

20071016 WT Town Hall Renovation Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting at Town Hall was convened at 1630 by Bea Phear.

PRESENT: Bea Phear, Kent Healy, Jim Osmundsen, Virginia Jones, Kate Warner arrived at 1645 and left at 1730; Kathy Logue, Staff Liaison

ABSENT: Chuck Hodgkinson

ALSO PRESENT for all or part of the meeting: Jen Rand, Staff Liaison, Glenn Hearn, Joe Eldredge

The minutes taken by Liz Catipovic of K & K were accepted as the official minutes of 9 October, 2007 with minor revision and a note that the minutes of 2 October, 2007 were MSV.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no meeting on the 23rd in order to accommodate K & K. The committee was polled as to whom could meet the 24th and 25th. Bea will check tomorrow with Chuck as to his availability and confirm the date to the members.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT: Bea presented a draft of a warrant article for the Special Town Meeting, which MAY be held in November. The purpose of the article is to ask for \$12,000 to cover the costs of bid document and bid specifications packets, and for costs associated with preparing materials to present at 2 public meetings. It was MSV to ask Jen to place the article on the warrant. Jen reminded us that if anything will cost in excess of \$5,000 (but less than \$25 K) three quotes must be obtained before placing the work.

SITE PLAN: Two weeks ago Kent presented us with a plan of the site and a list of considerations which must be taken into account before preparation of a Site Plan: Some of the items are: location of the temporary trailers to house Town Hall staff during renovations, and how the various services can be hooked up, location and amount of parking, location of play ground, drainage, run off, etc. What trees can be saved and which need to go. We also need to delineate the construction zone – the land area which will be available to the contractors during renovations.

Bea assigned Kathy, Kent and Jamie to work on a preliminary plan for the site. Ginny is to ask the Planning Board for a determination on the number of parking spaces needed; Kathy will ask the Park and Rec Dept. about the play ground and the lay out, also whether the basket ball court should be retained.

PRELIMINARY SCHEMATIC PLAN FOR THE BUILDING # 2

K & K e-mailed over a small set of 3 floor plans today. Bea asked for comments: in general the committee was not happy with the proposed plans except that the square footage has been reduced and the previously configured “stand alone” stair case on the N side has been eliminated. Bea asked for the Committee’s comments:

KATE: She likes the reduced square footage, and somewhat liked the idea of a separate meeting room. However she also noted that the separate meeting room is an inefficient use of space because it is remote from offices and the rest of the building. She does not like the elevator being the only item in the “link” and noted that because of the configuration that a single story addition is linked to the main building and then there is a shaft climbing up the W wall of a three story building for the elevator. She is concerned that the stair locations are problematic and suggested wrapping one stair case around an elevator. She did not like the location of the SW stairs and commented that about 50% of the main building on each floor is now stair cases and bathrooms, etc. which leaves inadequate space for the staff and offices. She feels that the various departments are “squished.”

JIM: Agreed with a lot of Kate’s points and would like to keep the bathrooms and elevator out of the main building Kathy liked the big storage vault in basement and the working vault on the ground floor. Is concerned that the location of the SW stair case cuts off much of what we all like about the current Town Hall – we want to use and enjoy the breeze and the sunlight. She would put one stair on NW or NE corner and move other stair. Offices are too small on second and 3rd floor. Not enough filing space on 2nd floor. Wants to insure that there is a proper allocation of the most vs the least used spaces, assuring good coverage (all day, all week) on the ground floor which might mean moving the meeting room upstairs and some of the staff (probably either building/health or the financial folks) down to the ground floor. Shared office for very part time staff could have work stations on the second or third floor.

BEA: Felt that the first plan, somewhat reduced, was a much better plan with a better allocation of size of work spaces, etc. She would lower the building and get rid of the ramp and the steps.

KENT: Is concerned that the stairways take up to 25% of the space on each floor. We don’t need a meeting room in a separate building. What is the plan for the basement? If we have a basement we can put dead storage in there. We need a meeting room for 20 people at most.

GINNY: Square off the foot print of the addition and “link” to the main building so that there are not jogs in the side lines. This eliminates a lot of outside surface area. We can enclose the space with only one wall and gain a lot of space which could be used for the second stair, for janitor rooms and for baths. It is not so much the idea of too much square footage that is troublesome but how the building is configured. Concerned about basement. Feels that a one story addition and link to a 3 story building looks weird. Feels that the work spaces (particularly for ZBA, CON COM and PLANNING BOARD are inadequate and do not have sufficient filing space. The staff needs one or two areas where rectangular or square (rather than round) tables can be accommodated as people need to lay out work for all sorts of reasons. Would put the SW stair around the elevator or janitor room in link. Specifically requested that janitor closet not be included in any bathroom (or at least not the ladies room). Is concerned about the size and inefficient use of space in the meeting room.

The committee as a whole agreed that the meeting room could actually move to the main building, perhaps to the second or third floor. It could be used at night (which is when

that large space normally gets used) and the rest of the building could be closed off. The meeting room does not need to accommodate 25 or 30 people. It could have seats for 15 guests and a table which accommodates 7 (largest board) plus the drop down screen, etc. Perhaps some of the part time offices (Personnel, Park & Rec, Affordable Housing, CPC) could have their work station/s on the second or third floor.

If the meeting room moves up, the Committee also discussed the possibility of moving the Building Department and Board of Health downstairs as they have the most foot traffic aside from the Town Clerk and possibly the Exec Sec. Or, Some of the financial group (Treasurer and Accountant? Maybe even the Tax Collector) could be placed there instead. The Planning Board, ZBA and CON COM could be in one section on second floor and the Assessors Department and Tax Collector could either be on third floor or in a section on the second floor.

Another concern is that the entry doors should be clearly visible from the Town Clerk's desk and the Exec Sec's desk (and any future Receptionist). With the two bathrooms inside the main building it would be difficult to secure that part of the building if both the Town Clerk and the Exec Sec were out.

The SW stair case was universally disliked – as it blocks light, breeze and makes the building seem claustrophobic.

Bea will discuss the plans and the committee's reactions, with K & K on Wednesday the 17th.

CPA FUNDING: Bea described the visit that she, Kathy and Jim made to the recent CPC meeting to discuss the application. Chuck is concerned about raising the amount previously requested, and the committee shared that concern. Kathy commented that we cannot obligate state funds to pay off future costs but may use state funds if available. She feels that the current CPA proposal allows flexibility in the future.

Should we ask for more than \$500,000? If we decide on a figure we cannot raise it in the future. The committee members present agreed (and MSV) to stick with the current proposal which is to ask for a \$500,000 commitment of which perhaps \$100,000 might be used each year, or a lesser amount if possible, to offset the costs.

Meeting adjourned at 1800.

Respectfully submitted

Virginia C. Jones

Approved November 6, 2007