



Meeting Minutes

Town of Adams Board of Selectmen

Board of Selectmen Workshop Meeting

September 24, 2014

On the Above date the Board of Selectmen held a workshop meeting at Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. **Chairman Arthur Harrington** presided. Present were **Members Richard Blanchard, Jeffrey Snoonian, John Duval and Joseph Nowak**. Also in attendance was **Interim Town Administrator Donna Cesan**.

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. by **Chairman Harrington**.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

MA Development Presentation on Architectural Investigations of Memorial School

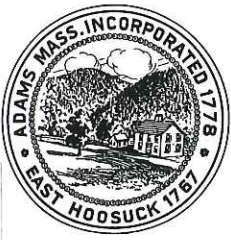
Interim Town Administrator Donna Cesan introduced *Beth Murphy*, the *Project Manager of MA Development for Western Massachusetts Development Projects*, and *Tina Soo Hoo* from *Arrowstreet Architecture and Design*. She explained that the Town had approached *MA Development* with the initial problem that the Town had a large former school building to be reused and wanted to understand the extent of the building's problems including if the building was sound. The Town asked *MA Development* to help assess the building, and they entered into an agreement to provide architectural and engineering expertise to the Town to evaluate it. *MA Development* hired *Arrowstreet*, and Tina and her colleagues evaluated the building. They have been giving the Town periodic information, and this presentation culminates the analysis of that data.

Tina Soo Hoo explained that the Memorial School had been vacant for several years and is a building that they feel has a lot of potential.

Existing Condition

The Memorial School was constructed in 1952, and had ADA improvements made in 1999. The building is approximately 65,000 square feet. It is a steel frame construction, which has recently had a new roof put on. The roof was funded through CDBG Grant money, which solved the problems that the building was having, mainly water leaking through the roof.

The building was toured with the engineers, who did as much visual observation as possible, as well as checking out the mechanical rooms. The building is in good shape despite being vacant for several years. The Town took care of it, and usually if a building is not taken care of it deteriorates very quickly. In this case, the Town has tried to take good care of it as best as possible and because of that it is in decent shape.



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Building Improvements

Improvements that are needed are regarding the building envelope because it has been exposed to the elements, but they are possible to repair. The repairs that were noted as being needed are masonry wall repairs; stucco-related material can be over clad with a rain screen and EIFS system that drives rain away from the brick at the back of the gym, where the brick has deteriorated. Window systems need replacement, and this may be the biggest cost. A new HVAC unit, a new electrical panel, a new generator, a new sprinkler system, replacement plumbing fixtures, structural improvements including seismic upgrades, and interior common area improvements were also noted. The building is sound, the foundation is good, and there is no indication of walls crumbling due to structural issues. Interior improvements include vinyl and ceiling tiles, clean up and new paint, but overall the interior is good. Additionally, the wood floor in the gym and auditorium stage sustained damage from water.

Proposed Reuse

The Town is recommended to come up with a tenant leasing policy, and there is suggested phased leasing.

Phase 1 includes the Youth Center in the gymnasium area, creation of a Performing Arts Center in the auditorium which has over 200 seats, a Food Prep Manufacturer to utilize the kitchen space, and Office Space.

Phase 2 would include a Council on Aging office space, and Senior Housing in the 2nd floor classroom wing. The Senior Housing would have space for 20 units including 5 one-bedroom and 15 studio apartments. Each unit would have its own thermostat, and would be designed that way. An elevator in place there already connects all three floors, and was built in 1999 so it should not need to be upgraded to today's code; it should already meet ADA compliance.

The reuse plan would include three separate entries, one for the Performing Arts Center and Youth Center, one for Council on Aging and Seniors, and the other for the Food Prep Manufacturer and Office Space.

Recommended Improvement Plan

The exterior improvements recommended would be the masonry and EIFS system at the back of the gym where most of the deterioration has taken place from the water damage. In an initial phase of improvements includes window replacement with more energy efficient aluminum windows, and replacement of wood doors with metal ones. The biggest challenge is the heating system, which is expensive but must be done.



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Building Commissioner Don Fitzgerald explained that the roof replacement increased air quality within one week of the roof being done, and it is now very good. The building is dry, has structural integrity, and he feels the building is very sound. He said there was some need for repointing on the masonry, and the HVAC needed replacing, which would help the building to be able to be reused for almost any use. He said the gymnasium floor was in surprisingly good condition, and the stage would need to be replaced. A mold assessment has not yet been done. New aluminum windows would last longer, and be more energy efficient, giving the Town payback from energy saved. Doing the roof, the windows, HVAC and doors together would work in conjunction with each other. To use the building these items will have to be fixed together. Heating systems now have smaller units that work in a series, and create an inherent savings. A mechanical engineer would design the heating/cooling/ventilation system with the walls, windows, and roof system as required to satisfy loads. Different areas require different levels of fresh air, heating and cooling. Hazardous materials reports indicated asbestos on insulation of pipes, in flooring, and tile.

Beth Murphy said there are schools across the state being reused for Senior Housing, and this building has the fortune of being able to be split up for funding sources for each type of reuse noted. ACB funding, low income tax funding and MA Works grants would be likely sources, as well as USDA funding and other grants or low interest loans.

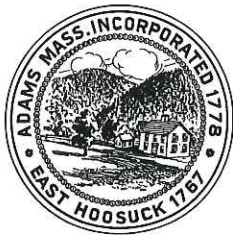
Chairman Harrington noted that a potential use for this building would be for both the community and downtown area, especially for Town Meeting, voting, and a place for artistic and performance arts groups to showcase in town.

Oversight of the Property

The Town would have to decide who oversees the property, whether the Community or the Town, and whether it will make a profit or break even. A committee with Board Members and experts of the community such as the Adams Housing Authority would need to be created to decide on short and long term tenants, and to help decide on who oversees or operates the building.

The next step is to work with *MA Development* and *Arrowstreet* to help figure out the reuse strategy, and decide what uses and funding can make it happen. Perhaps portions would be managed by the Town and other portions by a private entity. Now that the building has been found to be structurally sound, the Chairman and a Sub-Committee will look at what is best for the whole community and to make sure it is sustainable, to be able to pay the bills and keep going. Energy saving may be expensive up front, but if built right the energy expenses will be kept down. Alternative energy may be of value on the site.

Member Nowak questioned whether it was advisable to mix the elderly population with children, as the elderly may love peace and quiet but kids want to let loose. It could be an issue during school vacations, when kids need a place to go. He also expressed concern that funding may run dry, and the project could be left only part way done.



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One of the first priorities is the Youth Center, which is abandoning the building it is currently in. The Town is preparing to sell that building to maximize the opportunity and get on the tax roll. This money can be put into the Memorial School.

Additionally, there is potential the kids may be able to do some projects with the elderly people, such as helping the elders learn to use computers. This may help to bridge the gap and teach the students how to talk with older adults, while the older adults may share historical stories about the community and personal experiences. It is time to take a problem and turn it into an opportunity to solve problems in the community.

Motion made by Member Snoonian to adjourn the meeting

Second by Member Blanchard

Unanimous vote

Motion passed

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah Dunlap
Recording Secretary

