

Fire Facility Site Selection Committee
Minutes of September 30, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Office. Present were committee members PJ Ryan, Diane Cushman, Liz Herrmann, Gerry Slager, Brett LaRose, Kevin LaRose, Shawn Oxford, and Alan Huizenga. Also present was Administrative Assistant Jen Stetson, Sue Kavanagh and Willow Wheelock from the Bristol Planning Commission, Peter Morrow Meyer, Porter Knight, Eve Thompson, Randall Thompson, Naomi Drummond, Randall Freeman, Neale Schuman, Zach with the Addison Independent, and Joann Etko with NEAT TV.

Kevin LaRose motioned to approve meeting minutes from the September 16, 2013 meeting, PJ Ryan seconded. Alan Huizenga abstained as he was not present for the September 16th meeting, (8-0). So voted.

Shawn Oxford introduced Sue Kavanagh and Willow Wheelock representatives of the Bristol Planning Commission to help determine if the remaining sites follow the Town Plan that is currently in place.

Sue Kavanagh asked about a formal meeting later with a narrowed list of sites to bring to the planning commission. The committee agreed that this was an informal meeting evaluating the current remaining sites in accordance to the Town Plan. Liz Herrmann explained the maps she had created for each of the top 10 sites regarding building, parking, and zoning. Shawn asked if there are things that are not shown here that they should be considering. Both Sue Kavanagh and Willow Wheelock expressed that they couldn't speak on behalf of the Planning Commission but initially, Sue Kavanagh's impression was that it keeps a major necessary facility within the downtown. Brett asked if it would be helpful for them to take this information to compare it to the Town Plan. The committee answered some clarifying questions Sue Kavanagh and Willow Wheelock had. Both Willow Wheelock and Sue Kavanagh thought it would be helpful to review this information with the Town Plan and then report back to the rest of the Planning Commission members allowing them to review the site locations. The Planning Commission members agreed to report to their commission at their meeting on October 15th. They would slate the official meeting with the Site Selection Committee November 19th if not the first Tuesday in November.

Liz Herrmann discussed some of the zoning information that she had collected from meeting with Bill Bryant and Eric Forand, Zoning Administrators for the Town. Parking was discussed and in the current zoning regulations it states that a community center requirement, 1 parking space per 200 square feet.

Brett updated the group about his conversation with the Bouvier's, whether the Bouvier's would sell just the one lot versus both, and he had not received an answer yet. Gerry spoke regarding the water line for the Bouvier property. In speaking with Lance Perlee the Water Operations Manager, Lance said that they would have put a new line in based on the pipe size and location, but it is workable. He suggested that the second lot be used for septic due to the building size and the septic that would be needed.

Liz Herrmann discussed her meeting with Zoning Administrators. Parking would be allowed within setbacks, but not in the green buffer zone. Liz Herrmann noted that 32 North Street and the Bilson property limit expansion due to 30% lot coverage. PJ discussed the downsizing the Fire Department has already experienced. Kevin LaRose spoke about the cost and the extra space, to try to value one more than another due to the cost. The committee discussed the limited options the Fire Department and Bilson site had.

Kevin LaRose updated the group regarding the GIS mapping. In speaking with Middlebury College it sounded like this GIS project would have to wait until January for the students to be in J-Term. The committee discussed the important questions they wanted to get out of the GIS project, could they limit what they wanted in hopes of getting the project completed sooner. The committee agreed that the ISO mapping would be most important, since a majority of the sites remaining on the list were in Town and they wouldn't significantly increase or decrease response time for firefighters.

Shawn Oxford and Liz Herrmann reported on their meeting with the Recreation Club last week. In speaking with the Trustees that were present they had discussed the possibility to keep the property swap on the table. The Recreation Club does value the West street property, and they would perhaps look at the property of existing fire station in a swap. A potential thought that came from the meeting was that the Town would swap the Fire Station and the Horse Rink for the Hub and the West Street Property frontage. They discussed easements the Rec Club currently had and how that could potentially affect usable space for the fire department.

Kevin asked a whether all of the meetings in October were needed based on where they were at. The committee agreed that they were at a standstill, but they would decide what meeting times were needed for the month of October.

The committee discussed the Nelson site, regarding what to do with that site, and how long it would remain on the list. Porter asked why the committee couldn't speak to the Nelson's directly. Brett LaRose discussed that the Selectboard felt more comfortable negotiating themselves.

Peter Meyer, asked when the committee goes to the Selectboard how many sites they were looking to give to the Selectboard. Brett felt they needed to go with a minimum of 3 sites, but there was no set number.

Porter asked why they couldn't go with just one site after a public meeting. She also inquired about the current site possibilities paired with Bilson's. Shawn Oxford discussed the process and talking through each of these sites, but leaving it there because they aren't done with discussion. The Fire Station with the Bilson's is ranked at 5, but the sites fall in line with where they meet the criteria. He also emphasized the importance of getting information from remaining sites to help make some more decisions.

Eve Thompson, asked about when they would want to move into a new fire house. Brett LaRose discussed that this process could potentially take up to two years before they moved into a new fire house.

Naomi Drumond asked about a legacy project based on the area they are considering. If they use the current station, how a town can maintain what it has and still grow. She emphasized legacy as being a location that you continue to build on not necessarily creating something new.

The committee agreed they would meet again October 28th.

Gerry would attend the Planning Commisison Meeting Octoiber 15th, and would send out an email.

Kevin motioned to adjourn at 8:30, PJ seconded, all were in favor, so voted (8-0).