

Budget Committee

Public Meeting

January 9, 2007

Lee Carrier convened a business meeting of the Budget Committee in the Whitney Hall Auditorium, located at 23 Main Street, Enfield, NH, at 6:02pm.

PRESENT: Lee Carrier - Chairman, Gayle Hulva - Vice Chair, Eric Crate, Shirley Green, Richard Martin, Judy Finsterbusch, Bob Cusick, Lori Bliss Hill, Dominic Albanese – Selectman, David L. Stewart

ABSENT:

GUESTS: Nancy Scovner-Selectman, Chris Lizotte representative - Sheerr McCrystal Palson Architects, Todd Thompson representative - Trumbull-Nelson, Marjorie Carr-Librarian, Judy Kmon – Library Trustee, Bart Thurber-Library Trustee, Francine Lozeau-Library Trustee, Dan Kiley – Facilities Committee member

- **Administrative**

Steve Schneider reviewed newest revised plans for the Library/Town Hall Renovations.

Chris Lizotte spoke about changes to the original design, such as:

Current plan calls for 8320 square feet of new addition. The lowest level is for the Town office at 4,128 square feet and is still a considered a 20 year plan for Town Office space. The second floor calls for 4,198 square feet for the library. Giving space for 38,000 volumes and is considered a 10 year plan for Library space. Whitney Hall will be upgraded with new windows, insulation etc. The cost does include furniture, kitchen equipment, moving books etc.

Todd Thompson spoke about the finances of the project:

A handout labeled Conceptual Construction Costs was distributed.

The project is estimated to take 10 months. Todd went on to describe the process from the site-work, to foundation, to construction, to finish grade, and landscaping. The third floor of the new addition will not be usable as storage space.

The bottom line cost is \$3,065,403. The average cost per square foot is \$153. for both renovating the old and construction the new.

Bart Thurber handed out a document labeled Overview of the Current Enfield Public Library and spoke to the goods and services generated by the existing services of the building. How local vendors and local contractors currently service the building.

Bart Thurber is speaking to the Tufts business school to do a study of the impact of the library to the Town's economy. Patrons spend 2-4 dollars at area business when stopping at the library.

A core group was put together for fund raising. A three-year campaign will be started the day after Town meeting for coving the total cost of the library.

Steve Schneider distributed a handout of a chart showing the best-case and worst-case scenarios for debt service.

Steve Schneider explained that a study has been done to be sure that the current building is structurally sound and worth putting money into. The result of that study was, yes.

General discussion regarding fund raising.

Questions were raised as to the functions of the Library and Town Offices during construction. Basically the addition would be completed and then the departments would be moved into the new addition and then the renovations would be made to the old and the offices would be expanded into the renovated space.

Round table discussion regarding each member's thoughts regarding the renovation/addition and the tax rate.

Lee carrier agrees that the Town needs the building but would like to see the costs lowered.

Gayle Hulva agrees that there needs to be better space for the Town Offices.

Judy Finsterbush agrees that the project is a good idea, but the cost needs to be pared down.

Shirley Green believes the longer the Town waits the more it will cost. There is a lot of money out there that can be raised thru fund-raising. Would not like to see the taxes go up.

Richard Martin commented that the Town offices need new space and the library may need to have more space, but most of people he has talked to will vote against any costs that increase the tax rate.

Eric Crate believes that something needs to be done. The cost has not gone down enough for his support. It is too much money.

David Stewart believes the cost hasn't dropped enough to get the support of the public. He appreciates all the work that has been done to get this far in researching the project. It's a leap of faith counting on grants and gifts. He thinks that the library should take over Whitney Hall and the Town Offices should move. Preferably still on Main St.

Bob Cusick stated that he believes the Budget Committee is changed with looking at something as the representatives of the taxpayers. There needs to be a balance between what the town needs and can afford. Is this the best way to spend the Town's money? A) The Town office needs more space. B) People are not trusting enough to think that the government is going to give money. C) We need to come up with a way to get the Town Offices up to snuff and/or to move them. D) This is not going to sell. Personally would like to see something that he could be proud of.

Dominic Albanese we are sitting in a 1.2 million problem right now. We have to push this thing forward and when it gets turned down, turn the question around to the public-What to do with this problem? We're looking at trailers to move the employees out of the basement and have them in the back of the parking lot.

Nancy Scovner said that the cost of construction goes up average of 8% per year.

Bar Thurber stated that purchasing land takes money out of the tax revenue and then add the purchase cost, construction costs, moving costs and your way behind.

Lee Carrier spoke about \$300,000 to get this building in shape less ac and generator.

Dominic Albanese corrected Lee Carrier that the \$300,000 was for mechanical systems, not windows, insulation etc.

Lee Carrier stated that the Budget Committee would not support this project.

Dan Kiley recommends that it be put to Town meeting for a vote. Let the citizens decide.

Bob Cusick added that we have to try to come up with a comprise solution. We owe it to the Town.

Break 7:48 –8:00

Lee Carrier distributed handout labeled comparing Enfield's Taxes Rate with 14 Comparable Towns.

General discussion took place regarding the handout.

Eric Crate made a suggestion that the Dana Robes building is for sale/rent and could possibly be a space for temporary Town Offices.

Action Items

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn came forward at 8:16 PM from Richard Martin with a seconded from Gayle Hulva. Motion carried.