

OPM Steering Committee

September 3, 2020 at 6 p.m. via Zoom

OPM Steering Committee Present: Jim Ayres, Jason Connell, Brenda Lessard, Jean O'Neil, Dan Bonham, Paul Wetzel, Kim Boas.

Absent: Mitch Cichy, Denise Wickland

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m.

Rob Todisco, P3, noted that ATC has begun the Hazmat assessment. A full report with costs will be available for the next meeting. Test pit and test boring locations have been mapped out and will be done on the James building site on September 8 and September 14 respectively (test borings were later rescheduled). The Conservation Commission was notified as a courtesy. The Conservation Commission does not have jurisdiction over that work; however, the architect wanted them to be in the loop.

Kevin Chrobak, JPF, did some prior use research and has learned that at least since 1856 the site has not been developed. The site has been open and hasn't been used for anything other than a playground and possible garden.

The architect shared an updated schematic design of the public safety complex with modifications based on the comments made at the 8/20/20 meeting. Changes include – training room increased by 2 feet space which was taken from the Fire Chief's office, swapped location of restroom and storage room giving access to police, created shared vestibule which is larger versus the departments having two separate entrances, rotated the sally port 90 degrees to maintain main building and to get mechanicals on the ground floor, asymmetrical dormers, still north facing bays, parking for 14 fire fighters with direct access to the bay area. This model reduces the gables, making them asymmetrical, encompasses the three bays, reduces the size of the two windows next to the bays – although more work can still be done to reduce those. Wording over the bays and adding the town name breaks up the front, and the cupola was reduced in size. It is a 33 to 36 feet top ridge. 200 photovoltaic units on the south side of the building could bring it to net zero. This new design keeps everything out of the 100 Riparian zone. DEP allows building between the 100 to 200 riparian zone area. Discussed that there will be a 3-D model, suggested using white clapboard and 30-year shingle for the roof noting that metal is very expensive. This new design addresses the scale (gables, windows) and more successfully integrates the entry.

Current schematic design is 7,940 square feet and is estimated to be \$3,295,000 construction costs. Does not include soft costs such as architecture, engineering, & OPM fees, and furniture, fixtures and equipment.

If Police were put in the James building, the foot print of the new building would be 6,280 square feet and a construction cost of \$2,610,000. However, costs of the required necessary seismic upgrades which would be needed if the police were in the Helen E. James would most likely exceed the savings of reducing the new building.

Same is true if you put both Fire Department and Police Department in the James building and just build an apparatus bay at an estimated 4,750 square feet. The construction cost of the new building is estimated at \$1,972,000. It isn't cost effective to put any part of the public safety complex in the James building if it triggers the significant seismic upgrades which that use requires.

Cost is estimated based on \$415 square foot. Soft costs would add about 20% to the cost of the building.

Questions:

- Energy: A building that is energy efficient is important to the community. Concerns were expressed about heat loss out of large glass windows. There is more loss through glazed windows versus solid walls; however, the building areas with lots of glass will be generally kept at a low temperature versus the office spaces. More energy studies will be done.
- Bay Ceiling heights – will allow for hanging of equipment
- Shingles are more cost effective, but is metal more conducive for solar panels? Not necessarily more advantageous. Suggest that solar be done right away if going to be done. Concerns about snow sliding on a metal roof – would require snow guards.
- Future expansion – yes there is room for a 4th bay and bunk rooms if either was desired in the future. Also, could add a staircase to the mezzanine area – could be an add alternate.
- Bay doors are 14x14 - Northampton had issues with their glass bay doors
- Cupola was reduced in size – added to match other buildings in town – concern about leaks
- Windows in training room – windows can be made smaller around the building
- Entrance is mostly used by visitors to the police department. Should the entrance be highlighted by a canopy? More design details can be added, but we need to be careful because of cost
- Design is spare
- East side show four (4) exhaust fans – bays should be well ventilated
- Lockers were taken out in favor of property / storage – gear lockers for Fire Department are in the bays

Next steps:

Over the next 3 to 4 weeks site work will be completed. We can expect by mid to late October all schematic design tasks will be completed – 3 scenarios with all financial data including additional data on the Helen E. James building.

- Over the next weeks the Fire and Police Department personnel will work with the architect to handle the details of the design
- Committee will review the final designs from an overview perspective
- Discussed how to hold listening sessions with residents following the completion of the schematic design phase. Zoom meetings don't hold much appeal. Discussed if an outdoor event is possible before the snow.
- A special town meeting in January to vote construction costs would be ideal for the schedule but will actually depend on whether the Committee can fully inform and engage the community to

get support for the project. We will have to be flexible in the schedule as the uncertainty with COVID-19 will affect it.

- It was noted that it will take 3 to 4 months following the construction funding vote to finalize the design and put the project out to bid. Historically going out to bid in the summer still allows foundation work to be done in the fall. Ideally, the Committee would like to be starting construction in early fall 2021.
- It was requested that the historical society and its collection be included in the test fit of the James building. The Committee felt this was part of the same charge to look at potential uses of the James building.

Next meeting is September 17th at 6 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at (J.O., B.L) 7:20 p.m.