Meeting Minutes
October 20, 2021
via Zoom

Members present – Amy Bisbee; Dan Bonham; Jason Connell, Fire Chief; Mary Dudek; Dave Mathers; Jean O’Neil; William Sayre; Daryl Springman, Deputy Fire Chief; Denise Wickland, Chief of Police.

Members absent – Robert Reinke, Police Officer.

Associated participants present – Kevin Chrobak, Juster Pope Frazier Architects; Robert Todisco, P3: Jeff Squire, Berkshire Design Group, Denise Banister, Helen E. James Memorial Committee, Dick Gukowski, Energy Committee, Alex Kassell, Captain of Williamsburg Fire Department.

Members of the public present – Jennifer Black, Phoebe Shaw.

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

Review of Minutes:

Minutes from October 6 were approved with changes.

Update on Notice of Intent (NOI) for the Site Plan:

Berkshire Design Group has submitted the NOI for review by the DEP and the Conservation Commission. In review, most of the development is on the outer edges of wetland areas. The primary concern is where storm water flows. Sheet flow off of the parking lot is into a rain garden to the south, which also adds some improvement over current conditions. Sheet flow off the equipment driveway is into a rain garden to the northeast. The planting list has been sent to the Greenway Committee for review. Rugged natives requiring minimal maintenance were the primary choices, but some smaller, non-native ornamental trees were picked for parking lot islands for their tolerance of extreme heat from the pavement. Preference was expressed for native
species. Chief Connell shared that one firefighter is highly allergic to flower pollen, especially lilac. Berkshire Design will review the plantings.

Mr. Sayre requested that the NOI be posted on the PSCBC website.

The arborist’s report urged removal of invasive Norway maples from the site. The large Norway Maple to the east has significant structural issues and will have to be removed within a few years. Some issues arose around this finding.

- Removing the tree will add to the project cost, yet there is no money in the budget for that.
- Removing the tree may affect the water table.
- If the tree is removed, the rain garden could be moved further south to a lower elevation and closer to the building, improving drainage and reducing the site’s footprint.
- Another tree should be planted that will eventually reach a large size.

Mr. Mathers will get an estimate for taking the tree down. Discussion was continued to the next meeting.

Update on the elevation studies:

Mr. Chrobak shared some new elevation studies with hybrid schemes for the bay doors.

- 3 rows of glazing with red doors, $13k plus painting per door
- 3 rows of glazing with white doors, $13k per door
- 5 rows of glazing with white doors, $21k per door

Three rows of glazing line up with the administrative wing windows. This feature, plus the lower price were valued. A motion was made and approved unanimously to approve the 3 rows of glazing with white doors. It was reiterated that less glazing would have a higher r-value but most heat loss is from the door edges. The three rows provide a 63 inch height of glazing and allow the drivers to see out from their vehicles.

Mr. Chrobak would like to get the elevations approved so that they can be submitted to the Planning Committee.

- However, there were still concerns about the sally port roof. Mr. Chrobak stated that there would be 12 inches of flashing up the back wall and thick rubber pads under the eave line to cushion the snow drop from solar panels. He could increase the pitch to ½ inch per foot for a total 3 inch drop over the 24 feet. He also said that it does not have much of a public presence since it is set back 9 feet.

Discussion on aspects of the building plan:

Mr. Chrobak proposed making an add alternate for a gear storage room rather than for a
mezzanine. This room would be a 14 by 24 foot extension of the flat roof of the sallyport along the south end of the building. This room add-on, an NFPA recommendation, would isolate the gear from the carcinogens in the apparatus bays. It would not require windows. Firefighters would enter the gear room from the south side, then enter the vehicle bays.

- Ms. Bisbee feels it is short sighted not to add the staircase for a future mezzanine.
- Mr. Todisco suggested using some of the vehicle space to make room for gear storage, but Mr. Connell doesn’t believe there is enough extra space.
- Mr. Gukowski suggested taking the classroom space.
- Firefighters currently keep their gear with them in their vehicles. This is problematic for two reasons: first, carcinogens can be spread to driver and passengers; second, sunlight damages the equipment.
- Mr. Chrobak stated that the extra space would be inexpensive and easy to add. He will bring a more detailed plan and cost estimate to the next meeting. The added room would not affect the NOI.

Mr. Kassell said that the classroom as planned has an occupancy of 49 because there is only one egress, and is therefore too small to meet current or future needs. There are typically 55 people at trainings with Cummington possibly joining soon. Trainings are usually a mix of videos and hands-on practices. These could not be done in the apparatus bays in the winter by pulling out vehicles because cold is damaging. Using the auditorium in the town offices in Haydenville was proposed as an option.

Chief Connell reiterated that lack of storage was a big concern. Both Police and Fire Departments keep paper records, as well as store a lot of gear. Suggestions were offered:
- use the old station for storage- however the town is trying to reduce the number of buildings it maintains
- add a small loft in the vehicle bays or above the utility trailer – Kevin will draw this into the plan and consider the cost. Contamination would not be an issue because all files, etc are in closed plastic tubs.

Hazmat Scope Update

Decommissioning the elevator at Helen E. James: Otis Elevator owns the elevator. It could drain the hydraulics in November, taking one or two days and costing $5500. The license expires in January so decommissioning needs to be done before then. The hydraulic fluid will be put into a 55 gallon drum and left on site. Disposal can be included in the abatement contract. Mr. Mathers wants assurance that the drum will be left at ground level and accessible. He would also like to see a break down of the costs and information about who does the final inspection, Otis or a state inspector.
A motion was made and passed unanimously to give the Chair authority to authorize the decommissioning contract, with the costs going through the P3 demolition budget.

Removal of water from the existing pipes and radiators: Dan Banister of the Highway Department contacted Western Mass Mechanical and is waiting to get a price, which will be passed on to the town administrator. Water is shut off at the building but not at the street yet.

The phone line to the alarm system needs to be decommissioned as well. Electricity is still on, and useful for running pumps, as well as possibly a small heater.

The town administrator will be asked to check on any insurance changes that may result from the building being unoccupied.

The old building may be used for fire and rescue training for the next two months.

**Community Outreach**

- The working group is compiling a list of FAQ’s.
- The October newsletter is in the draft stage. Paper copies of the first newsletter did not get distributed widely because so much of the plan has changed. However, they are available at the town offices. A request was made to include meeting times and a zoom link in the newsletter, as well as the current floor plan. Mr. Chrobak will send the floor plan to Mr. Caccamo.
- The mechanics of removing the large Linden tree and distributing part for mementos is still being investigated.

**Election of new Vice Chair:**

Mr. Ayres, the previous Vice Chair, has resigned from the PSCBC. A motion was made and accepted unanimously to appoint Bill Sayre as the new Vice Chair.

**Next meeting:**

The committee will meet again in two weeks on November 3. On the agenda will be more information on the add alternate gear room.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:52.

**Documents used:**
• elevations
• floor plan

Respectfully submitted,
Melinda McCall