

**Town of Newbury  
Municipal Building Committee**

**MINUTES**

DATE: May 5, 2016

*Approved as written, 6/16/2016*

Present: Eric Svahn, Chair (7:15 p.m.); Tracy Blais; Mike Doyle; Steve Fram; Donald Jarvis; John Lucey, Jr.; Richard Ronder; Martha Taylor; Damon Jespersen, BOS Liaison

Absent: Sam Joslin; Nathan Walker

Guests: John Ashton; Bob Connors; Jim Moran; Joe Story; Geof Walker

Pending the arrival of Eric Svahn, who was delayed in traffic, Damon Jespersen was designated Deputy Chair and opened the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

**1. Meeting Minutes:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Mike Doyle and seconded by D. Jarvis to approve the minutes of December 17, 2015, as written. The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Lucey and seconded by R. Ronder to approve the minutes of March 3, 2016, as written. The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** A motion was made by J. Lucey and seconded by S. Fram to approve the minutes of March 22, 2016, as written. The motion passed unanimously.

On his arrival, E. Svahn took his seat as Chair.

**2. Recommendation on Preferred Project Alternative:**

E. Svahn briefly recapped the four project options that had been developed and presented at the March 22 Selectmen's meeting and at Town Meeting on April 26 and proposed that the Committee now make a recommendation on a preferred facility improvement option to the Selectmen, with the goal of including the proposed project on the Warrant for the Fall Town Meeting and the ballot for the November 8 election. He noted that the availability of municipal sewer and the Town Meeting vote to purchase the Protection #2 property had solidified the High Road/Morgan Ave. parcels as the best location for new and/or expanded municipal facilities.

E. Svahn proposed eliminating the option to construct a police station addition and office addition on the existing Town Hall. This option did not correct the accessibility deficiency and, with the expanded footprint, the site would not be able to accommodate the number of parking spaces required by the Zoning By-laws. The Committee concurred with eliminating this alternative and agreed there were no further sites and no further project options to be reviewed or discussed.

To provide context for the discussion of a recommendation, E. Svahn reminded the MBC members that the Committee's charge had been to develop the best long-term plan to solve the most municipal facility needs in the most cost-effective way possible.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the three remaining project options and what various Committee members thought the Town residents would support. B. Connors from the audience expressed the opinion that it was not the MBC's charge to make the political decision and suggested that the Committee simply update and finalize the work that had been done and present it to the Selectmen.

The Committee then took a straw poll on the three primary options: 1. A new Town Hall/new Police Station in one building in the existing Town Hall location; 2. A Public Safety Building (Police and Fire) and improvements to Town Hall, as previously proposed; 3. A phased option consisting of a new stand-alone Police Station on the vacant Morgan Ave. parcel, renovations to Town Hall, and potential future improvements to the Fire Station. Of the Committee members present, six supported the original recommendation of a Public Safety Building on the Morgan Ave. site and improvements to Town Hall as the best long term value. The other two members supported building a stand-alone Police Station, with improvements to Town Hall and, perhaps at a later time, the Fire Station as the least costly option in the short term.

J. Ashton expressed support for the stand-alone police station and offered to build an addition to Town Hall with volunteer labor to help save the Town money.

**3. Schedule and Next Steps:**

E. Svahn noted that information for all three options needs to be brought up to the same level for inclusion in the recommendation. This will include getting a cost estimate for a phased option and finalizing the program for the Fire Station. The Committee set June 14 as the target date for presenting the recommendation to the Selectmen so that a final decision can be made in time for Fall Town Meeting (to be held October 18 or 25) and the November 8 election (which requires that ballots be printed the first week of August).

On a motion made by J. Lucey and seconded by T. Blais, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING: TBD**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha L. Taylor, Town Planner  
MBC Secretary