

Fire Facility Site Selection Committee
Minutes of September 3, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Office. Present were committee members PJ Ryan, Chris Griggs, Diane Cushman, Liz Herrmann, Gerry Slager, Brett LaRose, Kevin LaRose, Shawn Oxford and Alan Huizenga. Also present was Administrative Assistant Jen Stetson, Peter Morrow Meyer, Porter Knight, Eve Thompson, Kenneth Thompson, and David Brynn.

Alan Huizenga motioned to approve meeting minutes from August 19, 2013 meeting. Liz Herrmann seconded, all were in favor (9-0). So voted.

Brett LaRose updated the committee regarding the Recreation Bluv property. They had decided to remain on the list. With that being known Brett LaRose asked the committee if they felt that it was appropriate that he go and meet with the Selectboard regarding both the West Street sites (the Recreation Club, the Shepard property, and the Nelson property). The committee agreed that this was a good idea to update the Selectboard about what they were doing and information for guidance regarding those sites. Diane Cushman updated the group with a list of appraised values for the remaining sites on the list.

Liz Herrmann had worked with the properties and created a map for each of the sites still being considered. On each map she included the zoning setbacks for these sites, the 25 foot buffer if there needed to be one along with a potential 7700 square foot building, a block for 50 parking spaces, and a small box created for the 38 foot truck so it could be seen on the site for reference. Alan Huizenga inquired about how they were going to narrow down the sites from this point. Gerry Slager suggested considering whether the old Fire Station could move. Brett LaRose discussed it being considered, but also wanted to remember the cost that could occur to move the historic building.

The committee discussed that they should do to proceed. Alan Huizenga suggested having the committee consider the pros and cons of each site while also considering the zoning regulations for that specific site to perhaps help eliminate some sites.

The committee decided to create a list of pros and cons for each of the sites.

Site #3, Recreation Club, West Street Frontage:

Pro's-Sidewalk, good exposure, visibility, gateway to town, good access for responders, purchase of one property, off street parking available, call volume to the West and South, lot has depth, close proximity to Mount Abraham Union High School, no historical impact, room for future expansion.

Con's-Re-location of Skate Park, loss of recreational space, proximity to kids, increased distance to downtown, increased distance to Bristol Elementary School, insurance impact.

The committee discussed the potential relocation of the old fire house. Porter Knight suggested that the committee make that an entirely separate issue based on the site chosen. Alan Huizenga thought it was important to have this discussion now so the committee could get an understanding of what each committee member thought about moving the historic fire house.

Site #22, Nelson Property, West Street Frontage:

The committee began discussion of potential pro's and con's of this site, but due to the uncertainty of the piece of property they would have to work with the committee voted to table the discussion until more information could be obtained regarding the site specifics. Brett LaRose emphasized the importance of going to the Selectboard's next meeting to use their guidance and perhaps be able to figure out some site specifics for the committee.

Site #4, Shepard Property along with Recreation Club Property, West Street Frontage:

Pro's-Sidewalk, good exposure, visibility, gateway to the Town, good access for responders, off street parking available, call volume to the West and South, lot depth, low residential density, close to Mount Abraham Union High School, no historical impact, room for future expansion

Con's-Re-Location of Skate Park, loss of recreational space, proximity to children, increased distance to the Downtown, increased distance to Bristol Elementary School, insurance impact, purchase of two lots, demolition costs

The committee discussed the lot size for this site. Gerry Slager suggested that since they thought this site had too much extra space, perhaps they could save the Skate Park by changing the amount of property they ask from the Recreation Club. After further discussion Alan Huizenga re-emphasized the importance of Brett LaRose coming to the Selectboard meeting to discuss the process with the Recreation Club and what the Selectboard needs to do. Peter Meyer asked about whether the Shepard house proved to be of historic value. Diane Cushman said she had spoken with Gerald Heffernan and the Shepard property on West Street was of no historical value to the Historical Society.

Site #19, Bristol Fire Station with Bilson Property, North Street:

Pro's-Sidewalk, good exposure, visibility, center of village, Town owns existing Fire Station, purchase of one property, good access for responders, municipal septic access, good curbing, historic Fire Station, close to Bristol Elementary School

Con's-Limited off street parking, limited lot size, depth, historical impact (moving Bilson house), scale of building and fitting in surrounding, no room for expansion, cost to move Bilson house, voted down once

Site #26, Bristol Fire Station with Vince Property, North Street:

The committee voted to remove this site from the list due to the lot being too small, (9-0), so voted.

Site#18, Dyke Property, corner of North Street & Fitch Avenue:

Pro's-Sidewalk, good exposure, visibility, easy access for responders, purchase of one property, corner lot, close to Bristol Elementary School

Con's-Limited off street parking, limited lot size, depth, cost to purchase property, scale of building and fitting in with surrounding, existing right-of-way on property, no room for expansion, demolition costs

Site #33, Bristol Fire Station with Bilson Property & Vince Property, North Street:

Pro's-Sidewalk, good exposure, visibility, center of village, Town owns existing Fire Station, easy access for responders, site development potential, potential to co-exist with library parking, municipal septic access, additional off street parking available

Con's-Historical impact (moving Bilson House), scale of building and fitting in with surrounding, cost of purchasing two properties, loss of two properties from tax roll, demolition costs

Site#13, Bouvier Property, 128 & 130 North Street:

Pro's-Off street parking, room for future expansion, access to Plank Road, visibility

Con's-Cost, purchase two properties, loss of two properties from tax roll, insurance impact, no sidewalks, demolition costs, distance to Bristol Elementary School, distance to Mount Abraham Union High School, increased response time for Firefighters, not near center of town, scale of building and fitting in surroundings

Site#17, Tanych & Hanson Property, 65 & 67 North Street:

Pro's-Good exposure, visibility, easy access for responders, sidewalk, close to Bristol Elementary

Con's-Cost to purchase two properties, loss of two properties from tax roll, demolition costs, scale of building and fitting in with surroundings

Site#23, Post Office, Parsons & Sons Lumber, West Street:

Pro's-Sidewalks, good exposure, visibility, easy access for responders, scale of building, fitting with surrounding, close to Bristol Elementary, Close to Mount Abraham Union High School

Con's-Limited off street parking, depth, no room for expansion, cost to purchase property, proximity to traffic lights, demolition costs

Kevin LaRose and Gerry Slager had met with the professor from Middlebury College regarding the GIS help. They had sent the link from Middlebury's GIS survey to the committee for them to review to help define what information the committee should request to have surveyed by this group from the college. Diane Cushman said that she thought Bristol's could be more concise than Middlebury's. The committee decided to table the discussion until the next meeting.

The committee discussed the insurance impact on homeowners. Brett LaRose suggested that perhaps they have this information contained in the GIS data done by the college.

The committee discussed the zoning regulations for the sites being considered. Liz Herrmann said that at this point she had included all of the zoning information needed on the maps, but there would be some difficult issues when dealing with more than one property.

Chris Griggs moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 pm, Kevin LaRose seconded. All were in favor, so voted (9-0).