

**FACILITY MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
JOINT MEETING WITH BOARD OF SELECTMEN, FINANCE COMMITTEE, SCHOOL COMMITTEE
June 20, 2017
MINUTES**

Committee Attending: Chairman George Hooper, Jeffrey Hull, Valerie Gingrich, Joseph Parrella Jr., Jack Holloway, Paul Ruggiero, Diane Allan, Paul Melaragni, and Theresa Manganelli.

Liaisons Attending: None

Others Attending: Board of Selectmen Members Greg Bendel, Ed Loud; School Committee members Steve Bjork, Jenn Bryson, Peggy Kane, Tom Talbot, M.J. Byrnes; Finance Committee members John Doherty, Jonathan Eaton, Marianne Gallezzo, Michele Kincaid, and Neal Couture; Dee Casey, Jay Tighe.

Consultants Attending: Steve Cecil

George Hooper called the meeting to order. George explained that a majority of the Finance Committee, School Committee, and Board of Selectmen are attending the meeting but there will be no deliberations as Boards or Committees, only comments.

1. Review Minutes

Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes as written. Approved by unanimous vote.

2. Discussion of School Alternatives

Steve Cecil gave an overview of the agenda and gave an overview of the intent of the master plan study and the process to date.

Steve outlined the information learned about the Town's schools, how they were evaluated, and provided an overview of the alternatives.

Valerie Gingrich gave an overview of public comments from the display boards that were posted around Town for feedback. Comments focused on consolidation and eliminating transitions.

Paul Ruggiero gave an overview of how Alternative 6 became the preferred scenario for the school committee since it is geographically balanced, eliminates a transition, and invests in our existing schools.

Steve explained how phasing will be looked at for the Schools. School sites that will no longer be used could be considered as open space, could be leased, could be used for a different uses, etc.

George asked the Facility Master Plan Committee for comments or questions.

Joe Parrella asked whether the addition shown on the school buildings would be the exact location. George commented that the graphics are conceptual to show size/scale.

George asked for comments from other Boards/Committees.

Greg Bendel asked about whether we could eliminate the transitions with the number of schools we have now.

Paul Ruggiero commented that the existing schools are near capacity. Steve added that there isn't a way to have less transitions with the schools we have now because of their size.

Jenn Bryson asked if Alternative S3 would be new schools. Steve commented that it would probably be some of the schools we have today. They agreed that "create" should be changed to "modify".

Steve Bjork commented that the School Committee unanimously supported Alternative S6. Jenn Bryson clarified that she was not on the School Committee at that time.

Ed Loud asked about the statement that school enrollment would not be increasing much and how they know that to be true. Steve explained that they look at development models and the case in Town is Senior population will grow, but family population will not grow by much. He explained that they would have a more flexible situation by having larger schools.

Jenn Bryson asked about the number of comments on the school alternatives. Valerie explained that the comments on the handout are all of the written comments from the Boards.

3. Discussion of Municipal Alternatives

Steve gave an overview of the Municipal Alternatives and the process involved in developing the scenarios. He commented that the DPW Garage site is cramped and will need some improvements. Since the site is close to wetlands and water resources, any expansion should be done in an environmentally friendly way. While it was talked about to add Public Buildings to the DPW site, there isn't any room for that function.

Steve outlined the key components and moving pieces of the alternatives: Library, Senior Center, Town Hall.

Valerie gave an overview of public comments for the Municipal scenarios.

George asked the groups for comments and questions.

John Doherty asked about the Wildwood site for senior housing. Theresa and Diane commented that it could be used but has limitations such as no access to sewer.

Ed Loud asked if these are the priorities for the town. Steve explained that those are the moving pieces. Ed commented that his priorities are a fire substation and senior housing. Ed asked about other town owned parcels. Valerie explained that the parcel off Salem Street is very wet.

Jonathon Eaton asked about the fire substation which was in the Capital Improvement Plan. Jeff stated that the substation remains on the plan for 2020.

Steve commented that the Town has more land than needed for facilities, so there will need to be decisions on parcels to keep and not.

Greg asked about the timeline for all of the projects since folks are concerned about funding and taxes. He asked when projects will be proposed. Jeff explained that we don't have a timeline set and that is an

element of the plan that will be developed after an alternative is chosen. He commented that a priority is the School/Town Admin building considering the state of the Roman House. He added that he would like to set a schedule to try to keep the debt level steady. He added that he doesn't expect going to town meeting next year, but within the next five years the town should initiate a project. Greg commented that it may be a difficult pitch for funding for a new town hall since he has been hearing about costs from residents.

Jeff added that not making improvements has a cost as well. It is an option to take no action, but the cost of that should be evaluated.

Mary Jane Byrnes commented that it is important to keep the School Admin staff on the Common and that new buildings should provide room for growth for all of the services provided and new services that will be provided.

Theresa commented that when she talks to people, she hears about creating a place for the growing senior population. She commented that the Town hall needs to be moved first and the appropriate location for that is at the Common. Housing can then be built on the St. Dorothy's parcel. She commented that the town should focus on all the groups in town and serve their needs.

Steve Bjork commented that they were previously told by others that they could not add on to the library and asked why that changed. Steve commented that you could not put as large of a library as previously proposed on that site, but it does fit as an addition where the Bookstore Next Door is currently. You wouldn't be able to go up with an addition. It would be complex, but possible.

Steve Bjork asked for clarification about the space on the Swain site and whether it could accommodate the 4th of July, High School Parking, etc. Steve confirmed. Steve added that he sees a lot of value in keeping the School Admin at the Common.

Jonathan Eaton commented that we have four schools that are 50 years old and asked about the life span of our existing schools. Steve commented that it's a hard question, but most building systems last 25 years and then should be refreshed. Steve added that that when you do a new addition, you would upgrade the existing so that it has the same lifespan.

Tom Talbot commented that the Library is more of a community center and could be paired with the senior center. He commented that having the senior center at the town hall site may be problematic with seniors crossing Glen Road but we should provide housing in some location.

Theresa commented that at first she didn't like the idea of the senior center at the town hall but when she thought about the outdoor active space that could be created at the site, she thought it's the right choice. Any crossing would have to be thought through to be made safe.

Peggy Kane commented that people talk to her about senior housing, but they want small ranches, not a community of housing. Ed commented that he likes the idea of a senior center at town hall and senior housing at St. Dorothy's created by a private developer.

Ed and Peggy agreed that the town should talk to the senior about what they want. Valerie explained the survey that was done in 2015 and explained what the survey results were. The group discussed housing goals and affordable housing, which should be provided for the seniors.

George read a letter from Selectman Mike Champoux into the record.

Diane Allen commented that she believes that the report will be a helpful tool to know how to invest our money. She commented that an older plan from 20 years ago has some of the same ideas. She commented that our senior population will almost double in the next 5-10 years. She stated that it's a population that will want services and housing and it should be right at the top of the priority list.

Steve discussed the approach on a future fire substation, explaining an approach to gathering data and tracking the need for an additional facility. Jeff explained that the capital cost of building a substation is not the only cost that will be incurred. He explained that staffing will be an on-going cost into the future as well.

Paul Melaragni commented that we should revisit a conversation with the MBTA about not stopping on the tracks in North Wilmington. He witnessed three instances of this recently. Jeff stated that a letter from the Fire Chief was sent to the MBTA regarding that topic.

4. Consideration of Preferred Alternatives

George asked if there is a motion about the preferred scenario for municipal buildings. Diane Allen made a motion that the preferred alternative be scenario M2 – Town Hall Common. Theresa seconded.

Jeff explained that each project will need to go through the town meeting process, but this document will serve as a guide for the future.

The Committee voted unanimously for Alternative M2.

5. Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

6. Schedule and Next Steps

Steve suggested another meeting in 4-6 weeks. He will get back to the group on scheduling.

Meeting adjourned 8:12 PM.