

**Town Hall Building Committee
Bantam Annex
80 Doyle Road, Bantam
Regular Meeting
June 20, 2012**

A Regular Meeting of the Town Hall Building Committee was held at the Bantam Annex, 80 Doyle Road, Bantam, on Wednesday, June 20, 2012 at 7pm.

Present: William J. Buckley Jr., Chairman; John Langer, Vice Chairman; Diane Fredsall, Secretary; Lynn Brickley, Ann Curtis, Peter Ebersol, Jack Healy, and Alternate William Deacon, Jr.

Absent: David T. Wilson, Jeffery Zullo, Ann Curtis, and Alternate Lisa Losee

Public Present: John Martin, Architect; Elisa Bauer

Call to Order: Chairman William J. Buckley Jr. called the meeting to order at 7pm.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Healy made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2012 meeting as corrected. Ms. Fredsall seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Report on Probate Court Needs: The Committee will wait until the next meeting to hear David Wilson's report.

Report on Digitizing Records: The Committee will wait until the next meeting to hear Lisa Losee's report. Mr. Buckley reported that Ms. Losee will obtain proposals from 3 vendors and include the proposals as an Appendix in the report. Mr. Ebersol recommended seeking advice from another town hall that has digitized their records and will research the matter further. Ms. Brickley stated that the digitizing company must be on a state-approved list.

Report on Park and Recreation Needs: Mr. Healy reported that Leo Paul has given permission for the Parks and Recreation Community Field planning to proceed, and that the Qualification Packages are due July 1st.

Presentation and Discussion by Architect: Mr. Martin reviewed changes to the town hall plan. First-floor changes included eliminating the two conference rooms and moving the 2nd-floor finance office to this space, and making the town clerk's and social services offices larger. The registrar storage space would still be adjoining the registrar's office. On the second floor, a folding partition would divide the conference room into a lunch room and Emergency Services space, both of which could be used as smaller conference rooms as well. The second floor also includes future expansion space, which Mr. Martin said could easily be finished to use as a conference room or otherwise. Mr. Martin estimated that the construction would take at least 12 months.

The Committee discussed the proposed location of the new town hall. Mr. Martin intended to use the same location as the current town hall and to keep the building in line with existing

buildings on the street. Mr. Ebersol discussed constructing the new town hall in back of the old one, which would eliminate the costs of temporary relocation of vault material and personnel. Mr. Martin felt that placing the new town hall in back with a parking lot in front would be detrimental to the feeling of Litchfield's downtown. Screening the parking area off with plants was suggested. Mr. Buckley felt that having the parking lot in the front wouldn't look good. He also stated that the building is being designed to last for the next 50 years, so a decision shouldn't be based on a year-long inconvenience. Mr. Buckley suggested using modular offices temporarily.

Mr. Langer would like to know the cost of relocating personnel, vault material, etc., twice. Mr. Deacon stated that when Torrington renovated their town hall they relocated to other buildings temporarily, and moving out then back into the town hall cost \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Mr. Buckley cited 3 potential problems for the town hall construction: whether the proposed height will be prohibited due to zoning, whether a setback variance would be allowed, and whether the Historic District Commission would oppose the project. Ms. Brickley didn't think that the HDC had legal jurisdiction to reject the plan.

Mr. Ebersol will consult with lawyer Michael Rybak for advice on legal aspects of the proposed plan.

Ms. Brickley stated that the cost of moving people offsite must be included in the estimate of the total cost of the plan.

Mr. Healy will discuss matters such as space needs, temporary housing of staff, and the possibility of modular offices with Leo Paul. Ms. Brickley stated that secure space for Probate, Town Clerk, etc. must be addressed.

Mr. Martin stated that the Committee must determine location next; if the height variance is not feasible then the new town hall must be moved to the back. He stated that if the height variance were approved, then it would be time to focus on exterior plans, mechanical systems, energy options, etc.

The Committee agreed on the general layout of the current proposed plan. Mr. Buckley suggested Committee considering debt service and bond-selling aspects when presenting the plan to the public. The Committee discussed energy-efficient options and getting the new building LEED certified. Mr. Martin said that quality of construction is the most important.

Correspondence: Emails were received excusing Jeffery Zullo, Ann Curtis, Lisa Losee and David Wilson from the meeting. Mr. Zullo also emailed the following information:

I have reviewed the questions you asked of me with Leo Paul and below are the comments for the meeting:

1. Discuss with Leo the Digitizing Process for Town Hall: I reviewed with Leo the need for a global digitizing process for all town records that will be stored at town hall and the possibility of reducing redundant storage space with digital records (based on state statutes for retention of records). This would apply to all town departments, including Town Clerk, Land Use, Land Records, Town Maps - DPW. I also reviewed with Leo that

this process could either be part of the Town Hall project or a separate capital project. Leo is very interested in pursuing a town wide digitizing process within the Town Hall project or separately. He would like us to identify the potential scope and cost and include it in our recommendations. We did not discuss if we need any special consultants for this effort and if so how we could cover that cost.

2. Discuss with Leo any planned personnel growth in town departments, especially building department or land use: Leo stated that there are currently 5 town employees in the building dept. and land use areas and there is no plan to increase this for the foreseeable future.

3. Discuss with Leo the possibility of an ordinance amendment or update relative to building height: I reviewed the potential issue we will have with the new building height and that this may require an ordinance change to accommodate the design. I mentioned that we believe it is an issue of the definition of building height and that Peter Ebersol has some experience with other towns that have a clearer definition that we could work with. Leo suggested that Peter get in touch with Mike Rybak (town counsel) regarding the definition change and potential ordinance wording. Leo will talk to Mike as well to outline the process if it would be an ordinance amendment or a new ordinance. The change will require an 824 application with approval by a number of boards, including, Borough of Litchfield, Historic District Commission, Planning & Zoning, Board of Selectmen and a Town Meeting. Leo will support this but we need to determine exactly what is needed and communicate with Mike Rybak to start this process moving forward.

Other Business: Mr. Langer made a motion that the Committee cancel the July 4, 2012 meeting. Ms. Brickley seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Adjournment: Mr. Deacon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Healy seconded the motion which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alissa Bumstead
Recording Secretary