

Approved

**TOWN OF NEWBURY
SELECT BOARD**

MINUTES

DATE: March 7, 2023

PRESENT: **Select Board:** Chair Alicia Greco; Vice Chair JR Colby; Geof Walker; Clerk Dana Packer;
Municipal Building Committee: Chair Bob Connors; Eric Svahn; John Kellar; Martha Taylor; Dana Packer
Finance Committee: Chair Erika Jacobsen; Vice Chair Marshall Jespersen; Susan Noyes; Frank Visconti;
Eugene Case; Joseph Ali
Planning Board: Chair Larry Murphy; Peter Paicos; Leslie Mathews; Woody Knight; Martha Taylor
Capital Planning Committee: Marshall Jespersen; Nick Orem

Call to Order:

At 7:00 p.m. Chair Alicia Greco called the meeting to order with a salute to the flag

Motion: JR Colby moved to open the meeting, seconded Dana Packer and voted unanimously

Municipal Building Committee called their meeting to order

Finance Committee chair, Erika Jacobsen confirmed a quorum and called a roll call vote

Erika Jacobsen - Yes
Marshall Jespersen - Yes
Susan Noyes - Yes
Frank Visconti - Yes
Joseph Ali - Yes
Eugene Case - Yes

Capital Planning

Nick Orem - Yes
Marshall Jespersen - Yes

Planning Board chair, Larry Murphy called a roll vote

Peter
Larry

Paicos - Yes
Murphy - Yes

Woody Knight - Yes
Leslie Mathews - Yes
Martha Taylor - Yes

New Business: Joint meeting with the Municipal Building Committee, Finance Committee, Capital Planning Committee, and Planning Board for a Town Hall project update

Bob Connors introduced himself on behalf of the Municipal Building Committee(MBC). Reviewed what the Public Safety Site Selection Committee was tasked with eleven years ago. Stated the Town residents at that time rejected the Public Safety Complex. Went on to explain six years ago Town Meeting authorized a standalone Police Station at 7 Morgan Ave. with any remaining funds to undertake the remodeling or extraordinary repairs of 25 High Road to meet the needs of Town Hall. Further stating four years ago Town Meeting authorized the increase expenditure of 6.5 million to 8.2 million to construct a standalone Police Station only. Discussed what happens when extraordinary alterations and a major addition cost more than a new construction. Provided information regarding the existing condition of 25 High Road.

Referring to the presentation being displayed, Bob Connors stated the Municipal Building Committee recommends option 2, building a 2 ½ story Town Hall to meet the programing needs that will address Newbury's projected growth over the next 30 years

Bob reviewed the power point presentation which included, the project status, timeline, costs, site conditions, and proposed Town Hall layout

Dana Packer, Select Board Clerk and MBC member, reviewed the various sites that were looked into for possible locations for the Town Hall

- Governors Site
- Boston Road and Route 1, next to Newbury Storage
- Corner Hanover Street and Route 1
- Walton Ave
- Old Woodbridge School
- Building in front of the Rusty Can
- Property located next to Transfer Station
- 25 High Road

Bob turned the discussion over to Alicia Greco, Select Board chair. Alicia inquired if the Finance Committee had any questions for the MBC.

Erika Jacobsen thanked the MBC for their diligence and attention to detail

Alicia asked the Planning Board if they had any questions

Leslie Mathews inquired when the hard numbers would be available

Bob Connors replied mid- March

Leslie inquired if there were any numbers regarding an addition to the current Town Hall in comparison to new construction

Bob replied we are not doing a separate estimate because did not go through schematic design. Went on to explain the architect analyzed and reported back on that in 2018 and it would be equal or more expensive than new construction

Larry Murphy asked if the estimate of the probable cost includes the cost of raising of the old building. Larry further clarified does 10.8 million include the demo of the old building?

Bob answered Yes

Marshall Jespersen inquired if there were variances in types of construction. For example, modular

Eric Svahn answered would need more repetition and size for that to work

Nick Orem, Inquired regarding square footage price comparison for municipal buildings

Bob responded that is the basis of our number. Successful bids that have closed in the past six months

Alicia asked the Capital Planning Committee (CPC) to speak a bit about the Town Hall project

Marshall spoke for the CPC, mentioned the capital improvement program, Town Hall was one of the elements in it. Described various needs of the Town. Spoke of the ability to put money aside for these types of projects. Capital expenditures will come up but the Town plans for it.

Erica spoke to the Town of Newbury voters establishing a Town Hall project account and continuing to set aside the money

Dana stated the big picture capital plan a concern of his. Projects like NES HVAC, is there some comprehensive report to see those projects that are coming up and which one's money is set aside and which ones do not. Feels this would be good information for the public to know

Marshall replied a great idea then went on to discuss looking at the Capital Plan and putting aside the depreciation schedule. That is money going to be used when the assets are used up. Receive details when things will be used up. For some larger pieces can plan on a life of those pieces.

Dana spoke of the ARPA funds gave an example of the DPW wacker. Where does that money go now?

Marshall provided an explanation

JR Colby inquired if the ports were available to plug into at Morgan Ave.

Bob replied yes

JR asked about the new proposed building and would the bottom floor have walk in/wheelchair access

Bob replied yes

The first floor plan was brought up on screen and a discussion was held regarding stair wells and building accessibility

Frank Visconti, Finance Committee, asked how many full employees are at the Town Hall currently

The amount was stated to be approximately 17

Questions from citizens were addressed by the Municipal Building Committee including but not limited to:

Deb Woodward, Green Street, asked about a cost analysis on Kent Way

Alicia explained the Town has a lease at Kent Way and the building currently is not for sale

Someone in audience spoke out saying we could “take” the building

Alicia and others replied did not think eminent domain would be a good option for the Town and asked what the benefit would be? Marshall explained eminent domain can be used when there is public need and no alternative

The question was asked if anyone has approached the owner for the building regarding selling?

Response no

Dale Williams, asked about having a serious conversation regarding a long term lease with owner

Marshall Jespersen, discussed the design life of buildings

Erica Jacobsen explained money used to pay for lease expense comes out of the Towns operating budget, that is money used for services that support the town, public safety positions

Jim Moran, spoke about a calculation he had done regarding renting Town Hall for 30 years. Also suggested giving the current owners of 12 Kent Way a call and ask how much would they be willing to sell for.

Mike Doyle, asked if a traffic study had been done on Parker Street, Morgan Avenue, and High Road? Mentioned people in his neighborhood were not aware of the meeting be held tonight

Resident asked if the presentation was available online for people to view

Bob Connors replied could make an electronic copy available

Same resident asked what the projected growth of the Town is over the next 30 years as it relates to the size of the propose Town Hall

Bob Connors, clarified projected growth of Town Government over the next 30 years

Resident than asked what it is the projected grown of the Town Government over the next 30 years?

Bob Connors, marginally bigger than what we are proposing. Confirmed 3 meeting rooms in the proposed Town Hall

Resident asked regarding hybrid work models, not needing as big of a physical space

Alicia Greco, spoke of the offices of the Town Hall and much of the work cannot be done remotely.

Clarification was made that the work at Town Hall is currently being done in person not remotely

Resident asked why records cannot be digitalized and save storage space

Bob Connors explained certain records by law must be kept. Commonwealth of Mass dictates

Dale Williams, commented Town Meeting will have different people attending, reiterated the need for comparison figures to Kent Way.

Fred Thurlow, commented difficult to hear in tonight's meeting. Referred to Bob Connor's comment regarding having the Town Hall in the historical part of town. Stated this Town is not the same as when Town Hall was there. Stated he was disappointed that the JRM and Veterinary sites were not investigated.

Bob Connor's replied JRM you would have to purchase where 25 High Road you do not

Dana Packer commented regarding state mandated housing coming up and that needs to be considered in reference to other needs for properties in Town

Jan Forrest inquired if there were any extra presentation books

Bob Connors replied there is an electronic version which will be placed online

Jack Rybicki, discussed the two leases at 12 Kent Way, Town Hall and COA. Suggested renovating the old Town Hall and move COA there and have Town Hall remain at 12 Kent Way with an extended lease. Commented also regarding the ability to have Town meetings at the same time prevents citizens from attending

Jim Moran, reiterated there are several options. Asked if anyone knew the Town's interest rate to borrow. Was told that information will be obtained. Inquired why in the proposal the needs were listed as only 20 years. Bob Connor's reviewed the current presentation, confirmed states thirty years. Question then asked why only 30 years. Asked for a cost comparison

Alicia explained have had professional architects and builder's opinion that renovating and making extraordinary repairs at 25 High Road will cost more

Jim replied without cost comparison that gives no credibility to that statement

Green Street resident commented a lot of people now working from home. Asked if there are any State studies currently regarding remote work

Alicia commented she is on the MMA fiscal policy committee and could inquire at the next meeting

Green Street resident asked if Town proposing to increase or decrease the space.

Bob Connors replied proposing 10,000 square feet. Kent Way is approximately 7,500 square feet. Does not include common areas at Kent Way, elevators etc.

Susan Noyes, Finance Committee, former Town of Newbury employee, commented Kent Way was the most nonfunctional space she experienced for employees.

Bob Connors added Kent Way is an office building that is being adapted for Municipal use and went back over the floor plan. Gave a shout out to Martha regarding her expertise and guidance during this process

Question was asked regarding the foot print of the proposed building. Bob commented could have that information added

Leslie Matthews asked if the sewer and water structure would have to be modified in the proposed new building

Bob Connors answered yes, both as building would be situated at different connections but the ejector can be reutilized

Adjourn:

Motion: At 9:01 p.m. JR Colby moved to adjourn seconded G. Walker

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie O'Brien
Executive Administrator