

## Washington Planning Board

### Working Meeting Minutes

May 16, 2016

- 0.0 Assembly: 9:00AM
  - 0.1 Members present: Crandall, Kluk, Dulac, Schwartz and Williams
  - 0.2 Alternates present: Hatch, Terani and Russell
  - 0.3 Members and Alternates Absent: none
  - 0.4 Visitors: None

Crandall opened the meeting at 9AM.

- 1.0 Minutes from May 6<sup>th</sup> working meeting – Crandall asked Williams if the Selectmen might go ahead with a project next year. Williams answered that he would cover that later in the meeting. Williams requested that we remove the line about there not being value in having the Police at the Safety Center and that there was confusion about the warrant article, inserting that it lacked flexibility. Schwartz will make the changes as requested. Williams motioned to approve the minutes with the agreed on changes, Dulac seconded and all voted in favor.
- 1.0 Review the Select Board’s (BoS) position as reflected in their minutes – Crandall said he felt that in reading the minutes they seemed positive and did not say what he thought they might. He asked what we want to do now that we know their position. Dulac said he wrote an email after reading our minutes and felt that it was a different ballgame, we were going to work together and now that has changed, so how do we feel about that? Do we keep the BoS informed and go to them to get approval to move forward on our own ideas. Dulac thought we might cut things down to basics and ask the users (Fire & Rescue) what they can live with (no full monty). Do the same with the Meeting House, the elevator is complicating things, but look for alternatives, look for a cheaper nut, try to get donations, volunteer efforts. Do a side-by-side comparative of the projects. But then he heard another view at the table, different from what he thought we would tackle. He feels that now it is our proposal and we need to convince the BoS and then the town. Terani wants to identify the buildings we want to deal with and then establish priorities for next year and beyond. He thought the Town Hall and Safety buildings would be the first two projects but maybe not. Crandall said the buildings need to be phased and we should consider volunteer labor and more to get them done. Terani said we should establish a baseline for what the projects will be and stick with it. Crandall said the information is there, the buildings have been studied to death and we should use the information. Crandall asked Dulac if he envisions us going to the BoS in a few weeks. Dulac said yes we need to go to them with an idea and see if they will go along. Williams doesn’t think it is too soon to go see them, whatever we decide we need to go see them every few weeks to keep the communication open. We don’t want to go down a road that won’t be supported. Hatch said he left our meeting thinking we wouldn’t go back with anything for 2017 Town Meeting, that maybe a longer timeline with a CIP fund request or warrant article for funds we could use that year. He doesn’t think the School has dibs on the funds opened up by the payoff of their bond. Crandall passed out a sheet he did about historic bonding in the town. This showed that in 2001 the school bond cost the taxpayers 91¢ a year. In 2017 a \$3M bond/loan would cost the taxpayers 91¢ a year (on a 20 year loan at 3.5%), a

\$3.5M bond/loan would cost the taxpayers \$1.06. Kluk commented that if you didn't spend it all in one year it would be less in early years but would go to \$1.06 eventually. Williams doesn't think that people will be willing to pay this without a needs based conversation. He doesn't feel \$3.5M is justified by the needs. He feels you need to pay for some things by donation and that we shouldn't get hung up on the numbers. He thinks 3 buildings is the right number to focus on, the Town Hall, the Safety building and the old schoolhouse. Dulac finds the money sheet helpful but says money won't move the projects, people want to do what they can afford, not figure out what we want to do then figure out how to pay for it. Crandall thinks it is costing the town \$8,000 a month for not doing the projects. Williams doesn't think that argument has sold the projects so far. He thinks we should meet the needs and find the dollars to accomplish that.

Russell asked if we ask the BoS what the needs are or do we come up with our own list, he wanted to know who is ready to ask the BoS what the needs are and then we can discuss and respond. Terani said we have been charged with planning for the buildings and we should move forward with what we feel is necessary. He asked about the "take aways" from Town Meeting. Crandall thinks we should make our own list and then go to the BoS. Dulac asked what if we meet with the building users to ask about their biggest needs and work that into a plan. He feels we should be the arbiters of the discussion and we present what we think are the needs. Williams thinks this has been done several times already and we don't want to go there again. Dulac said no he wants to talk to them about their needs and what they can live with. Williams said we already did that with WESAC, the present plan is generally need based and meets those needs, maybe there is a small amount of want, we need to find the middle ground where we can meet. Williams wanted to make a couple of points; he thinks there was no charge at Town Meeting, the PB has the authority to plan and advise but the BoS ultimately decides what moves forward. Crandall wants one vote to cover several years of possible spending with approval to do the projects over time. Williams said we are spending a lot of time talking about buildings and the needs to meet for each building and how we are going to pay for them in a variety of ways. He is hearing the full monty for each building and he doesn't see that going on the warrant. Terani said two of his take aways from Town Meeting was that he was happy that the BoS set a priority and had something on the warrant, he heard the Safety guys stand up and argue against it, which changed his mind. He thinks the townspeople really wanted the Safety building done but wanted a plan for the future. Crandall said the BoS survey said none of the options given on the survey were wanted by 40% on the Safety building and 30% on the Town Hall. Terani said we need a compromise. Dulac asked why the Fire/Rescue Departments didn't support what was being offered. Williams said that based on discussions with Fire and Rescue, they wanted the shell of the administration wing with decon and a bathroom but the warrant article couldn't be changed, the BoS made the wording of the warrant article very narrow.

Crandall said we seem to be going around in circles. Williams asked do we think we can do something meaningful in 8 months or will it take 18? Hatch said that at Town Meeting the one thing that hasn't been done is a combined project. He is conscious of what he knows and doesn't know, we don't need to redo all the studies that have been done, they all apply, we have to come out of our work with something to market by September.

Crandall doesn't see anything to be gained by not taking it on and getting the work done now, if there isn't the support this year we can carry forward into next

year. He thinks we should move ahead. Kluk asked Williams about his sense of the BoS participating in some of the tasks. Williams said they still want to play along in the right spots. Kluk said it would be a Planning Board plan that they accept or reject? Williams thinks the PB is driving the bus and they will ride along. Kluk said if we are looking out over 5 years what would the BoS support? Williams said they see the Town Hall out 5 to 7 years and things could be done piecemeal, they want the Safety building done first based on a needs assessment. They feel there are building needs to be taken care of in the old Schoolhouse whether the Police are there or not, they feel the Police needs are less now. Crandall wants to proceed, Schwartz agrees. Dulac is concerned that maybe the plan isn't the plan or the plan is the plan, it makes it hard to come up with any real plan. He wants to know what we are taking on if the BoS seems to have a plan and what are we going to do to change anything? He doesn't think the BoS will go along if our plan is different from theirs. He wants to go home and think about what we are doing. Williams thinks the BoS can be moved slightly but not a lot. Crandall asked about preconditions by the BoS. Dulac said he is a no for now. Terani thinks we should stop and ask who is responsible for the plan. Hatch doesn't think doing anything more than two objectives is worth doing. If a combined plan is a no go with the BoS, doing that is a waste of time. Williams said doing that is premature. Kluk seconded Dulac's thought, she has many questions that need answering; is the "plan the plan" or are we going to come up with creative ideas? She wants to know what the BoS is fixated on and she is confused about what we would be moving forward on. Dulac said he is hearing that there are BoS ideas that they can be nudged on and some things they are stuck on. Williams asked about "the plan is the plan" or not the plan, he has said that the plan is not the plan, all options are on the table and plans do help guide but we need to look at everything. He said the wildcard is that the BoS may present something at Town Meeting 2017. Kluk is worried about a parallel effort going on. Terani thinks the BoS make decisions in a box and don't talk to people. Williams said that the decision they presented was MBAC's suggestion, but Crandall said that that wasn't their suggestion. Williams said that the BoS decided to take the Town Hall off the table. Dulac said we need to talk to the Selectmen about their parameters, we say we are willing to work with them but we need to know what they think. We need to find out their "do-ables", then go to the users and see what they can live with. Schwartz said that our working meeting with the Selectmen was supposed to cover all that and they were supposed to tell us their thoughts on the projects. Russell said we know things and that there are ideas that we need to take into consideration and the parameters in which we have to work, we hope the Selectmen will be more open with us. He doesn't want to waste time and thinks we could scratch out a 5 year plan to present to the BoS, we could cover when we would use bond money and when we would use contributions or external funds needed at the end, sketching out smaller projects to do first. Williams said circling back to what Terani said, the PB has the authority to come up with a plan and take it to the BoS. The BoS can embrace it or not, a petition article is always an option. Schwartz said that a petition article is not an option because to get anything passed we need the BoS support. Kluk said we have no budget to work with if we need to speak or work with outside consultants. Williams said if we come up with something soon we can visit the BoS and ask for funds or the ability to work on things. There is planning money for the Safety building, about \$15K. Crandall said there are funds for the

Town Hall in a trust fund of about \$20K. Russell said he has some paper thin numbers to divvy out on the Town Hall.

Dulac said he would like to meet again in a week and discuss how we can make this process work with the BoS. Crandall asked when we could meet again.

Williams suggested a meeting with the BoS on Thursday, maybe just a few people so it is not a noticed meeting. Dulac thinks we should go in and regurgitate what happened tonight and ask for parameters and see what they say. Kluk asked for another joint meeting. Candall doesn't feel ready to go see them. Dulac said we need to hear from them because they know what they are thinking. Kluk would like a larger group there to hear what they say. Hatch thinks it is worthwhile to meet with the BoS. Dulac said one parameter we need to know is whether they are willing to listen to new ideas. Williams thinks we need to start communicating soon to get anything done. Hatch thinks we need to know their thought processes, how they were going to house things while work is getting done on each building. Williams encouraged us to go in and share our frustration and confusion and ask if they are willing to work with us.

Dulac made a motion that we move forward and continue our efforts with the planning for the town buildings at this time, Schwartz seconded the motion and four voted in favor with one abstention.

Kluk said that at least one decision was made tonight even though we didn't get buy in from the BoS, we have decided to continue. It was decided that Crandall and Schwartz would go in to see the BoS on Thursday. We will meet again on June 1<sup>st</sup>, Wednesday at 9AM in the Town Hall.

2.0 **Adjournment:** Time: 11:10AM

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nan Schwartz