

OLD SAYBROOK POLICE BUILDING COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
December 9, 2013
MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Old Saybrook Police Building Committee was held on Monday, December 9, 2013, at the Pasbeshauke Pavilion.

Present: Committee Chairman Dan Moran and Committee Members Ben Akin, Jerry Brophy, Patrick Maher, John O'Brien, Vito Savino, Lee Sparaco and David Wight. Also present were First Selectman Carl Fortuna, Police Chief Michael Spera and Police Commission Chairman Burnham.

I. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Attendance

Committee Chairman Moran called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Committee Chairman Moran led the Building Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Recording Clerk took attendance for the meeting. Carol Hanover was not present.

II. Meeting Minute Approval – October 21, 2013

Committee Member Sparaco made a motion to approve the October 21, 2013 Meeting Minutes. Committee Member O'Brien seconded the motion. The motion to approve the October 21, 2013 Meeting Minutes passed with a vote of 5 in favor and 0 against.

III. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

IV. Update from the First Selectman

There was no update from the First Selectman.

V. Update from Downes

Mr. Humes stated that the project is in the beginning phase of the town approval and permit process. In preparation for these meetings, several drawings have been created for review by the Town's various Boards and Commissions. Mr. Humes also stated that he has participated in several meetings with Chief Spera and other members of the Police Department with regards to specific items for the new building such as plumbing, electrical, interior design, etc. Mr. Humes expressed that despite these meetings, little has changed on the actual floor plan. Mr. Humes concluded that the project is ready to go before the Land Use Board. He added that an additional planning meeting would be taking place on December 19th, in preparation for upcoming presentations to the Planning and Zoning Boards.

Mr. Humes reviewed a list of variances that will be requested for the project. Among other things, these variances include landscaping, parking and lighting exceptions. Additionally, Mr. Humes stated that he had spoken with the Fire Chief with regards to a refueling station being located at the new Police Department. Concerns were raised by the Fire Chief about the location of the refueling station because regulations state that the refueling area must be 20 feet away from the building. This regulation was investigated by Mr. Humes and he stated that the refueling station must be 5 feet from the building but that he would investigate the matter further in the interest of being thorough.

Committee Member Savino stated that in most towns there is a paid Fire Department where the Fire Chief is also the Fire Marshal but that is not the case in Old Saybrook. Committee Member Savino continued that this decision should be up to the Town's Fire Marshal, Don Dobson. Committee Member Savino then provided Mr. Humes with the name of the state Fire Marshal who deals with fuel disbursement.

Committee Chairman Moran asked if the access road is going to hook onto the old asphalt or if a new road is going to be cut.

Downes replied that a new road is not being cut.

Mr. Humes informed the Committee that the Town has asked that the project be permitted for as much as possible, including additions to the site for future use such as the storage building.

Committee Member O'Brien asked if drawings needed to be made for future land use items.

Mr. Humes replied that drawings do not need to be made at this time but that the current drawings and permit applications should be as inclusive as possible.

Committee Member Savino asked if the site is going to be shown as one parcel and should include plans for future use, how will the green space be represented if there is no current plan for the future use of that section?

Downes replied that this is an issue they are trying to resolve.

Chief Spera stated that the acreage given to the Police Department and the park was covered at the town meeting. He added that the various Boards and Commissions will understand the difference and come up with a game plan to move the project forward.

Downes stated that if pragmatic hardships are not a basis for variance considerations then most of the necessary variances will not be approved.

Police Commissioner Burnham stated that someone needs to present and explain to the Boards and Commissions why a hardship exists and why a variance is needed.

Committee Member Brophy suggested that a land use attorney could make the case for the project.

Downes replied that they never go into presentations with a lawyer.

Mr. Humes added that the Boards and Commissions do not intend to come up with denials for projects.

Committee Chairman Moran asked if Downes had given approval to the drawings from Mr. Humes.

Downes replied that they have given approval to the drawings.

Committee Member Wight asked if there will be an issue with people saying that all town projects must be reviewed by Jacobson but the new Police Building does not.

First Selectman Fortuna replied that this will not be an issue because Jacobson is the engineer for the project.

Committee Chairman Moran read an email from the Chairman of the Zoning Board stating that the Board is not interested in hiring a third party to review the site plan.

First Selectman Fortuna asked if the project has been brought to the regional health district.

Mr. Humes replied that the project has already been submitted for health approval.

First Selectman Fortuna asked about when interior demolition would begin to take place.

Downes replied that a permit for that is needed and that there is a process for demolition that will take place after the permit is acquired.

Downes informed the Committee that the project is slightly over budget at this time and that they are working to bring the budget back down but that this is a normal part of the process. They added that the floor plan is not changing but some of the requirements for the project have proved to be more expensive than anticipated, such as seismic requirements. They concluded that their goal is to have the budget reconciled by next week.

Committee Chairman Moran asked if the old generator is being given to Public Works.

First Selectman Fortuna replied that it's possible.

Committee Chairman Moran asked if a third party would be hired for the generator's removal.

Downes replied that there is money in the budget to remove the generator but not to install it at a new location. .

Chief Spera asked what the construction timeline would look like if all the permits were acquired by March 1st.

Downes replied that the project would break ground on March 15 or April 1 at the latest. There might be some selective demolition prior to that date.

Chief Spera asked if the project would be completed 18 months after the first day of construction.

Downes replied that the project would be completed 12 months from the first day of construction.

Downes added that there will be a live webcam on the site, which will run 24 hours a day.

Committee Member Sparaco added that Harbor News could also take photos of the project for publication.

Mr. Humes stated that once the project is placed on agendas for approval, those dates will be given to the Committee Members so they can come and support the project.

Chief Spera asked when the application date is.

Mr. Humes replied that everything has to be done by January 10, 2014.

First Selectman Fortuna suggested a meeting with the same agenda for January 6th. He added that if there is no business that needs to be discussed then the meeting could be canceled.

VI. Comments or Concerns from Committee Members

First Selectman Fortuna stated that the project was able to catch a 50 year low in the market with regards to the bond.

VII. Adjournment

Committee Member O'Brien made a motion to adjourn. Committee Member Maher seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn the meeting passed with a vote of 8 in favor and 0 against.

The next Regular Police Building Committee meeting will be held on January 6, 2014.

The meeting minutes for December 9, 2013 were prepared and respectfully submitted by:

Trent Gerbers
Recording Clerk for the Old Saybrook Police Building Committee