

Police-Fire Facility Committee
Thursday, November 6, 2014, 4:00pm
Hanna Cosman and Selectboard Meeting Rooms
Minutes

In attendance: Robin Sweetapple, Steve Phillips, Philip Chapman, Kathy Dowd, Tony Farnum, Dave Emery, Sr., Prudence MacKinney, and John Allen.

Absent: Eli Gould

Staff Present: Patrick Moreland, Mike Bucossi, Pete Lynch

Others Present: Steve Horton, Russell Rice, Dave Schoales, and Howard Weiss-Tisman.

- A. Phillips called the meeting to order at 4:03pm and confirmed that the meeting was properly warned.
- B. Public Participation – None
- C. Approve Minutes (October 16, 2014) – Kathy Dowd moved to approve the minutes. Chapman second. The motion passed unanimously.
- D. Project Update by Project Manager – Horton acknowledged that the update from the project manager would overlap with the report of the subcommittee, and thus agenda items D and E would be taken up simultaneously. Horton thanked Russel Rice for his assistance with identifying sites that would meet with the previously identified criteria.

Horton passes out a sheet which identifies seven potential sites for redevelopment, and three sites offering vacant land. Horton walked through the list and identified pros and cons of each site as a potential new facility for a police department. Costs were discussed based only on available information. Some properties are on the market and have asking prices, whereas other properties could only be discussed based on municipal assessment. Horton clarified that while he would discuss the benefits and drawbacks of each property, the committee should not seek to reduce the number of options, or pick a favorite. Any final choice will require negotiation with the owner which must involve the Selectboard. Specifically, negotiating or the securing of a real estate for purchase is a subject that should be discussed with the Selectboard in an executive session as premature general public knowledge of a specific property would place the municipality and the public at a disadvantage in any negotiation. The committee should be prepared to present a range of options to the Selectboard.

Moreland asked how existing building construction would affect future renovation costs. A police facility must be built to certain essential facility standards that involve bracing for seismic activity, and so existing construction methods will

have a real impact on the ability to meet this code within budget. Mr. Weiss-Tisman from the Brattleboro Reformer asked about the need to meet the standard. Horton explained that the need stems from the International Building Code, which the state of Vermont uses to permit construction projects. Mr. Phillips reports that two architects have reported to him that IBC code is unnecessary for this project and that in their opinion the project should be constructed here at the Municipal Center. Mr. Phillips wants to know how and who requires Brattleboro to follow the code and whether the architects are correct. Sweetapple explains that the IBC has recently changed its requirements for essential facilities, and if a specific architect does not specialize in essential facilities, they may be unfamiliar with these requirements. Horton and Moreland will return with additional information.

The committee received correspondence from Clayton Grover regarding the Home Depot building. John Allen has been asked about the property many times. The building owner, Russell Rice reports, has not demonstrated an interest in changing the current lease agreement with Home Depot. Chief Bucossi also suggest that a Putney Road would not be the best location from which to dispatch the fire department. The facility is substantially larger than is needed for the police department.

The committee discussed each of the options on the list. The committee acknowledged that other properties may be worth additional investigation. The subcommittee agreed to continue to examine the identified properties and to consider other possibilities as well. The subcommittee will report back to the committee at the next meeting, and then the committee will ask to meet with the Selectboard.

E. Police Department Site Subcommittee Report – Discussed above.

Next meeting, December 5 at 3pm.

Meeting adjourned at 5:35pm.