

WT Police Station Study Committee

Meeting Minutes

7/20/10 Howe's House

Present: Norman Perry, John Christensen, Dan Rossi, Susan Wasserman, Beth Toomey; Ex. Off. Jeffrey Manter

Next meeting: 8/4/10, time TBA, Visit existing PD facilities, likely Chilmark, Edgartown, OB

General Organizational Business

1612 meeting called to order by Chair Wasserman. Minutes approved as written.

Mapping

Chief Rossi presents copies of maps of town-owned land produced by MV Commission (MVC). These distinguish town-owned with buildings, and without. It was offered that land that is under the jurisdiction of Parks and Recs is encumbered with regulations. Even a swap may require reference to the Legislature.

Size of building: requirements with a 20-year outlook.

First, recognition that, although this is a site committee, the careful estimate of the minimum size of the building will influence choice of site (among the other considerations listed in the last minutes).

Chief Rossi offered his take on the IACS checklist item by item. General agreement that many spaces may serve a dual purpose, but where current needs might allow a smaller space, future needs might require more. E.g. A shared desk might work for watch commanders today; in the future, we may need separate desks/offices for each sergeant and a future position of lieutenant. Span-of-control considerations based on the size of the department for the size of the community govern these decisions.

Perry reports that the Legislature has passed legislation proposed by Tim Madden, signed by the Governor, taking the burden of holding cells off the Towns. We have therefore only to deal with short term holding and interview needs in this facility.

Best Practices; space needs

Emergency Management and the Animal Control Officer may have to share this space, with their attendant ancillary space needs.

Large-evidence retention (e.g. an automobile), and the facility for the security of delivery of an arrestee to the station that minimizes flight risk, although they may seem expensive at first blush, are economical in the mission of a small-town police force.

Redundancy in restrooms can be a hard sell, but separate facilities for employees and the public has an importance that outweighs the expense. Failing to secure those in custody on a bathroom break is fodder for headlines in the tabloid press.

Prospective sites

Recognizing our role solely as an advisory committee, no site at this time is recognized as the final recommendation. Any discussion that seems to favor one site over another is merely part of the give-and-take of a thoughtful committee. Any discussion that seems to include one site and exclude another represents only a method of critical thinking.

That said, the Police Department rank and file certainly favored using the property adjacent to Lambert's Cove beach for the siting of the station, especially in the summer.

The site originally purchased for the new Fire Station was considered favorably, and the Town-owned land near Fire Station 1 was sufficient in size and other parameters for the station size envisioned.

Action items for next meeting

Schedule visits to existing facilities in other Island towns with an eye to space needs.

Particular notice will be taken of what has deemed to work, and what would be done differently.

Plan visits to existing facilities off Island with the same mission, especially Paris.

Future actions

Review information derived from site visits.

Meeting adjourned at 5:24

Respectfully submitted
John Christensen