

SELECTMEN'S WORKSHOP JULY 30, 2013

The Selectmen's Workshop for Tuesday, July 30, 2013 started at 6:30 p.m. This meeting was to discuss possible locations for a new town hall/library/SAU and renovation of the current library for recreation use. Present were Selectman Bussiere, Selectman Gaudiello, Selectman Hatch, Selectman Malloy, Chairman Clark, Gail Kushner, Lisa Allis, Ron St. Jean, Administrator Scruton and Clerk McNeil.

Chairman Clark welcomed everyone and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Clark noted that he was not going to take public comment as this is a workshop. Administrator Scruton presented a summary of the status and time table regarding buildings. Ron St. Jean felt that the town needs to look at the future with a vision. Chairman Clark felt that placing the complex on the Svenson property would not bring economic development. It may bring more customers to Calefs and the local shops but would not really bring business that would increase the tax base. Mr. St. Jean felt that maybe not today but it is anticipated that there will be growth in this area of New Hampshire. Selectman Gaudiello was concerned about the overall statement of #9 in the handout. Her highest priority is to meet all facility needs of the town including the SAU and library for the foreseeable future. The Board asked Administrator Scruton to adjust that and get input on parts #2, #3 and #5 from the Library, Recreation Commission and SAU respectfully.

Chairman Clark commented on the proposed time table for the project. Tonight's workshop is to decide the location of a facility. The schedule gets tighter as we approach the fall and have public meetings. The Planning Board should be included in the process in November.

The question was raised regarding widening Route 9 for the Svenson property. Does DOT have a problem if there is not enough room for the added width of the road for traffic? Administrator Scruton stated that it is not a physical problem but a monetary issue for the town with the 60' right-of-way. The plan would eliminate three driveways to one that currently exists and this is recognized by DOT as a benefit. DOT would like to see Christmas Lane not used. Route 9 would have to be moved away from the Calef side to the other side of the road. The proposed road would be the new drive into the parcel. The parcel that is being offered to the town by the Svenson's is a good developable parcel.

The development of the Svenson site is estimated to cost between \$400,000 and \$500,000. The cost of the complex is estimated to be \$5,000,000. Selectman Gaudiello asked what would happen if we cut back on the building by \$500,000. Selectman Bussiere stated that he is not for spending the extra 10% and noted heating the old town office should be added to associated costs. The Svenson property should be developed by private entities. The town should use the asset that we have and that is the property where the old town office is located. Mr. St. Jean thinks it is in the best interest of the town to look far ahead and start in a location for a town

center. He favors going “downtown”. This is the best vision for the future of the town. Lisa Allis stated that the Recreation Department can’t have their fields reduce by a new building. Gail Kushner commented on the impact of traffic downtown and asked is there space for additional buildings at the Svenson site. You are going to be limited to that site because of wetlands or need to acquire backland from another site. Selectman Malloy noted that New Hampshire has lost population in the past few years. The value in the property that we now own is high and we should build out at the old town hall location. There are added expenses in the Svenson area and the unknown of whether it would generate economic development on that property. Selectman Hatch would like to stay on the old site but we need to show appreciation to the Svenson’s for offering the property. Chairman Clark stated that he was not in favor of spending 10% more to move to the Svenson property. However; he is not a definite “no” to the Svenson property and asked if we could cut back by \$500,000. We have spent a lot of money on the town center concept, but it is still open for discussion.

Selectman Bussiere encouraged limited public comment which Chairman Clark entertained. Ken Grant argued the library should be just a book depository and is being used by people out of town. He does not want to demolish the old town office building as it is not nearly as dangerous as reported. Jack Bingham asked about demolishing costs and is the lot saleable? Administrator Scruton stated demolition costs would be under \$100,000. Bob Ott is concerned about raising property taxes. Do we need a new library that badly? The old town hall could be changed to support all the town uses. The taxes have reached limitations. Jeff Scott asked if there has been an impact study done for the Swenson property. Do the chiefs find it safe on Route 9 with all of the traffic that travels that road? Susan Marsh noted she would tend to lean to saving the old building and keeping our taxes low. Tony Gaudiello, Planning Board Chairman, noted that the town has a Master Plan and the Board needs to consider the Master Plan. The Board needs to seek out what people had said about the town center in the Master Plan. Diane St. Jean asked the Board if they can figure out over the life of the bond what the additional \$500,000 would cost. The town needs to reward the sense of community by building a community center. Administrator Scruton stated that it would be 4 or 5 cents per 1000 of valuation. Brian Lenzi stated that he likes the idea of a community center, but the town office and SAU are somewhat out of the realm of the community center. There may be advantages to separating the town office and SAU from the library Kim Nichols asked when the middle school will be paid off. Administrator Scruton stated that he didn’t know about the bond for the middle school but there is one payment left on conservation bond and the public safety building will be paid off in two years. There would be one year of overlap. Ken Grant suggested the Swenson’s offer the property to a business and keep it on the tax rolls.

Chairman Clark asked the stake holders for their comments on two separate parcels – one for the library and one for the town office/SAU

Mr. St. Jean – the library was originally going to stand alone. Not opposed to two locations.

Lisa Allis – two locations is going to be costly.

Gail Kushner– she agreed with Lisa Allis that two locations are more costly.

Selectman Malloy – are we following the Master Plan – did the people want a town center. He felt one location is less expensive. He had traffic concerns with the Swenson site - maybe an impact study should be done

Selectman Hatch favored one building on the hill. Before a move to the Swenson property, the town would need to have study done regarding adding more traffic to Route 9. Something needs to be down with the flow of traffic in that area.

Selectman Bussiere would like to spend the money right with a plan that is fiscally responsible. Best location is what we already own.

Selectman Gaudiello would like information from an architect if they could build with the new amount of \$4,500,000, allocating \$500,000 for the road and other site costs at Swenson's. She was okay with building on two sites.

Chairman Clark stated that he is not in favor of two locations and is concerned about traffic at the Svenson location. Ron St. Jean stated the library would not create traffic problems because of their hours.

Gail Kushner suggested a weighted method of voting to indicate strength of position that was held with 1 strongly opposed, 2 opposed, 3 neutral, 4 favorable, 5 strongly favorable. On the first question, there was consensus at the table that the group was ready to proceed. The second question on building at the Ramsdell Lane site of the Old Town Hall the level of support was as follows: Selectman Hatch- 5, Selectman Gaudiello- 3, Selectman Bussiere- 5, Ron St. Jean-2.5, Lisa Allis-3, Gail Kushner- 3, Selectman Malloy-5 and Selectman Clark-5. The third question was the level of support for the Svenson property:, Selectman Gaudiello- 5, Selectman Bussiere- 1, Ron St. Jean-5, Lisa Allis-3, Gail Kushner- 3, Selectman Malloy-2 and Selectman Clark-2, Selectman Hatch- 3.

Given the strength of feeling in opposition to the Svenson property of the Board, Chairman Clark asked Susan Gaudeillo and Ron St. Jean if they could support the old town hall site. They indicated concern that it should be one warrant article but indicated they could. The consensus that was arrived at was to build at the old town office site.

Selectman Gaudiello feels that it is important that people understand that they have been listened to and it is not a matter of what side or opinion is taken. The stakeholders need to find a solution that the whole town will support. Ken Grant thanked Chairman Clark for letting the public speak. When asked what towns had done a joint library/town office project, Administrator Scruton stated that Stratham has built a complex that incorporates both the library and town office.

STAFF REPORT

Administrator Scruton/Clerk McNeil

The following were approved and signed:

- Intent to Cut for Richard & Heather Warren
- MS-5 Financial Report of the Town of City Budget
- Update of Names Authorized to Call NHMA for Legal Services
- Abatements #67 - #70

- Payroll Manifest dated 7/21/2013
- Vendor Manifest dated 7/25/2013

Selectman Bussiere moved to support Clerk McNeil's recommendation for two road names for Village Place Residential Development – Village Place Drive and Breezy Way – the third will be considered at a later date, seconded by Selectman Hatch. It was unanimously voted in the affirmative.

Marcia Gasses asked the Board if they want to have final approval of the surety for the Village Place Development. The Board suggested that she get the numbers and information and present them to the Board next week.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.