

Facilities Master Plan Committee  
November 10, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.  
Town Offices – Meal Site

Members Present: Jim Ayres, Robert Barker, , Carol Conz, Nick Dines, Fred Goodhue, Charlene Nardi, Eric Weber

Members Absent: Kim Boas, Mitch Cichy

Others: Dillon Sussman (facilitator, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)), Bill Sayre (Board of Selectmen), Caitlin Marquis (Healthy Hampshire, Collaborative for Educational Services (CES)), Marie Westburg (Senior Center Director) and Dave Chase (Commons Co-working, resident).

Moved (FG, CC) to approve October 13, 2016 minutes. Unanimously approved

Moved (FG, JA) to approve October 20, 2016 minutes. Unanimously approved.

Jim Ayres went through the survey that asked all members to prioritize five considerations based on first importance and then on achievability. It was noted that many felt all five were important, relative achievability is important, that it was difficult to choose one over the other, that a sense of place fell in achievability because of balancing effective government with wise investment. Stated that we needed to use a set of variables to make decisions, concern that cost and resources available make us in a zero sum format, acknowledged that we have to make trade-offs. This is criteria we need to help guide decisions, need to look at the whole plan and when more money is spent, ideally we should achieve more of these considerations.

Public Comment:

- Two properties are possibly available for sale and suggestion was to consider as options for public safety: Willo Carey property – across from Pharmacy on River Rd and property behind Black Smith property (between Black Smith and Ovitt Property) with frontage on Rte. 9.
- Urgency to answer the questions comes from three things:
  - Public Safety Complex – need to address department needs for better facilities
  - Cost of maintaining James without a long-term plan
  - Questions been asked for over last several years.If more time was given, the best solution could be found.

Committee members acknowledged that more time was needed to come to the best solution and a consensus. Acknowledged that a lot of the time pressure comes from the Public Safety Complex need. Concerns outlined about current Public Safety Complex design / presentation were:

- Needs to be scaled down – town can't spend that kind of money;
- As presented now, (design)– doesn't fit the sense of place;

- Too big, too expensive; upfront costs ties hands of town's ability to address other needs for too long;
- Is this really the only site? If it is then design could be better for site;
- Feel like current design is shooting for the moon (too big, too much, more than needed), will cost too much and town has other needs, need to spread the town resources.
- Location doesn't meet any of the criteria discussed.

Other sites were looked at but most had flood zone issues. MEMA / FEMA strongly discourages building in a flood plain – comments are that we wouldn't be eligible for FEMA grants if we went against recommendation – in addition building in the flood plain may change focus of personnel as they end up to busy saving their own building and equipment. Noted that flood plain lines were changing because of more flooding events more often.

. Discussed a report to the Board of Selectmen which could take several forms:

- Asking for more time;
- Provide an interim report; answering questions as of now, but feel more consideration is needed;
- Suggest that the BOS ask the Public Safety Complex Committee to look at other sites as there is concern with James site;

These options would put a pause on the Committees work to give BOS and Public Safety Complex Committee to respond, FMPC members felt to stand behind their recommendations, that time was needed to come to the best decisions – feel that all the questions had been looked at thoroughly. Discussed having Bob, Nick, Fred and Charlene draft a report.

- Free standing site at James – opportunity costs
  - Put at the James site – you lose opportunity for green space;
  - James building is less valuable to developer for housing unless whole site is available to build more housing units than just in the James building;
  - Putting another building on James site requires that James building be kept

Nick Dines presented four proposals for the James site – 1.) DRA revised study #3 same PSC program; 2.) DRA revised study #2 (Police Dept. in James building), 3.) James building with green space only – Public Safety located elsewhere, 4.) Old Town Hall moved to James site to be used by Town in some way with parking. Thought should be “instead of being constrained by existing conditions, change the existing conditions. Nick's scenarios opening up possibilities, doesn't lock us into anything, cost is 3 to 6 million.

General comments / discussions:

- Can't move the Angel Park – like moving a cemetery – sacred ground
- Town needs to be committed to whatever it decides – perpetual care
- Why not split up Police Department, Fire Department, and Emergency Management Director Services? Why and what requires them to be together – noted one building generally costs less than maintaining more, sharing of purpose, work together, concern

that towns people generally support FD needs, but may view police differently and a vote for that department may be more difficult.

- Why not fix up existing buildings – condition of buildings and design inadequate for function, PD/FD building in Haydenville on wrong side of Mill River

Reminder that the Smart Growth America workshop will be November 29 & 30<sup>th</sup> – details will be sent out.

Adjourned at 7:01 p.m.