

## OPM Steering Committee

With Select Board, Finance Committee, & Capital Planning Committee

December 17, 2020 at 6 p.m. via Zoom

OPM Steering Committee Present: Jim Ayres, Dan Bonham, Brenda Lessard, Jean O'Neil, Paul Wetzel, Denise Wickland

Absent: W. Kim Boas, Jason Connell

Finance Committee and Capital Planning Committee: Gil Loud, Charles Dudek, Lisa Sheehy, Julia Peters, Dick Kisloski, Bob Cayo

Others: Kevin Chrobak (architect – Juster Pope Frazier), Rob Todisco (P3), William Sayre (Select Board), David Mathers (Selectboard), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator)

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

Jim Ayres welcomed the Finance Committee and Capital Planning Committee members and gave an overview of the work done over the last two years by the OPM Steering Committee and what the next steps are to bring the project to a Special Town Meeting. Kevin Chrobak then detailed the three scenarios looked at this past spring and summer sharing the schematic designs and highlighting the costs, benefits and challenges of each.

It was noted that based on the findings from the work that the Committee did, the plan is to recommend that the town move forward with option 3, removing the Helen E. James building and building a new safety complex on that area of the property. It is the least costly of the three options, it allows the town's investment to be more in the building then the site, puts the new building in an area on the property with the highest elevation which reduces concerns related to the high-water table and the risk of flooding, reduces the investment and challenges with wetland and storm water management, and offers the most opportunity for community open space / town commons space.

The Committee understands that this is a difficult decision because the town would be removing a 106-year-old building, but the members feel as difficult as it is, it is the right decision financially and it provides the best design and layout for emergency services and opportunities for community uses of the site. It was agreed that there needs to be a public park which in some way honors Helen E. James and / or memorializes the building. It was noted that the removal of bricks during demolishing may be costly so that needs to be kept in mind. The design and cost of a park will be a separate project which can bring in more of the community for design feedback. The town would pursue grants and coordinate a fundraiser.

The Committee has engaged the services of David Eisenthal, Unibank Fiscal Advisor, to analyze the tax impact on bonding (borrowing for) the project. These details will be shared at the next meeting. The town will need to decide when to borrow, before the project is complete or

afterwards. There are benefits and drawbacks to both. The group discussed the need to move the article allowing the options of grants. The Green Communities, MVP and FEMA grants were mentioned. Questions were asked about options for solar and battery storage which could be funded with grants outside the building project. The roof will be designed to support solar.

Questions / Feedback from those in attendance:

- Support was expressed for option 3 as it is the least expensive and offers opportunities to the community
- Asked about construction of building (2x6 wooden trusses) and whether metal building was considered. It was briefly but it was determined that it didn't fit the town center and there are concerns that those buildings don't last as long (sealant issues). The town is looking for a 20 plus year building that fits in this prominent location at the most reasonable investment cost.
- Asked what is known about grants. There aren't many grants out there for the building but solar and battery storage may be options under green communities, the sprinkler system and gear may be funded under FEMA, and it is rumored that the Biden administration may institute infrastructure grants that may apply. We want to make sure that any vote includes the option of applying grants.
- Value Engineering if necessary, will be part of the next phase. It was noted that the Chiefs have worked with the architect to reduce the building down to 7,600 square feet, a significant reduction in the original size of the building. This was done to reduce the cost but still provide a building that accommodates the current and expected functions / operations of the future.

Moved (BL, PW) to unanimously approve the 12/03/2020 minutes with two corrections.

The Committee discussed the creation of outreach materials.

- The cost spreadsheets should be available if needed but not included as a handout.
- Use of the words – stabilization, mothball and reuse need to be clarified and if the same we should be consistent.
- Attach costs below graphics – in presentation, first show graphic without then later slide should have cost and possibly the pros and cons listed
- Need to talk more about how the project size was scaled back to 7,600 square feet from the original 10,000 / 12,000 sf.
- Impact on taxes needs to be included
- Rob Todisco, P3 provided a draft article for the newsletter. Paul, Jean, Brenda and Charlene will work on it between now and the next meeting. Deadline for newsletter is January 28, 2020.
- Outreach materials need to demonstrate due diligence on James – what do we know about: seismic, soil, structural analysis, hazards, framing – demolition costs
- Outreach materials need to include graphics and have succinct text.

**Discussion with Community Members:**

Dan Bonham reported on a meeting that he, Jim, Kevin and Charlene had with Jim Moran to update him on the progress of the Committee and what was learned about the Helen E. James structure and costs to rehabilitate it.

Jim Ayres shared an update on a meeting he, Rob, Kevin and Charlene had with Nick Dines to discuss how the Public Safety project recommendation of Option 3 will blend with the planned Mill River Greenway. Nick noted that option 3 offered the most opportunities for community space which is seen as valuable in the center. It will be recommended to the Select Board that the planning and design of a memorial park will be treated as a separate project and that in the wider community be involved in addition to the OPM Steering Committee members and Nick.

Need to plan more individual and group meetings in January.

Next meeting is Thursday, January 7, 2020 at 6 p.m.

Adjourned at 7:39 p.m.