

Wolfeboro Board of Selectmen
Meeting minutes
Approved
June 22, 2011

Members present: Chairman Sarah Silk, Vice-Chairman Linda Murray, Dave Senecal, Q. David Bowers, and Chuck Storm.

Members absent: None.

Staff present: Town Manager David W. Owen, Director of Planning and Development Rob Houseman, and Recording Secretary Amelia Capone-Muccio.

Chairman Silk opened the meeting at 6:30 PM.

Non-Public Session RSA 91-A: 3II

Mr. Owen stated a non-public session is not needed.

Public Input

Suzanne Ryan stated she would like to remind the Board that no means no and noted that the Citizen's Petition was voted down last year and noted it was amended to be contingent upon approval for the Town Hall article leaving no appropriations. She read RSA 32:10 in regards to the transfer of appropriations. She stated she recently read about the discussions about the parking amendments at Brewster Hall and eliminating the use for the school. She explained that this discussion is nothing new as the school agreed they would not park there once the building was renovated in the very first discussions for renovations. She also referenced a discussion by the Board at their May 18 meeting in regards to a Municipal Assets plan and that it was emphasized the big hole in it was due to Brewster Hall. She feels they need a Plan A and Plan B that is a back up plan if the article should not pass. She feels the town does need anymore consultants or a study and that the idea has been studied to death, the town has plenty of options and there are 33 town owned structures. She also stated she feels it is time for the town to start thinking about a Municipal Complex. She stated that Linda Murray had read an overview of the taxpayer's appropriations and she feels that analysis is flawed because the road projects receive funding back from the state and the water/sewer and electric departments receive revenue, where funds for buildings do not receive any of that.

New Business

A. Town Hall renovations discussion

Chairman Silk provided an overview of the history on articles and appropriated funds for Brewster Hall dating back to the original purchase for \$1 in 2004. She also provided an overview of all the studies done on the building dating from 2003 to current and that she agrees the project has been studied to death and how it is ironic that they have more information on this project than any other project they have done, but it is yet to pass. She stated although the taxpayers have supported it, the bonded articles have not received the 60% majority needed. She stated they do need to look at the public/ private partnership with the Friends of Town Hall and that they did provide the \$45,000 for North East Collaborative Architects plans last year as well as they paid for the advertising flyer for such.

Mr. Storm stated that now is a good time to get low costs on construction and interest rates making this the best time to do this project. He pointed out if they had 10 votes in the other direction, they wouldn't be discussing this. He stated he is not in favor of phasing the project as those costs more in the long run.

Mr. Bowers stated that he is in favor of this renovation, but he also appreciates the opinion of those who do not support it. He stated he has received a lot of input such as opening the theater to the public, parking concerns, donations and help from the private sector. He agrees that now is a good time for low interests rates and that the town has received bids lower than the estimates for several projects. He pointed out that Brewster Hall is from the same time period as the Avery Building downtown, which is a wood structure but has been properly maintained. He noted that Brewster Hall has not been properly maintained, which has resulted in its condition. He stated that Brewster Hall is a wonderful asset that many towns do not have and it makes sense to make it useful and convenient.

Mrs. Murray stated that she would like to respond to a point Mrs. Ryan had made and that those departments do have revenue, but the funds still come from the taxpayer's pocket. She stated she took some time off from this project after the election and started revisiting it last week. She looked back at the records including a 2000 code report, the Wicker's building report, the Town Hall Options Committee report, the \$6.7 million dollar warrant article, the reports regarding vacating the building, the review of town-owned land or land available in Wolfeboro for a facility, current town-owned buildings reviewed for possible use, the Plan B Committee report and survey results, the downscale Town Hall plan, the Lehner Street idea, and the 2010 \$4.5 Million dollar warrant article. She also has heard a lot of comments from the taxpayers from the economy being too poor to do the project and she also took a drive around the Wolfeboro and looked at all the improvements that have been done from Dockside to Foss Field and that all those improvements have bettered Wolfeboro and made it more inviting, but then you look up at Brewster Memorial Hall which still looks unkept and run down and it needs to be upgraded to match the rest of the town. She stated now is the time for the Board to address this project.

Mr. Senecal stated he would like to get more information on the e-mails between Mr. Houseman and North East Collaborative Architects as to phasing the project. He stated that he would like more information as they ran into an issue with the Railroad Station and they ran out of money and he doesn't want to see that happen again. He stated he gets phone calls and e-mails from taxpayers not wanting to put the money into the building, but he would back it again if the project makes sense. He stated that he also read the letter from Don Hughes and agreed with some points made in that letter.

Mr. Owen stated it has been several months since the election and they have received lots of thoughts and view points. He stated he agrees with the comment from Mrs. Ryan of no means no and would like to approach the project in a different manner with phasing or a more scaled down version. He stated that Mr. Hughes' letter states he feels \$3 million is what the taxpayers would be willing to support, but he does not know if they could scale the project back to that. He stated whatever they decide to do it has to be a fine tuned approach to the situation. He referred back to Mrs. Ryan's comments regarding the parking and agreed that issue was not new, but what is different about the issue is they have decided to address and implement the issue before the project is proposed.

Chairman Silk referred to the e-mail letters to North East Collaborative Architects dated March 17 and April 7, 2011 relative to alternative plans and stated she contacted John Grosvenor to clarify some of the phasing proposals such as the removal of floor levels, the fire suppression system, and the steel roof supports. She noted they have \$6,557 left in the 2007 warrant article that they can use to get more clarification on phasing the project from North East Collaborative Architects. She stated her personal opinion is that they have put a lot of money into studies and plans, but they need to know how they can phase the project in these hard economic times because they need to do something with the building, but understands the taxpayers' concerns about the cost. She stated the town has enjoyed the support of the taxpayers for many large projects in the past and she would like to continue that support.

She stated the town has wonderful employees who provided the taxpayers with wonderful service and noted they have never had a complaint in regards to service and they need to provide those employees with a better working environment and make the building code compliant. She stated the Board needs to determine the parameters of the warrant article they would like to present.

Mr. Senecal stated that he would like to hear from Mr. Houseman.

Mr. Houseman joined the Board and stated after the vote he spent some time thinking about the issues regarding the project and wanted to have some ideas for when it came time for the Board to discuss the project again, so he reviewed some of the logical breaking points in the project and discussed them with the architect. He stated he presented some ideas to the architects to be flushed out for phasing and it is critical to have feed back from North East Collaborative Architects on how to phase the project as they know there are structural issues and energy efficiency issues, but they need to know how to cut up the project such by floor etc. He stated that it is important to make improvements that don't impact future phases.

Mr. Senecal agreed and that they should focus first on structural, then energy efficiency and thirdly the heating and cooling. He noted all the code compliance issues can be phased in as needed in the project including the fire suppression system and sprinkling system. He also pointed out that he and Mr. Bowers toured the old Power Plant this week and that could be used as well. He stated they have plenty of studies to use but they need to purge the plans.

Mrs. Murray stated she would also like to see some price breaks spots such as \$750,000 or \$1.5 million and what they would get for those costs. She stated as far as the old Power Plant they have to weigh that project in along with the future need for a Community Center.

Chairman Silk stated she would like to hear from the Friends of Town Hall as this is a public/private partnership.

Joyce Davis, Chair of the Friends of Town Hall, joined the Board and stated the Friends will still continue to support the plans for renovation and to keep the use for a Town Hall. They continue to support the help from North East Collaborative Architects and will support what the Board decides.

Bob Lemaire joined the Board and stated that he stayed on the fence at the last go-around for this project, but stated at this stage it is about the employees and it seems to have turned into being about the building. He stated no matter what they do it will cost several million dollars to upgrade the building and TOCAG's survey results showed that more than 50% of the people did not support the project. He stated that the employees reached out in this last proposal and it still didn't help. He would like them to address the issue of what they plan to do with the employees in March if a project does not pass. They need to take a good look at leasing or an alternative plan to move the employees out of the building to address the code compliance issues. He has a concern about the asbestos in the building and the cost per year to heat the building. He would like to see them deal with the employees first and the building second and maybe it takes the building being empty for the public to do something about it.

Chairman Silk questioned if the Board would like to agree on a consensus of the four options put forth to North East Collaborative Architects.

The Board agreed they would like to seek more information from North East Collaborative Architects.

Chairman Silk questioned if they would like to include Mrs. Murray's idea for some funding amount parameters.

Mr. Senecal replied he needs more information to make a decision.

Mr. Bowers agreed it seems they need some narrative on the options and costs. He stated he feels they need some merit to base it on.

Mrs. Murray agreed they need to send it back for more information.

Mr. Houseman replied that he can provide more information to break down the costs such as the first floor with or without the annex.

Mr. Senecal stated he would like the cost for code compliance.

Chairman Silk replied they will have to address code compliance once they start renovation. She questioned the Board wanted to add costs on new floor levels, with or without the annex and estimate for code issues.

Mrs. Murray replied that she feels they should have Mr. Houseman get clarity on phasing and provide a cost estimate for doing such for their meeting on June 29th.

Mr. Storm stated he has concerns about phasing and is reluctant to support it without guarantees.

Chairman Silk noted that when they needed more funds for the Railroad Station the voters complied, it is a risk, but she feels once the voters see some improvements they will support it.

Mr. Bowers agrees with Mr. Storm in having it as one project, but phased over a number of years.

Mr. Senecal questioned if Mr. Houseman can get them some information by next week.

Mr. Houseman replied he will. He questioned clarity on what has been removed.

Chairman Silk replied they would like to do the phased approach with life safety issues and the first floor with or without the annex and phase two would be the second floor.

Mr. Houseman stated his memo referred to phasing or a reduced scope option.

Mrs. Murray replied she believes the Board is only looking at phasing the project at this time.

Mr. Senecal agreed they are just looking at phasing the project at this time, not a reduced scope project.

B. Presentation of the Boston Post Cane

Chairman Silk stated the Town Clerk has informed them the Boston Post Cane should be presented to Dorothy Weidner, resident of Sugar Hill and questioned if the Board could present such on July 13, 2011 at 4 PM. The Board agreed.

Public

Mrs. Ryan questioned if the basement is included in the scope of work for the first floor.

Mr. Owen replied it is.

Mr. Bowers stated the projects should be tied to together, but done separately in terms of scheduling and funding.

Mrs. Ryan reminded them one town meeting can not bind another.

Being no further business before the Board, Chairman Silk entertained a motion to adjourn.

Member Dave Senecal moved the Wolfeboro Board of Selectmen to adjourn at 8:11 PM. Member Linda Murray seconded. Being none opposed, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Amelia Capone-Muccio

Recording Secretary