could be informal with lots of side conversations.

Kimberley asked John if a "Meet and Greet" was held, would his friends attend? He felt they would. But he warned against an intimidation factor.

Anthony pointed out that the committee had been running for a long time. He was surprised to hear the same questions still "out there".

Peter Ladd wondered if having a moderator at the meeting would help.

David referenced the medical calls. He said that outside of Mutual Aid Compacts, the Town of Warner, about 10 years ago, negotiated with the Town of Hopkinton for ambulance services at about \$70,000 a year. He wanted people to understand that was done to help keep costs under control. Former Chief Dick Brown had told David that Warner would not want to have its own ambulance; it's expensive. David said the deal with Hopkinton works.

Ed Raymond said Bradford received a big donation way back when and they used the money to build an ambulance service. They did that for 25 years. However, over time, that rescue squad couldn't continue finding EMT's. Now, they work with Henniker.

Ed Raymond added that if you have one ambulance and it has to go to the hospital, it could be away for three hours. So, then you would need a second one to cover. The cost would be too much.

Peter Wyman noted that medical records are supposed to be locked up. With 68% of the calls being medical, there is a lot of room for improvement in that area. The new building addresses that.

Kimberley asked for a vote on "Meet and Greet". Anthony felt that one talking head at an Informational Session would not be as productive as an informal "Meet and Greet". Peter Wyman did not want to see 38 firefighters meet with 6 citizens. Janice found the concept of mingling and answering questions chaotic.

Kimberley asked the three firefighters to go off and figure out the answer to the question about how to approach the Informational Session / Meet & Greet. She said Town Meeting should not be the place to be fielding dozens of questions about the need for a fire station, the design, the colors.

David asked for a review of the upcoming meetings. Kimberley said the Public Hearing must be done according to the law due to the bond. Then, the committee needed to decide how to meet with citizens in a less formal way. David felt that if the flashing sign said there was a Public Information Session to present what the plans are, that would be enough publicizing to get people to come. He was cautious about a "Meet & Greet". Personally, he wouldn't go.

Howard suggested that an Informational Session could evolve into a Meet & Greet.

David said there had been at least two Town Meetings of voting where citizens agreed to put a great deal of money towards a future fire station, bringing us to this point. He felt the Town wanted a new fire station and that they understood the need. Kimberley felt not everyone understood or was in favor. Peter Wyman added that there were some people who would never be swayed.

Janice felt the big questions that needed to be answered were about size and cost.

Kimberley stressed that another informational session of some sort was needed. Doing less was not an option. Now it was a matter of scheduling.

5. Questions & Answers

Kimberley asked everyone to email any questions they are hearing about the future fire station so that they can be gathered together to produce a Q&A document.

Peter Wyman said he's had people ask why construction hadn't started yet. Ed Raymond said that when fielding questions, he reminds people that the Town Meeting was on Saturday.

Anthony said he had recently met a citizen at the sand shed. He spent 45 minutes answering questions. The gentleman had a positive opinion about the station after that. Anthony stressed that everyone needs to field questions and help educate the public outside of meetings.

6. Other Ideas

Peter Ladd suggested that on the billboard at the site they post the number of calls WFD had in 2017. Kimberley suggested the builders on the committee could tackle that if they wanted.

Kimberley asked Anthony what other towns were doing. He said other towns were watching Warner and using Warner as an example. But, he added, Warner could always do more, do better. He also noted that some residents are doing research; they're learning about fire station projects in other towns. The committee should be doing that, as well.

Kimberley said she heard that Sutton was hoping to get approval to expand their fire station significantly. Anthony said Londonderry was looking to build a huge fire station. They have three stations, each of which are bigger than Warner's proposed one.

Anthony said that a lot of fire stations were built in the 60's and 70's. Now, a lot of towns need new stations. He said most new fire stations are being designed as two floors, meaning they would require at least two stair cases and an elevator. That costs over \$150,000. The Warner station is one floor. He believed the volume of the building was low when compared to two story buildings.

Anthony pointed out the new fire station would be a little bit bigger in square footage than the new liquor store, however, it would not look as big due to the design.

Anthony said another question he had heard was about how much light would come off the site. They have good answer to that question, which should be shared.

Anthony gave the fire fighters a list of the work the Warner Fire & Rescue Department would be doing themselves

after construction was complete. Those items were removed from the list of items to be covered North Branch Construction. David asked how much the list would impact the price. Anthony didn't have those numbers. However, as an example, \$46,000 was being covered by NBC for gear lockers. Peter Wyman believed the price, purchased by the fire department, would be closer to \$15,000 or \$20,000. The price markup and associated labor costs would be saved.

Ed Raymond said there would be a lot of weekend work details at the new fire station.

The committee was shown a new drawing with the colors selected by the committee at a prior meeting.



7. Schedule

Friday, January 26, the Board of Selectmen were planning to meet with North Branch Construction to discuss price.

The Public Hearing / Bond Hearing date would be decided soon by the Selectmen's Office.

The fire department would help decide a date for an Informational Session.

8. Other Things

Kimberley asked Anthony what else the committee needed to do at this point. Anthony said the primary focus for the committee would be educating the public. Peter Wyman and Howard agreed that prepping for an informational session was needed.

David repeated that he felt everyone should read past meetings. There were several things that needed to be done. He reiterated that he felt the Public Hearing should be part of a Selectmen's meeting.

Kimberley told Anthony that John McGilvray wanted to know if Linda McGilvray could decide the color of the fence. Anthony said the color options were limited, but absolutely.

Anthony said that after Town Meeting, if approved, the committee would need to talk about the interior of the building; picking colors and finishes.

Ed Raymond said someone had approached him about the garage on the fire station site. A couple was interested in moving it to their property. Kimberley said that Bob Irving had also expressed interest.

9. Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 31, 6pm. Topic: Brainstorming about the informational session.

10. Adjournment

David and Janice made a motion, seconded by Peter Wyman to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberley Brown Edelmann
Recording Secretary