

Saturday, May 04, 2013

Public Hearing for Fire Facility held at the American Legion from 9 am to noon.

At 9:00 am Alan Huizenga introduced Adam Lougee of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission who is the facilitator for this meeting. Adam stated this is the second of the two public hearings to be held regarding the location of the Fire Facility, he outlined the agenda for this meeting and revisited some issues from the previous meeting.

A. Roadmap of these meetings:

- By May 31 Adam will give his report to the Selectboard
- By June 3 the Selectboard will create a site Selection Committee
- This summer the Selection Committee will apply the public criteria to proposed sites
- Early Fall the report of the Selection Committee will be made public
- Fall the Selectboard will negotiate site acquisition
- Winter the Selectboard informs community of site and prepares for Town Meeting
- Town Meeting we will vote on funding for selected site

B. What is the community looking for in a site for the Fire Facility? (ranking criteria contributed by the participants from the 4/20/13 meeting, as very important, important or not important)

- Gerry Slager would like fire personnel to state what is important to them and what their needs are, as what is not important to him may be crucial to them.
- Peeker Heffernan said location to the intersection is very important to them depending on the intersection, as it can allow them different access points.
- Peter Coffey said intersections are important but since different intersections have different issues it is not very important.
- Peter D. Ryan agrees with Peter Coffey that it is important, but can be determined per site by the committee.
- Access to responders is very important.
- Room for moving vehicles is very important.
- Katie Raycroft Meyer agrees close to village location is important and feels this encompasses more than the historic village.
- Diane Cushman would like the criteria "access to village water system" explained. Joel Bouvier said this would be access to a 4" to 12" water main, not specifically a fire hydrant. Alan Huizenga thinks this issue will come out in the site analysis and we need to allow for the connection to the village system or a drilled well in the cost of site development. Joel Bouvier said they currently have a dump valve at the station they can use to fill the tank in an emergency situation. Naomi Drummond thinks this is very important. Bill Bryant agrees with Alan Huizenga that each site will be analyzed by the site Selection Committee and this issue will be part of that analysis. Katie

Raycroft Meyer agrees it is important and should be analyzed for each site. Kris Perlee said at the last public meeting it was agreed this issue would be part of the evaluation.

- Dedicated parking spaces (50 ideal). Willow Wheelock feels this is very important for the safety of the fire fighters. Kevin LaRose said it is important and 50 would be great but they have been using 6 for 120 years. It was agreed to be important not very important.
- Solve Village parking dilemma. Brett LaRose feels this had to do with existing parking interfering with the Federated Church and the Lawrence Memorial Library. Liz Hermann said depending on the location more parking spaces may be needed. Kate Raycroft Meyer would like the heading changed to consider village parking dilemma not solve it. It was rated as important.
- Consider multiple sites (department concerns). Can the Fire Department operate using multiple sites? Brett LaRose said one site is ideal for responders and this issue is very important. Peter Coffey said building multiple buildings and maintaining multiple buildings is expensive. Brett LaRose said currently the BFD is housed in two locations and it is difficult. Eve Thompson agrees with Brett that they should be in one location. David Brynn would like to change the wording to one location and make it very important. Everyone agreed one location is very important.
- Maintain hydrants. Ted Lylis, who made the comment at the previous meeting, said as far as site location is concerned this is not important.
- Size 13,300 square feet (ideal), couple acres (ideal), current site smaller: combination of apparatus bay and meeting space. Brett LaRose said 13,300 square feet is an ideal size, but they can do with less space and he would like this criteria marked as important. James Cole said looking to the future adequate space is important and they should not limit themselves, so this is very important. Lisa Hoff wonders if they should change the header to no smaller than 13,300 square feet. Kevin LaRose said 13,300 square feet is not important because you will couple it to the cost and the tax payers will vote whether it works. Ted Lylis said shoot for the moon then cut it back later. David Brynn said it is important that the site meets the need. Peter Coffey said we cannot compare ourselves to other Towns/Cities and agrees we need to look to the future and feels this size is very important and planning and meeting space should not be overlooked. Alan Huizenga thinks the study done by Asher Nelson gives us ideas on the size and feels this should be 10,000 to 13,300 square feet. Everyone agrees this criteria is very important.
- Consider historic village pattern regarding architecture. Gerald Heffernan is with the Historical Society and feels we should not tear down any more beautiful buildings and feels the existing station should not be destroyed no matter what. Katie Raycroft Meyer would like to clarify that it should not be just the architecture but also the pattern and how it fits into the fabric of the village –i.e.: mix of commercial and residential. Ron LaRose said a structure could be designed to blend in with its surroundings and if the fire station stays in the village, something is going to be disrupted. This was rated as very important. Jacob Tropp wanted to know if some of the topics will be merged together and Adam Lougee said they may, as these were specific concerns from last meeting and he wanted to address them all. Willow Wheelock would like it changed to consider historic village pattern in regards specifically to architecture. Adam Lougee said okay. Bill Bryant suggested this is very important and Ron LaRose is right there will be impacts no matter where the facility goes. Liz Hermann thinks maybe it should say consider conceptual texturization as architecture may be premature without a site. Adam Lougee would like to stay

with the architectural design of the facility and its accessory buildings in selecting the site. Thad Sorrell wanted to know the village and town boundaries. Adam Lougee said the village, for the purpose of this discussion, means proximity to the water system and the main population. David Brynn asked to change criteria #21 to siting within the neighborhood. Architecture as the criteria was split between very important and important.

- Legacy project – how important a public building is this and building for the future. James Cole thinks this is very important since this will be a long term investment. Peter D. Ryan feels it needs to last at least 50 to 100 years. David Brynn agrees with Peter Ryan that this is a 100 year project. It was rated as very important.
- Phases – should we build this in phases? This was rated as not important.
- Objective analysis for siting in regards to response times and calls. Lane Perlee thought where responders live in proximity to fire facility should be considered. David Brynn thinks we should drop the response times and calls, as those issues are just a small part of the objective analysis and leave the header as strictly objective analysis. He thinks this is very important. Adam Lougee agreed to the change. Joel Bouvier disagrees with removing the response time from the criteria as fire doubles in size every two minutes. Adam Lougee stated he is just acknowledging that response times and calls are not the only two parts of objective analysis. Alan Huizenga thinks this comment came up as Porter Knight wanted an objective analysis of response times using historical data. Peter Coffey said he is working on that using data from the past five years, and he will provide that information to the committee. James Cole said objectively analyzing the location is very important. All agreed.
- Co-location with other town services. Bill Bryant feels this is not an important criteria. All agreed.
- Co-location but separate facilities. Agreed as not important.
- Regional role in 5-Town and greater. Katie Raycroft Meyer feels it is important for access to other departments. Peter D. Ryan feels this is not important as siting it properly will take care of the issue. Peeker Heffernan does not feel this is important as sites currently on this list will work. All agreed this was not important.
- Promote collaboration with other public safety departments and the schools. Diane Cushman has the impression this was important to fire personnel so school children could walk to the location. This was rated as important.
- Ability to serve as a shelter. Brett LaRose said co-locating an emergency shelter with the Fire Department is not a good idea and emergency shelters are already located at MAUHS and BES. Peeker Heffernan said they have utilized MAUHS as a shelter in the past and agrees with Brett. This was rated as not important.
- Design, functionality and aesthetic – everyone agrees this criteria was already covered.
- Siting within neighborhood and its ability to fit within the patterns of the village of Bristol – this was rated as a split between very important and important.
- Safe sidewalks. Joel Bouvier believes this was in regards to streets with no sidewalks. Eve Thompson was concerned about school children and pedestrians going by. Katie Raycroft Meyer thinks this was based on the initial plan to push the sidewalk out to the end of the curb at the

North Street location. She wants to be sure when siting the fire facility, they consider pedestrian safety. This was rated as very important.

- Look at big concepts of existing public buildings. No one could remember what this meant and Ted Lylis suggested we ignore this. Alan Huizenga felt this was in regard to the inventory of what we already own and building in concert with current facilities. David Brynn does not know what it means either, but as a fiscal conservative does not want to over build public infrastructure. He thinks how it relates to existing infrastructure could be helpful i.e.: meeting space. This was rated as important to not important.
- Impact on neighbors. Adam Lougee believes this is why we are here. Willow Wheelock does not feel this is important, as it is your fire department and as a stand-alone issue it is not important as it has to go somewhere and is has to affect someone. This was rated as not important.
- Impact on historic homes. Jacob Tropp wanted to know if this was in regards to removing a historic home. Willow Wheelock said this was how to define a historic home and whether or not they should be torn down or moved. Everyone agreed on that definition and rated this as important. Peter D. Ryan wanted to know who is going to define historic. Adam Lougee said the committee can define it.
- Preservation of existing building. This was rated as very important. Slim Pickens wanted to know if they were preserving it as a fire station or just a building. Adam Lougee said just a building. Willow Wheelock agrees with Adam Lougee. David Brynn wanted to know if you were just preserving the façade or true historic preservation and would like more clarification. Adam Lougee just wants to rate the importance for the selection committee and let them define it later. Adam Lougee feels this is a knock the building down or not issue. Kris Perlee thought this was brought up in the context of moving the building and whether or not that was important. Lisa Hoff asked if they rate it as very important are we saying we want it to be part of the new site. Alan Huizenga said this needs to be considered as a cost to the project of moving it or updating the building. Willow Wheelock feels Alan Huizenga has a valid point but that steers away from the intent of the comment made last week. Peter Meyer feels the language of this meant preserving the architecture not preserving it in terms of use and maybe there should be another criteria added. Willow Wheelock said this was only in regards to preserving the architecture structure and perhaps not to the overall project. Bill Bryant said maybe it should be thought of in terms of what is important as a broader topic going forward. Naomi Drummond feels this is as simple as moving the building or taking it with them. Adam Lougee agreed to keep this as a broader topic for the selection committee to sort out and get feedback on. Alan Huizenga proposed we change this to disposition versus preservation. David Brynn agrees with Alan Huizenga and proposed other changes to upcoming numbers. Willow Wheelock said we need to agree as a group if we are going to alter the intention of the comments made two weeks ago. Preservation of building regardless of use or whether it stays or moves– not historical preservation. This was rated as very important based on that definition.
- Preservation of Bilson house. They agreed to remove this from the list of criteria.
- Expandability was discussed as part of the legacy question. Joel Bouvier feels this is station expandability and everyone agreed. Lisa Hoff feels we already discussed this as part of the legacy issue. People agreed to remove this from the list.

- David Brynn wants to go back to “preservation of Bilson house” and rename it preservation of 1898 fire house. He went on to say we have not discussed this specifically as a historic preservation project versus just keeping it. Adam Lougee suggested we make this criteria #39.
- Cost. Brett LaRose said this is very important and all agreed.
- Infrastructure large garage (regards to adequacy of size). Peter Meyer wanted to know what this meant. Gerry Slager said someone didn’t want a large garage built and feels we previously discussed the importance of design.
- Visibility and public presence – support volunteerism. Willow Wheelock feels if this is rated as very important are we going to disallow some possible sites. Joel Bouvier feels visibility and public presence are important but this is why you create a matrix of the criteria and sites will rise and fall within that matrix. Peter Meyer wanted clarification on this issue. Willow Wheelock said this criteria spoke to having a fire department in a prominent location and she feels that by creating a public presence, you create volunteerism. This was rated as very important.
- Insurance costs to residents (within 5 miles of fire facility you pay lower homeowner insurance rates). Peeker Heffernan does not feel this is a fair topic to discuss today as residents who reside in the outlying areas of Town are not present. He went on to say insurance costs to the public are very important to him as this could affect up to 90 homeowners. Therese Kirby wanted to know if someone lives near a dry hydrant does that mitigate the requirement of living within 5 miles from the fire station. Brett LaRose said no. In order for dry hydrants to be active they need to meet specific state requirements and currently none of our dry hydrants do. Willow Wheelock said this is not as much about fire insurance cost as it is the BFD’s ability to respond to the majority of the population. Adam Lougee said he feels this is defined as how important it is to the selection committee to encompass as many citizens as possible. Bill Bryant reiterated this was brought up by an insurance agent and he wanted to know if people wanted the selection committee to spend a bit of time hearing from other insurance agencies and their take on the rate structure. This was rated as important.
- Future growth/population need. This is in regards to where growth in the Town of Bristol is going to happen. This was rated as important.
- Response time was previously discussed under another header.
- Define village parameters was previously discussed as its relationship to the village water system.
- Septic capacity of 300 gallons per day is very important.
- Compatibility with Town Plan. The Planning Commission has agreed to help the selection committee. This was rated as important to very important.
- Landowner willingness. Brett LaRose said this is very important. Pam Lathrop wanted to know how sites got on the list if no one was asked. Adam Lougee explained that some sites were added last week and the first nineteen were on the original study done by Pacheco Ross. Thad Sorrell, owner of Thad’s Automotive, said this affects him directly and he was not aware of eminent domain until last week. Peeker Heffernan said it is very important to him that the landowner is willing to sell. As a member of the Selectboard he is completely against taking anything via eminent domain. Willow Wheelock likes having everything out on the public table for discussion, but does not feel the Town has any intention to take someone’s property. Alan

Huizenga said as a Selectboard member he is not in favor of eminent domain and told Thad his name is on the list due to the Pacheco Ross study before he bought the property. Bill Bryant said people will be notified that they are on the list and their comments will be given to the selection committee. This issue was rated as very important.

- Historic preservation of the 1898 fire station in an accurate historic concept. Gerald Heffernan said there is a Vermont Historic Preservation Committee and their standards should be used. He would be opposed to changing the façade, but not changing the inside based on Vermont Historic Preservation guidelines. Liz Hermann said gold standards say minimum changes to the inside and preservation to the outside façade and materials. Peter Meyer wanted to know if you can have historic preservation of a building and still move it. Liz Hermann said yes and that could include adaptive reuse. Willow Wheelock wanted to know if historic preservation increases or decreases our ability to be flexible with the use of the building. Liz Hermann said there are grants available but you have to abide by national standards. She does not feel that it is limiting. Joel Bouvier wanted to know if Historical Preservation would allow the attachment a new building to the 1898 building. He also said when the bell was found and placed back in the tower, they had to install a steel beam for support and at the same time they chose not to add the building to the historic registry as they felt it would tie their hands. Liz Hermann said it is tricky to give a yes or no on attaching to the 1898 building in regards to Historic Preservation and maybe this should read as “preserved as possible”. Slim Pickens wants to know what this has to do with site selection. This issue was rated as important.

C. What sites should be eliminated from the list?

- Thad Sorrell would like his business taken off the list (#5 on the list). It was voted to remove his property from the list.
- Willow Wheelock would like #8 the corner of Pine Street and Liberty Street (old Lawson Hammond property) that now has 5 houses on it to be removed from the list. It was voted to remove this from the list.
- #9 Telephone building on Munsill Ave and #10 the corner of Pine Street and Maple Street are now one site and developed by Bristol Works. It was voted to remove this from the list.
- Alan Huizenga suggested removing #29, Town owned property near the Town Garage and Landfill, from the list as there is no room. Lance Perlee and Eve Thompson agreed. Diane Cushman wanted to know if the landfill is going to close soon. Kris Perlee said it is permitted until 2029 and that will probably be extended. It was voted to remove this property from the list.
- Ron LaRose would like #21, the old Bristol Animal Hospital currently owned by the American Legion, removed from the list as they plan to build a new legion in the future. It was voted to remove this property from the list.
- David Brynn feels taking sites off the list now is not the right process. He thinks they are doing the work of the siting committee and feels all sites should be left on the list and turned over to the committee to sort out. Alan Huizenga said he agrees, unless a property owner is present then we can vote yes or no due to landowner willingness. He also said removing the Town owned property near the Town Garage and Landfill may be premature. It would be a costly site,

but possible. Adam Lougee explained he and Bill Bryant thought it would be a good idea to remove places as turning 32 properties over to the committee is a lot of work. James Cole agrees that if owners are present or locations have been developed since the Pacheco Ross study we should take those off today. Everyone agreed with that process.

- Peeker Heffernan said #31, Roy's automotive, was just sold and the new owner has plans for that site and the owner would like it removed. It was voted to remove this property from the list.
- Pam Lathrop wanted to know if they were really considering the post office and Adam Lougee said yes.
- Diane Cushman wanted to know if #9 and #10 (Bristol Works) were going back on. Bill Bryant said #10 was already rejected by the BFD and the other building has since been torn down. David Brynn said from the point of a pure process they should allow the siting committee to look at all the sites and send a letter to the folks asking if they are interested. There was an agreement to place #9, #10 (Bristol Works) and #29 (Town Garaged & Landfill) back on the list. Brett LaRose wanted to point out that not included on previous sites to be considered is the Bilson property and he thinks it should be added. Peter Coffey said it could be added to #19 (Bristol Fire Department 32 North Street) by amending it to say Bristol Fire Department 32 North Street and adjacent properties including the Vince or Bilson property. Kris Perlee would like the Bilson property to be added to the list as #33. Adam agreed.

D. Discussion regarding the composition and size of the Selection Committee.

- Same Committee as before?
- 7 people – composed of 3 firefighters 1 Selectboard member and 3 members of the public.
- Other?
- Meetings shall be open to the public
- The Selectboard shall create and post an application for citizen representatives after their next meeting on May 6, 2013.
- Ted Lylis thinks the one Selectboard member should not be a firefighter.
- Willow Wheelock would like clarification. Bill Bryant said there was discussion of having a site selection committee then a building committee or having it be one in the same.
- Liz Hermann wanted to know if they were deciding on the building committee today. Adam Lougee said you are giving your Selectboard input on the make-up of the committee.
- Alan Huizenga suggested a seven member committee and agrees with Ted Lylis that the Selectboard member not be a firefighter.
- Gerald Heffernan thinks it is vital that someone with an expertise in design and historical preservation be on the committee. Ted Lylis thinks one committee should be the site and building committee for continuity. Willow Wheelock agrees that seven members are good unless you have a large application of people. Ron LaRose agrees and feels seven is adequate and the suggested make-up is fine. He said with these all being open meetings, the committee will always be absorbing public opinion. He would also like the committee to stay the same from beginning to end. Ted Lylis also pointed out someone from the site selection could respectfully decline when it got to design. Alan Huizenga said the committee could also get larger if needed

during the design phase. Peeker Heffernan feels you will get continuity with the Selectboard member and firefighters staying the same. Katie Raycroft Meyer feels seven is a good number and agrees continuity is important. She suggested four members from public and two firefighters. Kris Perlee said firefighters are part of the public too and just because he is a firefighter does not negate that. David Brynn would like to reiterate what Katie Raycroft Meyer has to say and thinks having three firefighters stacks the committee. He would like the Selectboard to consider someone from the Planning Commission, Historical Society, school, Bristol Downtown Community Partnership, etc. James Cole suggested a Planning Commission member and believes we are all looking for a solution and the more it is presented as a public process, it will carry more weight when it is time to vote. Naomi Drummond supports the idea of public input at public meetings. Liz Hermann said it would be nice to have a more women on the committee. Bill Bryant said the other type of diversity the Selectboard has discussed is someone from the rural part of the Town. Ron LaRose feels we have reached consensus on seven. Peeker Heffernan would like a bit more consensus on how many firefighters. Slim Pickens thinks the psychological effect of the makeup leans towards two firefighters. Willow Wheelock agrees and feels we should be more gender conscious. Peter Meyer feels we need to be careful about weighing people unequally as firefighters or not. Lance Perlee suggested a broader citizen make up for the site selection and more firefighters on the design. Peter Coffey takes umbrage to the fact that people are speaking as though firefighters are not citizens. He would like to see each person evaluated as to what they bring to the process.

E. General questions and comments

- The Selectboard will design the application and place it on the website before May 10.
- Minutes will be posted on the website.
- Report from Adam will be given to the Selectboard and the public.
- Alan Huizenga thanked Adam Lougee for his work on behalf of the Town.
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Meeting adjourned at noon.

Respectfully Submitted,
Therese Kirby, Clerk

Attended by: Therese Kirby, Lance Perlee, filmed for NEAT TV by Joanna Etko, Mary Orvis-Baker, Anne Masterson, Peter J. Ryan, Diane Cushman, Peter D. Ryan, Gerry Slager, Kris Perlee, Paul Fuller, Christine Lathrop, Amos Martin, Slim Pickens, Pam Lathrop, Eve Thompson, James Cole, Katie Raycroft-Meyer, Peter Meyer, Thad Sorrell, Willow Wheelock, Liz Hermann, Peter Coffey, Lynda Malzac, Jacob Tropp, Lisa Hoff, Robert Norris, Ted Lylis, Phillip Sumner, Lucille Sumner, Naomi Drummond, Randall Freeman, Michaela Goodyear, James Goodyear, David Brynn, Kevin LaRose, Brett LaRose, Ron LaRose, Bill Bryant, Joel Bouvier, Alan Huizenga, Peeker Heffernan and Gerald Heffernan.