

OPM Steering Committee

Board of Selectmen

Joint meeting

July 30, 2020 at 6 p.m. via Zoom

OPM Steering Committee Present: Jim Ayres, Kim Boas, Jason Connell, Jean O'Neil, Paul Wetzel, Denise Wickland

Absent: Dan Bonham, Mitch Cichy, Brenda Lessard

Select Board Members Present: William Sayre, Denise Banister, David Mathers

Others: Kevin Chrobak (architect – Juster Pope Frazier), Rob Todisco (P3), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator)

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. It was noted that the architect contract was signed with Juster Pope Frazier for \$90,500 for the schematic design phase. The hazard mitigation portion of the contract will be handled by the town under a separate contract negotiated with ATC.

Kevin Chrobak, Juster Pope Frazier architect, stated that his folks along with RW Hall Consulting Engineers would be assessing the Helen E. James structure. They are approaching this with an open mind and blank slate. The assessment includes making test holes to see how the framing connects to the brick, maybe a half dozen 2x2 to 2x4 holes in closets. They will be looking at the structure, architecture, and HVAC to determine if reuse is feasible and affordable. For a public safety complex, seismic design is very important. If the reuse of the building is not for public safety, the level of seismic resistance required is less. It was also asked if Public Safety spaces such as storage and training could be in James, which wouldn't trigger the higher seismic requirements. It was again noted that once you put anything in the building, whether it be the public safety complex program or another, you are renovating the entire building, which adds to the cost of the project.

The initial walk-through is on Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1 p.m.

It was reiterated by the members that the structural analysis of the Helen E. James School is very important and it needs to be done thoroughly. This information will determine how to move forward. We need to answer for the community: What are the issues of the Helen E. James building? Is it feasible? And most importantly, is it financially prudent to reuse the building for a public safety complex? The Committee wants to be able to share thorough and detailed data with the community on the structure of the building and the cost of using it. The data should speak for itself. It is expected that Juster Pope Frazier will have some costs at the end of August and initial findings of data from the HEJ in September.

All the data collected will feed into the designs and fit for the various options – stand alone, or a hybrid with reuse of the James building. The siting of the building needs to take into consideration open space, a possible park, and the Greenway, and that is why data for the James building is important as well. It drives whether the building is kept or not and siting is affected by that. Focus should be to best use the

site including how it impacts sustainability options. The siting should take advantage of sustainability options (solar). Berkshire Design will be out in August to look at the riparian zone – wetlands – as they relate to siting the building.

Juster Pope Frazier will do test fits for a new building in parallel with the structural needs assessment. It was briefly discussed whether to do a test fit of the town office governmental functions and the senior center program in the Helen E. James building as it was sometimes mentioned at past meetings. Kevin Chrobak offered to do this within the existing scope and cost of the contract. This issue was not decided.

Kevin Chrobak will sit with Chief Connell and Chief Wickland to review the program. Programming is based on what is needed, but relies on what the town is willing to pay for. He noted that from reviewing the DRA drawings from the previous Committee's work several years ago, the programming was for a much larger community. The focus will be to consolidate and share space. The size of the building that was last discussed by the OPM Steering Committee was reduced to between 8,500 and 9,500 square feet. It was briefly mentioned that a 72 x 112-foot wood frame building would cost just over 3 million – carpentry is less than other forms of building construction. There are a lot of ways to keep the costs low and construct a beautiful building. In addition, the town may be in a position to take advantage of competitive pricing and interest rates. The Committee will be able to review a test fit for new construction at the next meeting.

Ideally the Committee and Kevin Chrobak should meet every two weeks, so it was decided that a two-week schedule needed to be developed. It was suggested that the next meeting be August 13<sup>th</sup> (later changed to August 20<sup>th</sup>).

The OPM Steering Committee voted (JO, WKB) to unanimously approve the minutes from June 11, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.