

# TOWN OF HARVARD

## MUNICIPAL BUILDING COMMITTEE



**Meeting Minutes** – Meeting # 28 – 22 December 2011, 7:00 – 9:15 PM, Town Hall Meeting Room

### Attendees

Wade Holtzman, Doug Coots, Peter Jackson, Marie Sobalvarro, Chris Cutler, Lou Russo

George McKenna, Lucy Wallace, John Sayre-Scibona, Drayton Fair, Jason Maurer

1. Approve minutes
  - a. Read and approved December 14 meeting notes as amended.
  - b. Read and approved December 15 meeting notes as amended.
2. Discussion and selection of preferred schemes
  - a. Town Hall – Drayton presented three revised schemes
    - i. LLB has integrated comments from December 14 meeting and email account. Any of the three design schemes can still be combined (into a hybrid). There is still some investigation to be done – what is the square footage are we looking for? (Size of stage? Small conference room?)

LLB has an appointment with their cost estimator tomorrow morning. Drayton confirmed with the cost estimator over the phone that it would cost just about the same amount to build new as it would be to renovate the existing addition on Town Hall. Additional square footage will not cost as much per square foot beyond of the big ticket items that we need to put into the building. Broad brush numbers can be applied to any scheme; cost can be broken into “core” services and then the rest of the square footage. Wade requested that the cost estimator also generate a cost for renovation without addition (scheme#4) for comparison.

Lou agrees, and would like numbers for schemes 1, 2 and 4 for comparison. Lou would also like to confirm the statements being made that the existing addition isn’t structurally sound.

Doug would also like to see a “core” services quote with specific line items for comparison. He thinks the assumption is that #4 would be least expensive and still meet our needs. The MBC needs to frame the conversation looking to the future needs of the town. It isn’t a simple equation; numbers can help us get there.

Wade adds that the aim is not to constrain the project but find the best value for the town.

Lou used the Maynard Police Station as an example of a creative solution while staying under budget – they built a shell with fit-up outside of the contract.

George wants to make sure that we are balancing the potential for growth with the needs of a modern office in which part time positions will share desks and there is more potential for web-based applications. Lucy responded that the Town Clerk still responsible for certain hard copy paperwork, municipalities are not run like private businesses. There is a “retail” aspect to the Town Hall; a need to interface with people.

Drayton will come back with broad numbers; he wants to make sure that this is what we are looking for. (Specific numbers will come in later when specific schemes are chosen. Lou reiterates that we are looking for facts to compare (specifically relative deltas from 4 to 1 to 2), so we can make a recommendation to the BOS. This particular project is about consensus building and input.
    - ii. Scheme #1: Approach from Ayer road – rational to set new entry at “back” of building,

develop axial layout, telescope shape of existing town hall (very New England), total square feet: 2,400 (a difference of 800 square feet). Toilets only on 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Wade asked if it would be possible to pursue historic grants to help restore features of Town Hall. Drayton answered yes, but there are often maintenance agreements. It is possible to secure individual spaces/offices, so that the building can be used after normal business hours. Lou would like to explore the possibility of getting a “convenience toilet” on the second floor. Wade spoke with executive director of the ADA – variances are available. John pointed out we don’t want to ask for too much; Drayton agrees, we should pick our battles carefully (historic entrance variance).

- iii. Scheme #2: Entrance on west, elevator in new addition to avoid underpinning issues; restrooms on both levels; larger stage (509sq/ft) back door to stage; form of the building on the outside follows the function of what is within (elevator feature – barn silo). Total Square feet: 3,200; longer along the axis, same width as scheme #1. A raised stage would require equal handicapped access. (Drayton not a fan of raised stages because it limits your flexibility). Pete likes entrance on the west side as it keeps entrance close to the common. Additional meeting room on second floor, circulation space has also grown. Having more space in hallways, especially next to meeting spaces, is a good thing. Pete thinks this scheme best fits with Lou’s suggestion of building the shell now, with an option to fit-out later. John cautions that a fit-out later is cheap money now. Lou confirms that the width across of stage area would allow the space to double as a meeting area. Drayton has done some partition research – passed around some photos of examples. Partition options will continue to be explored.
  - iv. Scheme #3: “L” shape; very small stage, second means of egress out of meeting room behind stage, 2,700 square feet, shed roof on addition, Doug sees this scheme’s addition as subordinate to the main building, does the least amount of attention grabbing. Will include the addition of a small porch in pricing estimates. Narrow upstairs corridors; small vestibule. Jason sees possibilities for future additions (either back, or to the west), allows access from north and the west. Doug thinks this is a huge improvement to the first version of scheme 3. Lucy thinks the interior space is too small, suggest small bump out addition to create more square footage.
  - v. No re-use of large meeting space on second floor – further investigate what the town wants. Moveable partitions? Shrink performance space? Full utilization of upstairs space? Drayton suggests we call Acton – they have a very similar room. How would we sub divide and what would the cost be? Added cost of sub division? A large meeting space was included in the program. Pete remembers applause at the idea of leaving upper town hall open at last town meeting. Worries we will lose public support if we permanently partition the space. Doug thinks we need to really describe what it means to sub-divide the space.
  - vi. The Vault – John and/or Drayton will follow up with Janet. LLB has done some research: if you build a new vault it basically needs to be a bomb shelter, can’t be in basement and must be separate from the rest of the structure. Will be an expensive addition to the project. What triggers us needing to do something to the vault? More research is needed. Does the vault need to be handicapped accessible? If we aren’t touching it, we have no code issues. Estimator can provide cost. Break the vault out as a separate bullet point.
- b. Hildreth House
- i. Drayton presented some refinements to Scheme 3 presented at the Dec 14 public meeting. Based on the MBC decision at its Dec. 15 meeting to select Scheme 3 and comments received, the parking and approach on the west side of Hildreth House was evaluated in more detail. Three parking lot configurations was shown. The issue is fill required to keep a reasonable level entrance and approach. The MBC selected the option which locates the main parking lot to the north of the entrance so that drivers would drop off people then proceed to park. This option should also reduce the fill needed.
  - ii. Drayton also reviewed refinements to the layout of the addition. The entrance from the west is at the current basement level. In order to make the entrance more welcoming,

there would be a two level glass entrance where stair and elevator would be located. One level up would have the main reception area. The entrance would be open to the second level and feel more connected and less confining.

- iii. The dining area was realigned to give better views to the north, east and south. The angle between the existing building and the addition was enlarged slightly to create more space for a terrace and allow for a more open entrance and connection between the buildings. Three dimensional images were used to show external massing and roof angles that would be compatible but not competitive with the shingle style of Hildreth House.
- iv. There was general concurrence that the refinements were acceptable and that LLB should proceed to more detailed analyses on the parking lot and on the costs.

3. Review of Schedule

John will add a milestone to show Board of Selectmen approval of the schemes for Hildreth and Town Hall on January 10. No other changes needed to the schedule.

4. Agenda for Next Meeting

We asked LLB to have relative costs for the Town Hall schemes (1, 2 and 4) for the next meeting on Jan 5, 2012. At that meeting, the MBC will select the Town Hall scheme to recommend to the Board of Selectmen and to carry further into schematic design.

Rachel Holcomb  
Pete Jackson

Approved