

Minutes
West Tisbury Space Needs Committee
January 8, 2007

Present: Chuck Hodgkinson, Sue Hruby, Bea Phear, Kathy Logue, Bob Schwartz. Les Cutler, Kent Healy, Hermine Hull, and guests Bob Holt, Bruce Keep, Cheryl Lowe, Peggy Stone, Anna Edey

Chuck opened the meeting at 8:00 AM at the Howes House.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of December 18, 2006 and December 21, 2006 were approved as distributed and amended.

Park & Rec. Committee

Bruce Keep gave a brief history of the Old Courthouse Road Building. Constructed in 1883 it has served as a community center, town hall, fire station and now Parks and Rec usage. They want to rehab the lower level and use it for community programs such as yoga, poetry, slides, and summer camp. They have applied for \$75,000 of CPA funds and have been told that the project “meets the criteria” under the historic preservation category and that the CPA committee has some questions that Park & Rec are working on. They ask for the Space Needs Committee’s support for that CPA proposal.

Questions from the Space committee arose around the documentation of need for program expansion; need for a community center (as opposed to using other available sites such as the school); the options under building code for parking and of rehabbing only one level and leaving the upstairs unrepaired; and the water and sewer capacity and set-backs to meet the state code requirements for public use, given the size of the lot at less than an acre and the close residential neighborhood. Kent expressed that he thought it could not be done under state requirements.

Mr. Keep said he had talked with John Powers and was under the impression the site was within health guidelines for this use. He said they held an open house three years ago to which about 10-15 people came and were enthusiastic. Peggy Stone said she receives lots of calls each spring to learn about summer programs. They reported trouble with using the school because of cost issues and scheduling conflicts.

Members of the Space Committee volunteered to help with those issues, and thought that paying for school use would cost significantly less than paying for a center. They also volunteered to help with a business plan. The Space Committee members expressed that it was premature to support the Park & Rec goal, since the needs data and alternate options had not been studied. Also it was expressed that Historic CPA funds could be used for town hall renovations, that children may need scholarship or transportation assistance to a variety of existing programs rather than create town-run programs, and that the site may be more suitable for affordable housing. It was agreed that the code issues needed further clarification, since there were conflicting interpretations.

There was clarification that when the Space Committee report mentioned that use of school space may be available in 10 years, it was for permanent alternate use, should school enrollment continue to decline over the next five or ten years, not summer or after school overlapping use of classroom and other school space, which is available now.

Anna Edey

Ms. Edey presented the committee with a proposed plan for the town hall that included renovation of the first floor, abandonment of the upper two floors to storage, and the addition of a wing to the west - total area about 4,100 square feet. It made use of creative solar heating and cooling. The committee was concerned that there were not enough square feet to meet the identified needs, that failure to repair the upper levels would not meet the goal of the bonding commitment, and that this was not the forum to discuss architectural plans. The committee thought that the ideas she presented could be brought up to a building committee at a later date.

The committee mentioned that a new, one-story town hall option is already having a comparative cost estimate prepared. The differences between Ms. Edey's suggestion and that one are the partial renovation and use of the current town hall, the amount of new construction, and the heating and ventilation system. The committee had previously rejected a partial restoration of town hall as an option for the Police Department because a significant investment to "shore up" the total structure might be cost prohibitive considering only the first floor would be used. The committee said it would know more after it receives and studies the comparative cost estimates of the various town hall options. They asked Ms. Edey if the heating concept is flexible enough to stand alone--outside of her architectural solution. They thanked Ms. Edey and took her idea under advisement.

Next Meetings

It was decided to change the public meeting from January 24 to February 7, to allow more time to analyze the questionnaire responses and the estimator report and to plan for the meeting.

January 15 is a holiday – no meeting

January 22, 2007, 8:00 am with Peter Timothy, estimator

January 29, 2007 8:00 am

February 5, 2007, 8:00 am

February 7, 2007, 7:00 pm, Howes House, pending availability

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Beatrice Phear

Approved: January 22, 2007