

Facilities Master Plan Committee
December 8, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.
Town Offices – Meal Site

Members Present: Kim, Boas, Mitch Cichy, Carol Conz, Nick Dines, Fred Goodhue, Charlene Nardi, Eric Weber

Members Absent: Jim Ayres, Robert Barker

Others: Dillon Sussman (facilitator, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)), Bill Sayre (Board of Selectmen, Chair of the Public Safety Complex Committee, Caitlin Marquis (Healthy Hampshire, Collaborative for Educational Services (CES)), and Dave Chase (Commons Co-working, resident).

Reviewed and voted (CN, FG) approved minutes of November 20, 2016

Comments about the Smart Growth America Workshop held on November 29 and 30, 2016: Broadened cross section of public input, affirmed by questions and comments what has been discussed in our meetings, raised similar points, generated a broader conversation, that any decision will have a domino effect, and that we are a community of place. Noted that Williamsburg has internet access unlike the hilltowns and therefore we have the ability to provide opportunities for economic development. Comment that the presenters stated we need to be careful of thinking that what was important to the baby boomer generation is what is important to the millennials, because it isn't. Need to understand what that generation is looking for. Jobs will follow the millennials. A definition of sense of place – what is unique about Williamsburg and how can we enhance it? Ideas / suggestions noted were focusing on infill, bringing back the idea of adopting the Community Preservation Act, a need for a full time planner. Provincetown raised funds to hire a planner. Strategies to achieve goals: CPA, zoning changes.

Next phase: Identify what to do and take action to achieve it. Have more formal planner process – holistic, pull together. Discussed what is a master plan – its purpose to guide the town in decisions – cost of a full master plan can be \$100,000 or more.

Survey: Key Findings:

1. Many don't know about the public safety
2. People don't seem to feel strongly about one village over another
3. Want more services in village centers
4. Less interest from options offered in paying for tax increase for a public safety complex
5. Fire Dept. and schools are top priority for spending on services or physical infrastructure, cemeteries are least priority.
6. 62% would definitely or probability support selling selected town owned properties to raise funds / reduce costs. Reviewed the five scenarios outlined by Dillon with cost estimates, projected phasing and estimated tax rate impact.
7. 51% feel Williamsburg is a single community

8. 83% don't feel it matters if most of the town's municipal departments are located in only one of the village centers
9. 54% feel walkability is good or excellent
10. 50% of respondents are 60 or older, 24% are in their fifties
11. 77% don't take advantage of the senior center services

Brainstormed reasons for low use of Senior Center: time – not enough evening events, branding – many don't describe themselves as older – would name change help, Boomers want a more active environment and current Senior Center is around the old model of programming, want a community center with all ages, want fitness center, community center, others disagreed that some seniors don't want to be around the activity of children, need services so you graduate through offerings. Challenges to this: timing, scheduling, spaces for programming, facilities aren't necessarily the issue, develop a program that speaks to more seniors. Need to rethink the model of the senior center, first need to develop programming that speak to the population then determine what the facility needs are, don't necessarily need one central facility – some people don't want to come to a place named a senior center - don't need to build a building – spaces are available such as Brassworks, library, grange – could town utilize those spaces for programming more of interest to baby boomers?

Comments about the Public Safety Complex: residents need to learn more – while there was a strong effort to reach out, not a lot of public attended or seemed interested, noted that fire and police department protection important, For location – doesn't care where but response time is important, having the public safety complex within walking distance is not a need. Does it need to be in village center? What are the trade-offs in siting it – unclear.

Survey Responders: Older with a somewhat high income level, are the people that always tend to be involved in town business.

What are the needs / programming of the Safety Complex? Share certain equipment – part-time always moving, on call means coming from different places and the locations of where firefighters live and come from will change over time so that response time isn't valid. Can you separate the trucks from administrative offices? Equipment, EMD, training, Administrative activities – can you separate these and what are the pros and cons of together or separate? What about two stories versus one level (requirement of ADA compliant and elevator?). Need to relook at options of programming / design. Other alternate locations that were looked at – Is the highway garage lot a viable option – not convinced that it was thoroughly looked at – what about adding on for the vehicles. The 500 year flood plain area is an issue for other sites but could we raise the location to mitigate that? The statement we would lose federal grants/ funding – what does that equate to in funds? What about locations not owned by the town been looked at? Dillon offered that the GIS map developed showing all sites along the Route 9 corridor could be looked at.

If the public safety complex is built at a cost of 2.5 million, you more than likely are going to keep the James building – that comes with a cost of minimum of 1.5 million

Provisional Report: Members reviewed and discussed Dillon's draft and Nick Dines' draft. Overall it was felt that the report was on target. Agreed to combine some of Nick's points and language into the Provisional report: Looking at keeping James building or both buildings, what would be reuse? The Town submitted a Mass Downtowns Initiative grant (MDI) that would do a market analysis for who would want to partner with the town – the Committee would work that consultant. Need to answer question of what is wanted in community use building. Reviewed the decision tree, fill in costs and changes required in zoning to achieve opportunities, and traffic study.

Main Points:

- State a framework for making decisions about Town Facilities
 - Effective Town Government
 - Wise Investments
 - Sense of Place
 - Community Building
 - Thoughtful Design
- Multi-factor planning
- Summary of preliminary public input and committee discussion about town facility improvements
 - Scenarios – decision trees
- Facilities Scenarios to Explore Further
- Summary of Recommendations
- Appendix

Dillon will pull in comments from this meeting and some of language of Nick's draft into the final report and share prior to the next meeting.

Noted that there is a META grant for \$5,000 toward energy changes for a facility.

Next meeting is December 22nd at 5:00 p.m. Adjourned at 7:04 p.m.