

Safety Services Building Committee

July 15, 2019

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

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

Mr. Healey said that this meeting of the Committee is a deliberative session to discuss the recommendations that the Committee will be giving to the SelectBoard. Mr. Healey continued that he will be drafting the report to the SelectBoard this week and the Committee will present the recommendations at the SelectBoard meeting on July 22nd.

Mr. Wright read a statement addressing the group that has been formed and came in front of the SelectBoard at their last meeting. (Statement attached to these minutes.)

Review of minutes from 5/29/2019 meeting. Mr. Holmes made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Mr. Wright seconded the motion. All in favor.

Review of minutes from 6/29/2019 meeting. Mr. Holmes made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Mr. Wheeler seconded the motion. All in favor.

Mr. Healey said that at the public meeting it was suggested that the Larson's who own property on Old Post Rd. wanted to talk to the Town in regard to their property being a potential appropriate parcel for a fire station. (a GIS map of the Larson's property was handed out-attached to these minutes). Mr. Holmes said that it was too far away. Discussion followed.

Mr. Healey said he proposed a list of Committee recommendations as a starting point (attached to these minutes) and asked the Committee if they agreed the list was a reasonable starting point. Mr. Holmes said yes. Mr. Healey continued that if the Committee agrees that it is a recommendation, the 11 voting members of the Committee will vote so the SelectBoard knows what the consensus is and the Committee agrees on the wording because that wording belongs in the final report. (There were 10 voting members at this meeting)

Mr. Healey said the current proposed location is the Bald Sunapee/Camacho property-into the hill. Mr. Holmes said the Committee heard a lot of "let's look at other locations" and he thinks the Committee did that. Mr. Holmes continued that he has not seen anything that suggested a better location in town center without spending more money. Mr. Holmes said he was for the fire station to be located at the Bald Sunapee/Camacho site. Ms. Bryk said that she thought that was the best place in the center of Town for equal response time for everybody. Mr. Wright said the Town is deeply invested in the Bald Sunapee/Camacho site and the property was purchased years ago for the purpose of placing a fire station and/or police station. Mr. Wright continued that it makes sense that the Town would follow up on what previous Town votes have done, particularly when there are no viable alternatives. Mrs. Wallace said she still maintains that the property on top of Ledge Hill would be better. Mrs. Wallace continued that the Town would still need to buy the property and site work would have to be done but it would even out the response time and it would allow the Bald Sunapee/Camacho property to remain a park. Discussion followed.

- Committee recommends that the Bald Sunapee/Camacho property is the best option for placement of a new fire station. **9 votes for, 1 vote against**

Mr. Healey asked if the Committee wanted to make any recommendations about the location of the playground. Discussion followed.

- Committee recommends keeping playground at its current location. **All in favor**

Mr. Healey asked if the unanimous vote also refers to keeping the Vet's Memorial in its current location also. Mrs. Wallace said she thought it was possible to move the Vet's Memorial but it was not necessary. Mrs. Wallace continued that she would rather see the Vet's Memorial in front of the of the Town office if the Town needed it to be moved. Mrs. Wallace said that it is not actually "hallowed ground" and nobody is actually buried there and it would be worth investigating what it would cost to move it. Mr. Wilkonski said that he took exception to what Mrs. Wallace had said. Discussion followed. Mr. Wright said as a point of order that it was a Town vote that set the location of the Vet's Memorial and the Committee has no power to recommend anything relative to the Vet's Memorial, it has to be a vote of the Townspeople at Town Meeting.

- Committee recommends keeping the Vet's Memorial at its current location. **9 votes for, 1 vote against**

Discussion followed. Mrs. Wallace said she would still like the location consultation to happen and that she thinks it would be a wise thing to do because it makes it more objective. Mr. Healey said that the Committee could make a recommendation to the SelectBoard and see what the vote is. Mr. Holmes said that he was the one that made the suggestion of a Location Consulting Service to begin with and since then he has done some reading of some of the reports and although he feels the city reports are impressive, the reports on areas like Newbury have no more information than what the Committee has put together by evaluating available properties. Mr. Holmes said he is not for spending the money.

- Committee recommends that the Town retain a Location Consulting Service to analyze fire station placement. **1 vote for, 9 votes against**

Mr. Healey said the Committee has discussed three general possibilities in regard to the disposition of the current Safety Services building. 1) Renovate for the fire department but the Committee has conclusively determined that is just not possible. Discussion followed.

- Committee recommends that the current Safety Services building and site are unsuitable for renovation as a fire station. **All in favor**

Mr. Healey continued 2) If cost effective, renovate the current Safety Services building for the police department. Mr. Holmes said he is for that and that when the Committee was first started he was not for that, but after hearing from Townspeople that cost was a factor he thinks it makes sense. Mrs. Wallace said the renovation of the current Safety Services building should be for the police department and other municipal use. Mr. Healey said that the recommendation to the SelectBoard should be that they provide 5 items to the Townspeople in regard to the renovation plan. Discussion followed. The Committee agreed that cost effective should be taken out of the recommendation.

- Committee recommends the current Safety Services building be renovated for Police Department and other municipal use and the Selectboard will provide the community with 1) proposed floorplan for Police Department & other municipal use, 2) estimated cost, 3) when renovation amount will be requested, 4) life-expectancy of renovated building, 5) location of Police Department during renovation. **All in favor**

Mr. Healey said that the Committee probably had no recommendation on the cost. Mr. Holmes said that he does. Mr. Holmes continued that there has certainly been a fair number of Townspeople that have suggested compromise, and the concept that if the Town does not do something different, the new fire station will not pass the 2/3 bond vote. Mr. Holmes said he thinks a new fire station is needed and it has to meet the needs of the Town, but so far the Committee has voted as he expected and if they get to the end and the Committee's recommendations are do the same as we have done in the past. Mr. Holmes said that he has heard enough from enough other people that the Town has to do something substantively different. Mr. Holmes said that the fire

station proposal that went to the Town voters for the last two years left enough property empty for a future police station to be placed on the Bald Sunapee/Camacho property. Mr. Holmes continued that the Committee unanimously voted to renovate the current Safety Service building for the police department so that opens up some land on the Bald Sunapee/Camacho property. Mr. Holmes suggested that if that land constraint is lifted, he believes it is possible that an alternative design for the fire station could be done potentially a little smaller and less expensive. Discussion followed.

- Committee recommends that the SelectBoard contracts design professionals to re-evaluate the Bald Sunapee/Camacho property without the constraints of leaving land open for a future police station, the goal being a fire station design with a potential lower cost and future expansion potential. **All in favor**

Mr. Healey said that all the Committee is going to do on long range planning is recommend to the SelectBoard to follow through with the Committee's efforts to identify the estimated tax impact. Mr. Lord and Mr. Holmes suggested that the SelectBoard use the same format the Committee used. Discussion followed.

- Committee recommends that the SelectBoard present most current tax impact of all proposed projects, in the same format the Committee used, to the Town. **All in favor**

Mr. Healey said that he believes he listed all of the various suggestions the Committee came up with to increase the public awareness of the need for the new fire department building. Mr. Healey continued the Committee has already started with some of the suggestions, but these are activities that the SelectBoard should follow through with. Discussion followed.

- Committee recommends that the SelectBoard organize and administer public relation activities suggested by the Committee. **All in favor**

Mr. Healey asked if the Committee had any other recommendations for the SelectBoard that has not been discussed. There were no other recommendations. Mr. Healey asked if there was any discussion about the opinion poll. Mr. Holmes said he found the opinion poll interesting in that it showed different priorities for different people and that if a compromise was made to satisfy some voters it would throw other voters in a different direction. Discussion followed. Mr. Healey said there were 34 negative comments on the opinion poll about the current proposed design of the proposed fire station.

Mr. Healey said his goal was to get a draft report to the Committee by Friday morning to get their feedback. Mr. Healey asked Ms. Bryk to schedule the Committee for the SelectBoard meeting on July 22nd. Mr. Healey wanted to thank the Committee for their participation. Mr. Holmes thanked Mr. Healey for his stewardship.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Favreau

Recording Secretary