

TOWN HALL BUILDING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

March 6, 2019

Members Present: Jay Butler, Jean-Pierre Minois, Tim Olson, Jeff Hubbard, Mike Twomey, and Patrick Reffett

Members Absent: Allison Jenkins

Others Present: Owner Project Manager (OPM), Lee Sollenberger, and John Sayre-Scibona of Design Technique (DTI); FINCOM Liaison, Phil Stearns; Designer/Architect, Drayton Fair and Mallory Demy of Lerner, Ladds, Bartels Architects (LLB)

The Town Hall Building Committee (THBC) meeting was called to order by Mike Twomey at 5:02 PM in the Memorial Room at Hamilton Town Hall. He opened the meeting by saying that he would like to keep the meeting time to one hour and thirty minutes.

Past Meeting Minutes

Jeff made a motion to accept the minutes from the February 20, 2019 meeting and Jay seconded the motion. Lee suggested a modification to the minutes in the section under Consultant Reports, line 3, delete, “around the”, and replace with “in the DPW yard for a future”. The amended minutes were then approved unanimously.

Consultant Reports – Lee Sollenberger of DTI reporting

Lee distributed copies of DTI’s latest progress report dated March 5, 2019, and then reviewed his report. The report will be placed along with copies of other reports, presentations, and meeting minutes in the committee Drop Box.

Structural Report – Roome and Guarracino

The structural analysis is complete and no problems were identified.

Jay asked why no holes were cut in the building to better understand any structural issues and therefore asked if we inadvertently assumed unnecessary risk. Drayton mentioned that the project will be a wholesale gutting of the building so any issues will be readily identified. Mallory will look into why no holes were cut.

Jay asked if option 6 needs a seismic expansion joint, as he assumed option 1 provided such a joint. Mallory explained that option 1 had a large connector and an expansion joint and that option 6 has a seismic expansion joint and that it was only 2 inches wide as required.

Jay further asked if the reported 100 pounds per square foot of live floor load carrying capability on the second floor agreed with the past anecdotal observations of floor bowing. Tim and Patrick reported that floor bowing had been observed under the copier and under the treasurer's office both on the second floor. Mallory wondered if it were a subfloor issue. Drayton agreed to look into it.

Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing/Fire Protection - Architectural Engineers

A sprinkler system will be required. There are insufficient ADA compliant bathrooms. The heating system is at the end of its useful life. The building electrical system is insufficient for the elevator and mechanical system upgrades.

Lot Survey - Northeast Survey Consultants

The survey was completed.

Jay asked if the Town owned part of the private way, Paddock Lane, since town property borders it. Tim thought that that the Town did own part of Paddock Lane.

Geotechnical Investigation - Geotechnical Services, Inc.

Five soil test borings were taken around the building and in the DPW yard where a future septic system may be located. No issues were found. VOC measurements also showed no issues.

Jay asked for information about calibration for the handheld meter used for VOC measurements. John mentioned that it was typically not included in such reports but Lee will get that info.

Jay also asked why the ground water monitoring well setup was placed in the hole furthest from the building. Lee explained that it was done there as that is where the future septic system expansion may be located.

Building HAZMAT Investigation - Smith and Wessel Associates

The HAZMAT investigation (asbestos, mercury, PCB's, lead, radon, and misc.) of the Town Hall Building and the DPW garage bays showed no issues of concern. Asbestos was found in the roof of the garage flashing. Lead paint was found throughout the Town Hall as expected but this is not an issue with this type of building. Radon levels were below acceptable limits. No measurements were made on caulking materials as they will be done later as demolition/construction starts.

Jay asked for info on the calibration of the X-ray Fluorescence Analyzer. Lee will pursue that info.

LLB Presentation on Committee Requested Questions and Modifications to Options 6 and 8 – Drayton and Mallory

In response to a question raised at the last meeting, Drayton reported that there is no requirement to update the building insulation, whether a green building or not, or according to the Stretch Code. This answer was confirmed with the building commissioner as per building code level 3 dated 2015. The THBC will need to decide what they want to do for insulation moving forward.

Option 6.2

Dayton presented the latest version of Option 6, i.e., option 6.2, to the Committee. There is still a 1000 square foot addition in the rear right corner of the building to house the elevator that provides access to the basement, first, and second floors.

The basement now has: the two existing rest rooms updated with showers; the staff break room; a DPW locker room; an 8 person conference room; a small flex office; a new vault with size TBD; and multiple storage areas.

The first floor has a grade level entry to the elevator and the current ramp on the side of the building for ADA access. One set of ADA compliant restrooms are provided along with a 14 person conference room. The existing vault remains.

The second floor provides a 67 person open meeting room with a view of the domed ceiling. All offices are fully enclosed and separated from the meeting area by a hallway. Four new rest rooms are created along with a small break room.

Most all departments had storage removed from offices and relegated to the basement.

Mallory also mentioned that the side entrance to the building will need to be rebuilt as the pillars and gables are rotted out. Drayton mentioned that both the front and side doors will need to be replaced, made larger, and be automated.

Patrick questioned the office sizes for the Board of Health vs. the Planning Department and Mallory offered that she was open to suggestions on individual office size and noted that all employees must accept less storage in offices. To this point, Mike asked Patrick what happened with the previous paperless initiative at Town Hall. Patrick noted that it was a perceived cost issue at the time, but he observed that going paperless for the future was probably less expensive. Mallory asked which departments had public entry needs, and suggested a further reduction in filing cabinets to accommodate them. Jeff noted that the future temporary relocation of employees during construction will highlight the file cabinet storage needs.

Jay asked about whether or not the ADA access ramp was part of this option or not. Drayton explained that the ramp is optional for the design but it is an accepted practice that handicapped persons should not be forced to go to the rear of a building for access. He indicated that we

would need a variance from the state to remove the ramp. The fact that the building is historic may support a request for a variance taking out the ramp. If not, he felt a new aesthetically designed ramp could be developed. It was noted by Mike that the Hamilton Historic District Commission does not like the present ramp and it does not conform to code. Drayton will await a decision by the THBC on how to proceed.

Option 8.2, Option 1

This modified Option 8 still has the grand staircase removed and there is no addition on the rear of the building. It was noted that the chairs of both the Hamilton Historic District Commission and Historical Society both had no concerns with removing the grand staircase. The elevator is located within the building confines in the general area where the grand staircase was located.

Two new rest rooms are added in the basement along with the two existing ones that will now have a shower in them. Lockers for DPW personnel are located along walls but the employee break room has been removed. A flex office has been added as well as an 8 person conference room and new vault (size TBD). Storage areas remain.

The first floor layout retains the ADA ramp on the side of the building so that the side door can provide immediate access to the elevator inside. A ground level entry to the elevator is provided in the rear of the building as well. This option for the first floor provides two ADA compliant rest rooms and a 14 person conference room.

The second floor for option 8.2 option 1 provides a 67 person meeting room with a view of the domed ceiling, fully enclosed offices, and two ADA compliant rest rooms. File cabinets are placed along the wall in the hallway separating the meeting room from the hallway. The Health Department has two large, separate offices for the Board of Health Agent and Nurse in addition to a relatively large entrance area.

The design allows for the possibility of a mezzanine level for either storage via stairs or future offices if the elevator were extended upwards through the roof. However, the mezzanine level would have no natural light and some headroom issues at 7 feet near the edge of the space and the offices below would have less than desirable 8 foot high ceilings. Mallory showed illustrations of the large meeting room and mezzanine with views of the domed ceiling.

Tim noted that he needed a spot for a future assistant DPW Director and that this modification was included in a further option that relocated the HR office and reduced the size of the Health Department area by placing the Board of Health Agent and Nurse in the same office. Tim noted that the HR Dept. has only a part-time employee, the Health Dept. has 2 of 3 part-time employees whereas the DPW Dept. has 5 full-time employees.

Option 8.2, Option 2

This option modifies the above Option 8.2, Option 1 only on the second floor, by removing the wall in the back of the large meeting space so as to allow a better view of the domed ceiling and space for approximately 30 more people in the meeting room. The file cabinets in the hallway would be removed as well. The usable storage area in the mezzanine is also reduced.

Tim noted that he normally works after hours and that having an open meeting area next to his office would be an issue. Mallory offered that a free standing 8 foot high wall could be installed if desired.

Mallory then discussed the access to the mezzanine and provided an illustration to show the extension above the existing roof line for a dormer over the stairs, and either a hydraulic or traction elevator structure. The elevator structure would extend 3 feet above the peak of the building. She also provided comparisons of a traction elevator vs. a hydraulic one. The dormer is necessary for the set of stairs to access the mezzanine in the right rear corner of the second floor. Drayton had explained at the previous meeting that access to the mezzanine could be limited to stairs if no offices were there and access was restricted to staff for storage. However, it may be possible to have only one set of stairs that would not require a dormer for headroom.

Mike noted that it will be too costly to have offices in the mezzanine. Tim wanted to make use of the mezzanine while John asked if we really needed more storage. Mallory noted that allowing storage in the mezzanine will require relatively expensive internal structure and a foundation in the basement to provide the floor loading capability. Considering future needs, Patrick noted that a certain percentage of the staff is already part-time and that when they go full-time that they will already have offices. Tim felt that we may need more office space in the mezzanine in the future and we could use skylights or dormers as necessary. He wondered if we were planning far enough ahead in our thinking. He wondered about melding options 6 and 8 by taking out the stairs and using the addition for the elevator. While no formal vote was taken, the idea of a structurally supported mezzanine for future offices was abandoned.

Jean-Pierre reverted back to Option 6 and asked about mezzanine access for that option. Mallory pointed out that the addition would then be much higher than the eaves of the building, and that stairs would be required to access the mezzanine. It was also noted by Mallory that the mezzanine would be a very dark space with no natural light. She also noted that the existing second floor ceiling pitches up on the side of the building due to the heating system, thereby affecting access to the windows for natural light.

Project Cost Estimate and Funding Requests

Mallory asked about the cost estimate that will be needed and pointed out that they will need a couple of weeks to pull it together. She asked what were the deliverables required of LLB in the near term.

Mike noted that we will not ask for full funding of the project at the upcoming Town Meeting. Phil noted that there is a warrant article for Town Meeting for \$550K as a DPW capital request. Tim admitted that this was his estimate of what will be needed in addition to the \$150K CPC grant request to get through Schematic Design for the project. Mike felt that a large multi-million dollar project cost will be rejected by Town Meeting, especially since we have done little outreach to date to voters, e.g., COA, HDC, Historical Society, etc. He also felt that we need to show all options considered to date to show how thoughtful our efforts have been. Tim reminded all that when LLB was hired that we were still planning for the total project cost ask at the upcoming Town Meeting and thought that the current DPW capital ask had been previously discussed as our progress against the schedule had not been realized. He then asked for direction from the committee on how to proceed. Patrick noted that we need to ask for what we need. Jeff complained that we should be asking for more CPC funding rather than target the taxpayers directly. Jean-Pierre noted that we need a final estimate and that we need to inform the public about it. Drayton said that he would not be able to develop construction documents by next Fall 2019. Tim noted that we need to make some public presentations on this project. Patrick noted that we need to explain perhaps 3 options maximum, otherwise we will confuse people. Drayton preferred one option. Patrick noted the need for a Town Meeting presentation that will include an explanation of the state of the existing building vs. current building codes and further explain the focused efforts by DTI and LLB in getting where we now are. Phil echoed that sentiment by saying we need to show all of what we have done to date, unlike the last time at Town Meeting where nothing had been initiated. Drayton said that we need a strong advocate for the project who could effectively explain the need for the Town Hall renovation, preferably someone who works at Town Hall.

Given the above, Mike felt we may need a separate meeting to discuss funding needs for the project, and that perhaps we may need to ask for \$700K (CPC grant of \$150K and DPW capital request of \$550K). He then wondered about the origin of the \$550K request. Tim admitted that he and the Town Manager had discussed such a number but he was open to inputs. Tim also thought he had discussed the number but Jay reminded him that some of his discussions were off-line. Tim asked if \$700K were approved at Town Meeting on April 6, 2019 and were thus made available on July 1, 2019, could get the project through the Schematic Design Phase by the Fall 2019 Town Meeting so that we could start the Design and Development Phase in November 2019. Mike noted that when the ask for dollars is made at Town Meeting, regardless of the amount, we will be asking for approval on a several million dollar project. Jean-Pierre felt that the project will cost what it costs. John added that Weston went for the full ask for their Town Hall project. He also noted that Schematic Design that might take 20 weeks, could then result in a much better cost estimate. He felt we should give Town Meeting a range of costs. Jean-Pierre noted that LLB has provided us with a summary of costs on past projects that can be used in our presentation at Town Meeting.

Mike then asked Jay to pause from taking minutes and make some comments.

Jay noted that when LLB was hired this past November the plan was to go to Town Meeting in April 2019 to ask for the full project cost. Unfortunately, as the work did not keep up with the

desired schedule, and the committee proceeded to discuss and modify building renovation options, the committee did not actually vote on any options. In fact, other than voting to approve past meeting minutes, the only recent vote of the committee was on January 30, 2019 to endorse the CPC grant ask for \$150K. Jay admitted that he had approached Patrick earlier noting that the deadline for applications for CPC grants to be considered at the April 6, 2019 Town Meeting was rapidly approaching. He felt that an ask for a grant of enough money to keep the project alive if we were not able to ask for the full project amount at Town Meeting might be a good move. If the committee were then able to ask for the larger amount, the CPC grant could potentially be rescinded. Jay also noted that since the committee had not done any community outreach or public meetings that he was very worried about the recent decision for a dual ask for money for the project recognizing that this was the same scenario as the last time this project was rebuffed at Town Meeting. He also wondered who would do the required presentation at Town Meeting, noting that Drayton would obviously do the brunt of the presentation. Jay also was concerned over the potential length of the required presentation followed by a likely large number of voter questions all of which might take an hour or more. After an hour talking about the project, he felt the voters just might vote it down having tired of it.

Drayton said that we need to present the estimated project cost and explain the project efforts to date. We could then ask for the full amount at the Fall 2019 Town Meeting.

Mike asked both DTI and LLB if the \$150K CPC ask is enough to keep the project alive from July 1 to the November Town Meeting. Both acknowledged that they needed to look into it.

Mallory noted that the time-frame from the April 2019 Town Meeting to the November 2019 Town Meeting was too short to develop Construction Documents. However, she felt that we could get to the Design and Development Phase by Fall. Drayton felt we could then get to Construction Documents and Bidding for a Spring 2020 Town Meeting.

Jay asked if we needed to choose an option at this meeting so that LLB could do a cost estimate. Mallory and Drayton indicated that they need this decision.

Patrick indicated that we should provide a cost range at Town Meeting and that we had historic data to rely on for help.

Jay pointed out that we had not yet addressed staff relocation costs during construction but John indicated he could estimate something. John suggested that the THBC needs to provide info to them in their effort to ascertain staff relocation costs during construction and Mike indicated that the committee could definitely help.

John said that LLB would estimate the construction cost and DTI would estimate the total project cost. Mike wanted to know if LLB were going to build in contingencies into their estimates. John indicated that there would definitely be contingencies built into the estimates but there would be no separate line item showing what they were. Mike insisted on knowing what they were.

Further Building Options Discussion

Tim asked if we could shift the location of the elevator in Option 8 to the rear of the building. Mallory answered yes, but it may interfere with the stairs and may penetrate the roof line, therefore needing a dormer, and we would lose some office space.

Tim expressed concern over office space size in general. He also asked about electing option 6 without the grand staircase. Mallory suggested that we may gain perhaps two additional offices, and therefore might not be worth it.

Mike then asked for a vote from the committee on Option 6 vs. Option 8. The votes were as follows: Option 8 – Tim, Patrick, Jay, Mike, Jeff; Option 6 – Jean-Pierre. Mallory offered that the best option for future expansion was Option 6. John felt that he and potentially many voters would want to keep the grand staircase. Based on the vote, Mike suggested LLB cost Option 8. Patrick made a motion, seconded by Jeff, that LLB cost detail Option 8.2. Mallory indicated that costs would be available for review on 3/27/19.

Mike suggested that the next THBC meeting be on 3/20/19 but that LLB attendance would not be required. The following meeting would be on 3/27/19 with LLB.

A general question repeated for all was how much money is needed to get to Design and Development?

Mike asked about efforts to enlarge the size of the Committee. Patrick noted that the Board of Selectmen has asked but no interest found to date.

Mike asked about the search for identification of temporary staff housing during construction but no activity was identified.

Mike asked about plans for outreach activity and the answer in addition to Tim attending the Historic District Commission meeting on the next evening, was that the 3/27/19 meeting will be promoted as a public meeting. Mike suggested meeting at 6:00 PM on 3/27 to get the cost estimate and then having a public presentation at 7:00 PM. Jay suggested that any presentation only summarize past options and not show them in detail. Mike agreed. John suggested that the committee may also need to meet on 4/3 to develop the Town Meeting presentation.

Mike indicated that we will discuss what we need for the upcoming Town Meeting on 3/20.

Just to be sure, Mallory asked about whether or not we wanted a wall separating the second floor meeting room from the hallway or not. While the committee did not take a formal vote, the informal voice vote suggested we wanted the wall and the separation.

Tim pointed out that there were no locations identified for a coffee service or a place for a copier on the second floor. Mallory agreed to find a couple of niches for them.

Patrick made a final comment that he had informally spoken with COA Director Mary Beth and learned from her that the COA would welcome a briefing on the project sometime during the day.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Secretary

Jay Butler

Attested 3/9/19