

DRAFT MINUTES
New Library Committee
The Brookfield Library
Tuesday, September 1, 2015 6:30 p.m.
Town Hall – Room 129

8th Meeting

The meeting was convened at 6:35 p.m.

Present: A. Barney, P. Wagner, C. Cumberton, J. Voris, D. Cioffi, D. Brooks, J. Choi, C. Lasser (joined the meeting at 7:12 p.m.)

Discussion of Locations

Gurski Homestead - C. Cumberton and A. Barney have drafted what they envisioned for the property. Per an email from A. Dew, Mrs. Barney reported that the Conservation Commission is pleased with the potential use of the site for the library. Ms. Dew has also made some contact with the State Office of Policy Management, and offered to reach out to the State Historical Commission. It is hoped that interested members of the Committee will walk site with A. Dew and P. Checco next week. C. Cumberton reminded the Committee that its recommendation of a proposed location for the new library is due to the Library Board of Trustees at its November 18, 2015 meeting.

Four Corners – C. Cumberton reported that H. Kurfels advised her that the bowling alley is being sold.

Other Locations - C. Cumberton advised that C. Lasser looked at Mystery Acres with G. May.

There was brief discussion regarding property at 1 High Ridge Road, but Mrs. Cumberton stated that A. Dew advised her there are wetlands issues at that site.

It was noted that the only other possibilities for locations are the two areas at the Town Hall site. A. Barney recalled that the soccer field location was built with private funds, and has been explored previously but discounted. That area is larger, and would provide more parking.

There was the discussion regarding the funding and vocal support that has occurred for athletic fields in Town.

J. Voris noted the importance of expansion capability, citing his visits to the Southbury and Monroe Libraries. He also noted the pleasant décor at the renovated Sherman Library. He encouraged Committee members to visit 30,000+ square foot libraries.

C. Cumberton advised she has attempted to explore all possible alternatives.

P. Wagner noted he has read articles recently about libraries that do not have any books. Mrs. Barney indicated that is a more common occurrence at university libraries. There was discussion regarding the other activities provided by public libraries: concerts, classes, children's programs, study/tutor space, maker space, and rooms for community organizations to meet. Currently, the Library's community room can only be used for one event at a time. Mrs. Barney is hopeful that a new library can house the Historical Society's books and other material (which is now only available during the Society's limited hours), and allow room for the use of a magnifying machine (that

the Library owns but does not have room to display). Mrs. Brooks also noted that prior to the re-location of the Friends' Book Sale, children's programs were recessed during Sale time due to the unavailability of the community room.

Mr. Voris discussed the ability of the Monroe and Southbury libraries to expand their book collection after expansion.

There was brief discussion regarding acreage behind Huckleberry Hill School, and the "cornfield" site.

C. Cumberton advised that she will meet with A. Dew and ask her about the soccer field area at Town Hall.

P. Wagner discussed his enjoyment of the library in his former residence of Jacksonville, Florida, due to its easy access, plentiful parking, and spacious and comfortable furniture.

Mr. Voris agreed that the Gurski site could be a primary candidate for the new library location, and suggested that it be articulated to the Library Board, so that an itemization of necessary tasks can occur. Mrs. Barney suggested utilizing A. Dew as a resource to determine what those tasks are and when they need to occur.

C. Lasser joined the meeting at 7:12 p.m. C. Cumberton requested that she contact Mr. Checco about walking the Gurski site. There was discussion regarding the Gurski Commission's dissatisfaction with the proposal and a State grant that the Commission previously obtained. D. Brooks noted that this Committee's previous discussion included a plan to keep the house on the site, and to offer gardening and other programs through the Library. Mrs. Lasser agreed to speak with former Commission Chair, J. Heise, and former site resident, J. Howard.

Mr. Voris recommended identifying any other potential obstacles, and parties that need to be consulted.

It was suggested that the soccer field site at Town Hall be visited for a site walk. Mrs. Lasser pointed out that the funds for the construction of the soccer field were obtained by private funding, not the Town.

Mrs. Barney stated that she had heard that Happy Landings and the Gurski Homestead were not same type of open space. C. Cumberton stated she believed that there is a historical easement until 2021 on Gurski Homestead. There had been discussion regarding using artifacts from the Gurski barn in the library, and if that would make the State look more favorably on the proposal.

Mrs. Barney advised Mr. Wagner that the Town has a \$1 million State grant, which it will lose if funding for the library is not in place by March 2018.

Mrs. Cumberton requested that Committee members email her with their availability for the next two weeks to schedule a site walk of the Gurski site.

Discussion of Webpage

C. Cumberton will email out the link for the webpage, and it will be linked to the Library website soon.

Gmail Account Activity

D. Cioffi reported that there have been no new emails to the account.

Next Steps

There was brief discussion regarding The Hearth property. C. Cumberton will reconfirm what she heard about the sale falling through. It was noted that the site is likely not big enough for a potential new library.

Mrs. Cumberton advised that the deadline of promoting a location will be revisited after she speaks with A. Dew. She will also ask Ms. Dew about the acreage of the soccer field location. Mrs. Brooks suggested that if the soccer field were moved, that incentives (the addition of benches, etc.) be offered for its new location. She also noted that if it were moved to the Ptak house site, it would be closer to the lower soccer field.

C. Cumberton will speak with Mr. Checco regarding the Town Hall parking study. At the suggestion of D. Brooks, she will also invite Director of Parks & Recreation, D. DiPinto, to talk about potential locations for a relocated soccer field.

Mr. Voris will look for map of the Town Hall campus so that the Committee can better understand the layout. It is also believed that there is a drawing of the site with the soccer field on it.

There was discussion regarding the workshop that Mrs. Barney attended entitled, “Capital and Facility Development Planning”.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
D. Cioffi