

TOWN HALL REVIEW COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2018
LITCHFIELD TOWN OFFICE BUILDING, 74 WEST STREET

The regular meeting of the Town Hall Review Committee was held on Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at the Litchfield Town Office Building, 74 West Street at 6:00 pm.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Jeffrey Zullo called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The minutes of this meeting will be recorded.

ATTENDANCE AND APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES: Chairman Jeffrey Zullo, James Hilby, Lisa Losee, Richard Quay, Jason Travelstead, Alternate Ann Combs and Alternate Denise Raap. Public present were Paul Hinkel, Advisor, Leo Paul, Anne Kalognomos and John Martin.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING JANUARY 18, 2018: Lisa Losee made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 18, 2018 Special Meeting and Jason Travelstead seconded the motion. All were in favor to approve the minutes. The motion was passed.

SPECIAL MEETING FEBRUARY 5, 2018: Jason Travelstead made a motion to approve the minutes of February 5, 2018 Special Meeting and Lisa Losee seconded the motion. The following corrections were made: On Page 1, paragraph 4, Review of 2008 Town Hall Plan, the second to last sentence should read: Jason Travelstead did a 3% escalation of the 2008 estimate of \$5.9 million, would be about \$8 million, at \$383 a square foot now. Page 1, paragraph 5, Review of 2016 Town Hall Plan, the 4th sentence should read: Leo Paul stated that the previous report that was done in 2014 did not go to a public vote because that was when the Board of Selectmen decided at that point to shelve it because there was a potential in one of the options for a school regionalization plan. Page 2, 1st paragraph, 2nd sentence should read: Paul Hinkel stated that the Trust took the 13,717 sq. ft. and gave it to their architect to see what they could do with it. Page 2, 1st paragraph, 3rd sentence should read: Paul said that they are also working on a second reduced scope plan that utilizes as much of the existing layout as possible to further decrease the cost. Page 2, 1st paragraph, 4th sentence should read: Paul said that they are able to demonstrate from a square foot basis, that it could accommodate the most current new town hall program, and there is also additional space that was unprogrammed in the basement that could be used. Page 2, 1st paragraph, 5th sentence should read: Paul said that the vault must be on the main level according to State Statutes. The following was deleted from the 5th sentence: and thought that they could accommodate the Town Hall in the Courthouse plan. Page 2, 1st paragraph, 7th sentence should read: Paul said that the main entrance will probably be in the rear of the building because of accessibility requirements, elevator access and parking. Page 2, 1st paragraph, 8th sentence should read: Paul said that there were earlier options to build out on some of the sides of the building coming forward to create accessible entrance, but were rejected by the Trust to preserve as much of the existing exterior façade as possible. Page 2, 1st paragraph, 9th sentence was deleted: Paul said that they want to preserve the exterior of that building.

Page 2, 2nd paragraph, 15th sentence should read: Paul Hinkel said that they are hoping to reuse as much of the existing floor plan and architectural features as possible. Page 3, 1st paragraph, 5th sentence should read: Leo Paul stated that one of the things the Board of Selectmen is going to have to review depends on the use of this front piece of property and to do the entire review. Richard Quay made a motion to approve the amended minutes and Jim Hilby seconded the motion. All were in favor to approve the amended minutes. The motion was passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

INTRODUCTION OF JOHN MARTIN, MARTIN ARCHITECTS, THE ARCHITECT ON THE 2008 AND 2016 PLANS: Jeffrey introduced John Martin, Martin Architects. John Martin was the town chosen architect by the Town Building Committee and Town Facilities Committee, he was the originator of the 2008 plan and was brought back for the 2014/2016 plan. John will discuss these plans, review the 2008 and 2016 plan, the programming analysis and space utilization.

REVIEW OF THE 2008 TOWN HALL PLAN (EXISTING LOCATION DEMOLISH/REBUILD): John explained the 2008 plan: This plan would tear down the front part of the building, save the foundation and put an addition on the back portion of the building. There will be 3 levels: Lowest level – 2 vaults, one for the registrar's office and one for Probate Court, redo restrooms and no more space will be added to the Probate Court. With the extension, there will be an elevator, 2 storage rooms, IT room, mechanical room, Park and Recreations Department. Main Level – Front entrance remains the same, First Selectmen's office on the right, on the left – Tax Collector and Assessor's office, small meeting area, central patron area open through the 2nd floor, public common area, Town Clerk's office with new vault, elevator comes up, 2 conference rooms, copy room, mail room, redo the restrooms, closet for supplies, at the back entry will be Social Services. Second floor – meeting room for 50 people, storage room, Land Use, Building Department, Fire Marshall, Inland/Wetlands, conference room, small lunch room, Finance Department and Registrar of Voters. What we were trying to accomplish with this plan was to keep part of the building and build the addition first and allow them to keep the Town Clerk's office, vault and operations so they wouldn't have to move. After the back part was finished, the Town Clerk and vault would be moved to the back so the front part of the building could be renovated. Paul said that with the 2012 plan, it was less expensive, you would tear down the existing building and build a new building. The problem was that you would have to move everyone out, especially because the Town Clerk needs a vault. Jeff said the key part of the discussion going forward is how to maintain the functionality of the Town Clerk. The options of closing it and moving it somewhere else would be very difficult and gets very expensive to relocate for 8 months to a year. Lisa Losee said some the problems with that plan is that the State does not want vaults in the basement and with the open floor plan, it doesn't work for the Town Clerk or any of the offices.

REVIEW OF 2016 TOWN HALL PLAN (NEW BUILDING AT REAR OF TOWN HALL LOT): John explained the 2016 plan: keep the existing Town Hall, build the new Town Hall in the back portion, all parking would be in the rear, after the new Town Hall is built, tear down the building in front, build a park, move the skating rink to the front. Front of the building, main level entrance, on the left: First Selectmen's office, Tax Collector, Assessor's office, Town Clerk's office and vault. On the right: Finance Department, Registrar's office, Police, Social Services, Probate Court and vault., Second floor: Inland/Wetlands, Fire Marshall, Building Department, Planning and Zoning, 2 conference rooms that double as a lunch room and emergency services, recreation department, rest rooms and expansion space for future. Leo Paul said that the expansion space, 800-1,000 sq. ft., will be the Borough office. Jeffrey said that there is less common area and less conference rooms. Paul said that there is a basement under the front portion that is not included in any of the square footage. Jeffrey said that the elevator will service all 3 floors. Jeffrey pointed out that the Probate Court is not a town function and they lease the space. Ann asked if the design could be changed to look more colonial, smaller window panes, and shutters, if that is what the town wants. John said that they took elements from a number of buildings in town, so when you look at this, you will find details from the Historic Society, the Firehouse and the Courthouse.

REVIEW OF JOHN MARTIN'S TOWN HALL PROGRAMING ANALYSIS AND SPACE UTILIZATION: In 2007, we sent out questionnaires to all departments regarding space needs, dimensions and numbers, files, storage, conference, tables and chairs, technology and future equipment. When all the information came back, it was very detailed and it was reviewed. Meetings were set up with all departments. Information was received from the Connecticut State Library regarding vault sizes and time was spent with Diane Blick from Probate Court regarding the storage and privacy of records. This was then incorporated, and then a matrix was formed of all the departments showing, what is existing in the space, what was requested, and came up with what we proposed for the square footage for each department based on future use. John said that all the departments did not have enough storage and solved that with all the good basement storage for space. There is about 7,260 of square feet in the basement. Richard Quay said that the State requires us to keep paper documents indefinitely, even though we have modern technology, we can't reduce the physical storage space as much as we would like. Jeffrey asked John is the square footage was net or gross and John said that it was gross. Paul asked the difference between net and gross square footage. Net square footage is the interior usable space and gross square footage includes the walls. Jeffrey asked John to address the estimates that were developed. For the 2008 plan, there were 3 estimates. And it was updated in 2012. Jeffrey asked Jason if we have enough information to do reasonable estimates. Jason said we should go back and compare every project because the market has changed because it would not be fair to do a straight escalation from 2012.

REVIEW OF COURTHOUSE RENOVATION/EXPANSION (RENOVATION/EXPANSION OF COURTHOUSE): Paul explained the updated Courthouse plan: Try to reuse as much of the building as possible, rear parking lot will be main entrance, easier access for accessibility, the main entrance will still be in the front that faces North Street, it will be accessible, but has a lot of steps, on the main level, space will be created for the vault, closing up windows providing proper details for a vault design. The police will be on the main level, having visual of the parking lot, the old courtroom will be the Finance Dept. and Town Clerk's office, Probate Court will be 1,676 square feet. On the second floor, Land Use will be in the main courtroom, Park and Recreations Department, a main meeting room, the First Selectmen's office will face north and Borough office. For the Demo, the judge's chambers will come out, get rid of railing on second floor. John said that if you include the unprogrammed space in the basement, we have 18,352 of gross square footage, this would be a 50% increase of what the current Town Hall and Annex add up to. Paul handed out a chart of the area comparisons of Existing, 2008 Town Hall, 2016 Town Hall and 2018 Courthouse Town Hall. They made some adjustments in the 2016 plan and came up with 22, 701 square feet. Jeffrey asked about the condition of the basement. Paul said that the basement is dry and is checked on a daily basis. They will have a structural engineer look at the building and they will work with the man who works for Cambridge 7, who has historical building experience. The structural evaluation should be ready for the next meeting. There was a handout from Berkshire Environmental Services and Technology, LLC and Eagle had estimated a total cost of \$100,397 for asbestos abatement and associated consulting services. Denise asked about building the Probate Court outside of Town Hall. The cost would be about \$750,000. Leo Paul said that if Probate Court was not in the Town Hall, the budget will have to go up, because each community would be paying for her rent. She gets rent from the District and all those communities are contributing to her rent and to the cost of running the Probate Court. If she goes to another building and pays a premium at the building, then our taxes will go up because we will have to pay her. Richard said to summarize the main change from the earlier version is, there is less construction.

Jeffrey asked Paul if he would have a presentation ready for our next meeting on March 5th. Paul said that he will check be with Gary Johnson from Cambridge 7. Paul said that in regards to the visuals and reports, they may not be ready until after the March 21st meeting. Jeffrey asked the committee if they think that is the next step for us. We have gone through the 2008 and 2016 plans pretty well with John's report. Do we want to have that presentation from the Trust and the architect and do a site visit? Lisa said that we can post the change of location for the meeting to be different and it would not change it to a special meeting. John said that if he can't get Gary Johnson to come, he could probably get the mechanical consultant to attend. Jeffrey then said that it is agreed that we will convene our March 5th meeting at the Courthouse at 6:00 pm. with a presentation from the Preservation Trust with the architect and/or mechanical consultant. Jeffrey invited John Martin to attend the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: None

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OLD BUSINESS: None

CORRESPONDENCE: None

PAYMENT OF BILLS: None

FUTURE MEETING AGENDA: Discussed earlier

Jeff handed out copies of the most recent site map for the West Street and Rear Parking Lot area from Director of Public Works, Raz Alexe.

ADJOURNMENT: Lisa Losee made a motion to adjourn and Richard Quay seconded the motion. All were in favor and no one opposed. The motion was passed at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara L. Balsamo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara L. Balsamo, Recording Secretary
Dated this 25th day of February 2018