

## Safety Services Building Committee

May 22, 2019

**Members Present:** Bruce Healey, Chair; Dick Wright; Bob Wilkonski; Jim Lord; John Dean; Ken Holmes; Lynn Wallace; Scott Wheeler, Pam Bryk, Members; Hank Thomas; Brad Wheeler, Ex-Officio Members.

Mr. Healey started the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Review of minutes from 5/8/2019 meeting. Mr. Wilkonski made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Mr. Wright seconded the motion. All in favor.

Public Input: Ivor Freeman, Chair of the CIP Committee, said that the CIP Committee is a sub-Committee of the Planning Board and they meet every year and produce a projection for the next five years of the anticipated capital expenditures of the Town. Mr. Freeman continued that it is difficult to produce a projection without knowing what is going to happen with the current Safety Services building. A proposal this year was made that a fee be reserved in the CIP projection for professional services to review 1) if the current building can be converted to a police station and/or 2) if the police department moved out of current building and the entire building used for a fire station. Mr. Wright said the current building does not have enough space for the fire station. Mr. Freeman said he is suggesting to temporarily use the police department space for the fire department to alleviate the current congestion, build a new police station first and then build a fire station later. Mr. Freeman said that it might not be the best solution, but an easier one. Discussion followed.

Public Input: Ted Jones asked if the police department needed 4600 square feet. Chief Wheeler said that he felt the police department did need that much space. Chief Wheeler continued that the original 2011 plan was roughly 2600 square feet, but the police department now has 2 more officers than in 2011 and the 2011 plan does not have any holding cells, a must at this point for the safety and protection of the officers. Chief Wheeler said that the Warner police station is 5500 square feet, but Newbury provides more police service, has more people and more cruisers than Warner. Chief Wheeler asked if the Town should build a 2600 square foot building that wouldn't suit the police department right now or look to the future. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey asked if the Committee had any comments on the updated advantages/disadvantages summary after the last meeting. The Committee had no comments.

Mr. Healey said that Mrs. Wallace had asked for a couple of items to be put on last meeting's agenda that the Committee had not covered so Mr. Healey asked Mrs. Wallace to cover those items now. Mrs. Wallace said that for the make-up of the Committee, she felt that Steph Spaulding was an important voice because the proposed fire station location is across the street from the Spaulding property, and Mrs. Spaulding should be on the Committee. Discussion followed. Mr. Healey asked Mrs. Wallace if she would advocate for the Committee to suggest the Selectboard form a new Committee. Mrs. Wallace said no but might invite Mrs. Spaulding to see if she would be interested. Discussion followed. Mr. Wilkonski said that Mrs. Spaulding has attended many of the Committee's meetings and has had active participation with what the Committee is doing. Discussion followed.

Mrs. Wallace said that her second item was options and she felt that the Committee keeps coming back to "this is the proposal" and not taking a serious look at other options. Ms. Bryk said that the Committee has looked at response time and realized that a central location was the best option for all parts of Town. The Committee has looked at centrally located properties for the fire station location and some Committee members made a site visit to a lot Mrs. Wallace thought should be given a closer look. But this property

has a lot of rock and ledge. Further, while the lot would accommodate the proposed FD building, the cost to purchase the lot, site work and location on Rt. 103 on Ledge Hill makes the Bald Sunapee/Camacho property an adequate town-center lot option.

Discussion followed. Mr. Wheeler said that all the meetings the Committee has had there has been discussions about so many options and so many directions. Discussion followed.

Public Input: Ted Jones said that he is not convinced that 5 bays are needed, if the Town puts up a 3-bay which will be much smaller. Discussion followed. Mr. Healey said that if the consensus of the Committee is that a re-look at design is needed, the Committee will recommend that to the Selectboard.

Public Input: Polly Lowe said that there has to be negotiation and compromise in regard to wants and needs of the fire station.

Mr. Healey said he has some suggestions about options, which he has thought about after receiving several phone calls about letting the voters decide what is important. Mr. Healey continued that the Town has put forward the same proposal two times, and a combined PD/FD proposal in 2016. Mr. Healey asked what if the Committee recommends to the Selectboard that they consider options that are different than the current one and let the voters decide. Mr. Wright asked if he could bring up a point of order. Mr. Wright continued that from the start it was said that the Committee would not deal with design, but now you are saying we need to change the design. Mr. Wright said that meeting after meeting the Committee has listened to the public saying that something is a want, but maybe it is because they do not understand the reason for the need for some of the things in the proposed fire station. Mr. Healey said that he wasn't going to talk so much about design but the possibility to let voters decide what's important. Mr. Healey continued that location, cost and response time are basic decisions. Mr. Healey said that the Committee supports the Selectboard's decision that Town center is the only place we should be putting a fire station. However, Mr. Healey wondered whether we should be letting the voters decide what's important? Mr. Holmes asked how you determine what the voters decide, because he has been trying to find out the issues that are driving the no's for three years and the issues are all over the map. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey said that he has some suggestions for options,

- without changing the design of the building just changing the building material to steel, the building could be put up cheaper than the proposed building,
- the engineered steel building be placed on the "Hearst House" lot in South Newbury. Mr. Healey said that he accepts that there are issues including response time but he is suggesting this as an option to let the voters decide what is important to them,
- the engineered steel building placed on the Bald Sunapee/Camacho site,
- recommend to the Selectboard to offer 2 solutions to the voters
- recommend to the Selectboard that if the Town is not ready to build the fire station, ask for \$225,000 to remove the hill and ledge and put up retaining wall, \$125,000 from taxes and \$100,000 from unanticipated funds.

Discussion followed. Mr. Holmes clarified you would need a 2/3 vote on one of the options. Mr. Wheeler said that he didn't think you would get 2/3 vote if you split the vote to begin with. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey asked if there were any options that the Committee felt they should be recommending to the Selectboard. Mrs. Wallace said that Mr. Holmes had spoken about firms that analyze a Town to determine the best place for a fire station. Recommend to the Selectboard to hire one of these firms, could use discretionary money for payment. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey asked where the Committee was in regards to compromise in terms of the building structure and if the Committee was interested at all in recommending to the Selectboard that there is a need to look at the current footprint. Mr. Healey continued that at the last meeting he had advocated reducing the footprint and the Committee was not interested in going in that direction, but the public has said that they would like to see an effort in that direction. Mr. Holmes said that the Committee said they wouldn't do a redesign, as that was not the Committee's charge. Discussion followed. Mr. Healey read from the minutes of the last meeting, "The Committee discussed the possibility that some aspects of the building design may appear to be a want and not a need. However, the Committee determined some flexibility in building the design today is necessary to ensure the long term life expectancy of 50+ years for the proposed FD building." Mr. Healey said that this is a suggestion to the Selectboard that they look at the design. Mr. Healey said that he believes the Committee could show a reduction in the footprint and cost that's meaningful and people would recognize that an effort was made. Mr. Healey asked if the Committee wanted to recommend to the Selectboard to look at the design. Mrs. Wallace said that she thinks that you have to look at the location before you make the design so your building fits the location. Discussion followed. Mr. Healey said that he believes that if some people saw a change in design that it would change their minds. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey said that the Selectboard is aware that they need to provide to the public 1) floorplan 2) cost 3) when going to ask for and 4) life expectancy of building in regard to the current safety services building. Discussion followed.

Public Input: Tim Gove said that 5<sup>th</sup> bay is not needed. Mr. Gove continued that the building needs to fit the site, why can't the building be 2 stories, going up is cheaper than going out. Mr. Holmes said that it would then need an elevator and two sets of fire rated stairways which is more money. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey said that the Committee has one scheduled meeting left at which time the Committee will talk about public relations.

Mrs. Wallace said that she would like to find out about the firms that analyze fire station placement in towns. Mr. Healey said he would bring the request to the Selectboard at their next meeting.

Public Input: Polly Lowe has requested the costs that have gone into the Bald Sunapee/Camacho site such as architects and facilitators, etc. Mr. Healey said that he would follow up for the information.

Meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Favreau

Recording Secretary