

# TOWN HALL BUILDING COMMITTEE

## MINUTES OF MEETING

January 8, 2020

Members Present: Jay Butler, Mike Twomey, Jack Lawrence, Jeff Hubbard, and Patrick Reffett

Members Absent: Tim Olson, Bill Olson, Jean-Pierre Minois

Others Present: Owner Project Manager (OPM) - Lee Sollenberger and John Sayre-Scibona of Design Technique (DTI); Designer/Architect - Lerner, Ladds, Bartels (LLB), Mallory Demty, Drayton Fair, and Mark Ritz; FINCOM Chair, David Wanger; Scott Clements, HHDC; Doug Trees, resident and local architect; and David Thompson, resident geotechnical engineer.

Mike Twomey opened the meeting at 5:02 PM in the Memorial Room at Town Hall. He delayed the meeting minutes approval until the committee had a quorum which was met within 20 minutes.

### **Presentation on HHDC Option B**

Drayton made a brief presentation on the latest design aspects of the HHDC Option B. Some aspects mentioned were as follows: Lower Level: 14 person conference room, no flex office, two bathrooms with showers, new vault and storage. First Floor: 6 person conference room. Second Floor: 80+ person meeting room rotated 90 degrees counter clockwise from the Option B layout, thus now facing the preserved stage and proscenium arch. Rear Entry: slightly larger addition with connector to main building, entry way mimics front door faces toward adjacent post office, with the new structure necessitating a higher roof line than the main building due to the required elevator stops. Drayton also

presented details on added roof insulation. He noted that all of the above were approved by the HHDC at their 12/10/19 meeting.

Drayton then showed a rough diagram of the site plan, noting that Tim Olson had given his preliminary approval even though the plan is still in the development stage. Mike mentioned the need for a “swing space” for more parking in the DPW yard as needed for large meetings. Doug asked how many parking spaces were provided and Mallory said there were 49. He then asked how many we had currently. Patrick promised to report on it and subsequent to the meeting reported we now have 34 spaces. Drayton mentioned that the relocated gas tanks in the DPW yard were not part of the project. Mike said that we needed to relocate the generator due to the proximity to the next door neighbor’s bedroom, and Mallory indicated a likely spot for it. Drayton pointed out that it would only run during emergencies and at a scheduled time once per week for maintenance. Mike noted that there were ways to reduce the noise.

### **Review of 11/13/19 THBC Votes**

Since Jay had not attended the 12/4/19 THBC meeting, nor the 12/10/19 HHDC meeting, Mike asked if he had any comments or questions at this time. Jay mentioned that at the 11/13/19 THBC meeting he had proposed staying with the Town Meeting approved Option B but that his motion was voted down 4-1. However, Jay wanted to inform the committee at this meeting that he still supported the original Option B. John said with some emotion that we do not want to go backwards and Jay assured all that he was not promoting such. Jay then reminded all that the only vote to approve the current design direction, i.e., retention of the stage, was on an earlier variant of the current HHDC Option B that was approved by a 3 -2 vote. He suggested that looking forward, the THBC might want to consider another vote on the HHDC Option B that might show stronger support given the committee has 8 members.

## **Introduction of New Project Manager**

Drayton introduced Mark Ritz as LLB's new Project Manager since Mallory was needed on some other projects that she had been supporting. Mark is an accomplished architect who has been working in the background on our project and thus can easily manage the project. As per the contract requirements, a copy of this notification was provided to the committee along with Mark's resume. Mallory assured all that she will always be available for consultation. Drayton assured everyone that he would be around as well. This info will be sent to the Town Manager for his ultimate approval.

## **Comments on the Site Plan**

Doug Trees noted that there were only 49 parking spaces with the new design but that with the meeting room able to hold 80+ persons added to approximately 20 employees that might be working at the time of a meeting, that there are serious shortcomings with the design. He also commented on some potential traffic flow issues considering the size of some of the trucks entering and leaving the DPW yard. Drayton noted that there is still a need to review this preliminary layout further with Tim Olson. Doug asked if the Planning Board will need to review this site plan and both Mike and Patrick assured him that it would. Scott noted that the turning radius for vehicles looked tight and that this detail was not shown on the plan and thus should be added. Scott further noted that angled parking might need to be implemented as he felt that 28 feet should be allowed for a vehicle turning radius but Patrick said that 24 feet was allowed by code per the Planning Board. As suggested by Scott, Patrick admitted that the turning radius must be shown on the site plan prior to Planning Board review. Doug asked if the Planning Board review would be conducted before the THBC went before Town Meeting to ask for construction money and Mike assured him that was the case.

## **Basement Moisture Issues**

Dave Thompson, Hamilton resident and geotechnical engineer for 42 years, appeared before the committee by invitation to help resolve what to do for moisture control in the basement. Dave first admitted that he had only spent a modest amount of time looking at available documents and that he was not part of any previous work done at Town Hall.

(Secretary's Note: One of the available documents he reviewed was a previous committee circulated drawing by Kenneth J. Lavoie, Architect, dated 11/6/95, entitled, "Perimeter Drainage System, Hamilton Town Hall, Exterior Repairs & Painting." This drawing detailed the existing exterior water drainage trenches dug around the building foundation.)

Dave first noted that it was extremely important to have gutters and downspouts connected into the existing drainage system, especially with the fieldstone foundation. He also said that some moisture may seep through the fieldstone walls and that we will need a very good air conditioning system. He noted the current plan for excavating around the building for French Drains as well as plans for replacing the basement slab were costly, gold plated solutions, and overkill. He felt the water table was below the current floor level. He pointed out that the current drainage system was not a French Drain system as the trenches were not deep enough. Doug Trees mentioned the granite front steps that would pose a problem with installing French Drains. Mallory outlined the current proposal for excavating around the building for French Drains and external water proofing in addition to internal water proofing, and installation of a vapor barrier and insulation. Dave felt that we should not excavate around the exterior of the building but if in the future that proved to be an issue, it could always be done then. A brief discussion ensued about whether or not there would ever be offices in the basement but all more or less agreed that it was not a good idea and by direction that no permanent offices are planned in the basement. Dave's overall recommendation was to do no work on the building exterior ground but install interior basement waterproofing, vapor barrier, and

insulation along with a good air conditioning system and to have exterior gutters and downspouts connected to the existing drainage system. Mike mentioned that we were also planning a new, duplex, sump pump system connected to an emergency generator. As an aside, Drayton asked Dave about his experience with the effectiveness of negative side waterproofing using a product called aquafin. Dave mentioned that he recommends ironite. Jack asked about using an epoxy coating but Dave did not recommend it. Jack also asked about using sprayed closed cell foam but Scott indicated issues with adhesion.

Mike mentioned that the plan for the basement conference room is not definite until more work is done on the air conditioning plan. Jay asked if the committee were comfortable with a plan for office expansion over the next 30+ years considering we have eliminated the flex office in the basement. He noted the likely inevitable introduction of new state mandates into the future. Patrick agreed with Jay's views, especially in area under his purview. Mike reiterated the direction that the committee received of no offices in the basement and pointed out that any expansion would need to be an external building expansion from the new addition. Doug commented that his design calculations on the air conditioning piping needs installation would reduce the ceiling height in the basement to 7 feet and consequently he felt that was an important issue that we needed to address now. Mike mentioned that there is a plan to meet with the MEP (mechanical, electrical, plumbing) consultants to talk about the air conditioning system in the near term.

### **Second Floor Structural Issues**

Doug asked about the status of plans to reinforce the second floor. Drayton noted that the second floor structure meets code for "Assembly Use" live load of 100 PSF but the floor deflection is excessive. (Secretary's Note: Drayton was paraphrasing from a letter from Roome & Guarracino, LLC, Consulting Structural Engineers, sent on 11/15/19, and received by Drayton and then provided to the committee.)

According to the report, the expected deflections are anticipated to be excessive to the extent that they may be uncomfortable and possibly disturbing to users and could potentially damage existing and newly installed finishes. Drayton also reiterated the initial complaints prior to the start of the project from town hall employees of excessive floor deflection due to heavy file cabinets. The plan is to anticipate the need for sistering all of the joints, but upon inspection during construction, a decision might be made that it would not be necessary. Scott asked about the condition of the hardwood floor underneath the current wall to wall carpeting and Mallory indicated that it was in good condition. Scott suggested taking up the hardwood floor and storing it during the sistering operation so that it might be reinstalled afterwards. Doug asked about the type of sistering planned and from which direction to attack the problem. A discussion ensued amongst several as to the issues with coming up from the first floor or down from the second floor. Scott was concerned over inadvertent damage to historical features that might be found in the floor. Mike commented that while we need to meet code with the project, that we need to establish a comfort level with what to do. However, he felt that the letter from the structural engineer was too vague. Doug suggested installing a long beam under the floor to support it. Drayton said they will consider the most effective approach and plan to exceed the code requirement. Doug argued against the need for exceeding code, much less meeting it since the building was previously used for proms, dances, assemblies, etc. Mallory noted that the cost of proposed renovations vs. the assessed value of the building legally requires the building to meet level 3 building codes. Doug argued the point that we need to lower costs so that we did not need to meet that mandate. Mallory felt that we easily exceed that threshold with MEP, fire protection, elevator, etc. costs. Mike suggested that we do the calculation to demonstrate the need for level 3. Jay mentioned that the July 2019 assessed value of Town Hall was \$1,473,400 and thus was probably slightly higher now, given his experience with his house assessment. Mallory will send a letter with her calculations.

### **Further Deliberations on the Project**

Doug asked if we had received Ben Nutter's architectural plans for the Topsfield Town Hall that he had sent. Mike said no but will try and get that info. Doug pointed out that he has serious concerns over the cost of our project, and hence the trigger of the need for level 3 building code compliance, especially since our current design crams everything into the existing building envelope vs. the Topsfield solution that created a building addition. Doug offered that we could meet with the Topsfield Building Committee and their architect to see how they approached their renovation. Doug also commented that DTI was the OPM for that project but John countered with the fact that the project took many years to fruition and they were brought into the project very late to the effort and the fact that the Hamilton Town Hall project is constrained by the desire to stay within the existing building envelope.

Doug indicated he wanted a fair presentation at Town Meeting on the status of the project and strongly suggested we first talk with the Topsfield people involved with their project. Doug felt we were shoving the project forward and being ridiculous in our project design. Jeff harshly criticized Doug's comments and especially his repeated refusals to officially join the committee and help the effort. Jeff further commented that his consistent suggestions for design changes on issues that have already been discussed and addressed by the committee has slowed down the effort. Doug asked why his cost estimate on the project was not reviewed by the committee. (Secretary's Note: Doug's cost estimate was reviewed by some personnel on the committee but his initial assumption significantly reduced the building square footage as he was inserting his plan to move some offices into the DPW garages. Unfortunately, that suggestion was discussed and reviewed as building renovation Option 1 and was discarded by the committee. Thus, his cost estimate could not be compared with those authorized by the

committee.) Doug insisted that he wanted Construction Documents and hard costing before Town Meeting was asked to vote on the project. He threatened to file a citizen's petition to force consideration of his concerns. Doug then asked if the Site Plan will be reviewed by the Planning Board before being presented at Town Meeting and he was assured it would be reviewed.

Jay mentioned that at the Fall 2019 Town Meeting that the voters approved funds for: completion of Option B Detailed Design, development of bid documents and construction documents, conduct of the bidding process, and costs for temporary relocation of town employees during construction. Thus, the only money remaining funds to be requested would be for the actual construction.

### **Project Schedule**

Drayton presented the new schedule but due to the font size on the power point presentation, it was unreadable but more importantly showed the Spring 2020 Town Meeting date from the town website was incorrect in mid-May as opposed to the actual date of April 4, 2020. Thus, the proposed schedule was not correct and more importantly presented a significant time compression of required actions to produce a design and cost estimate in time for Town Meeting. A discussion ensued between Mike and Mallory about what was possible, and Mallory indicated that Construction Documents were possible by August 2020. Mike asked if a design status for the April 4, 2020 Town Meeting could be developed as well as a cost estimate. Drayton said he could do so. Mike was focused on attending the Spring 2020 Town Meeting and asking for the construction dollars. John wondered if we should wait until the Fall 2020 Town Meeting but noted the project cost would then escalate at the 2.5% rate. Mike was persistent in his desire to ask for funds at the April 4, 2020 Town Meeting. Mike then mentioned that he, Tim, and Joe D. will have a meeting as to how to proceed. Drayton commented that many projects can be accelerated but he felt that in the



case of Hamilton that it was not possible. Drayton said he will redo the schedule with the correct Town Meeting date and send it to the committee for comment. Mallory noted as an after thought, the requirement for pre-qualified bidders and the attendant schedule expansion if our project exceeds \$10M but John and Lee noted that we were under that threshold.

### **Past Meeting Minutes**

Jay asked for and received unanimous approval of past meeting minutes for 11/13/19 and 12/4/19.

### **Coordination Meetings**

Mike said that he will respond to requests for updates on project status and he plans to attend future meetings of the FINCOM, BOS, and COA.

### **Next Meeting**

Next meeting of the THBC will be on Wed., 1/22/20 at 9:30 AM in the Memorial Room at Town Hall. The working group meeting with the MEP consultants is TBD. Mallory suggested setting up a standard meeting day and time for each month as we move forward. John asked about the plan for setting up small working group meetings.

Mike asked for a motion to adjourn at 7:07 PM that was seconded and voted unanimously.

Secretary

Jay Butler

Attested 1/10/20

