

MINUTES
SHARON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
March 22, 2017

The meeting of the Sharon Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:05pm in the Multi-Purpose Room at the Sharon Community Center with Chairman Walter B. Roach, Clerk John J. McGrath, Selectman William A. Heitin and Town Administrator Frederic E. Turkington, Jr.

Review of Town Office Renovation/Replacement Project

Standing Building Committee Chair Gordon Gladstone introduced Kevin Paton from BKA Architects and Richard Marks from Daedalus, and then provided background on the actions of the 2016 Annual Town Meeting to appropriate \$600,000 for design and programming for the Town Office project. The three options provided to the architects were 1) make the existing Town Hall ADA compliant; 2) make existing Town Hall ADA compliant and a small renovation; and 3) construct a new Town Hall. He went on to say that the timeframe is concentrated and the Committee cannot give project costs now, but expect to have firm figures within the next six weeks. Mr. Paton and Mr. Turkington are working closely together.

Mr. Paton explained that the Town Hall is aging and is not handicapped-accessible. It is presently 9,800 square feet over three floors. He then showed renderings of options 1 & 2. Option 1 would cost an estimated \$6.7 million and the existing fire station would remain as is (same for option 2). Mr. Turkington pointed out that the \$600,000 appropriated at the 2016 Annual Town Meeting is already included in the total costs for all three options. Option 2 would offer 14,000 square feet over three floors (5,000 additional square feet more the existing building) at an estimated cost of \$8.9 million.

Mr. Paton went on to show a rendering for Option 3 – a modern design. This option would put the new Town Hall on the site of the existing fire station, and would provide for 22,500 square feet. At the request of the Standing Building Committee and Mr. Turkington, a colonial design was drafted, with 22,000 square feet and a roof deck. The cost of this design is an estimated \$13.7 million. Keeping the budget in mind, the new colonial design was modified to remove the roof desk and the basement. This new option (3c) translates into 15,234 square feet with an estimated cost of \$11.7 million.

Mr. Gladstone stated that the Standing Building Committee looked at a range of options, and felt that the modern design didn't fit with the area. The Committee is budget conscious and look to differentiate between needs and wants. The latest version, 3c, has a smaller footprint. He reminded the Board that the last time project costs were looked at, by Kaestle Boos Associates, was three years ago, and prices have increased since then.

Mr. Marks reviewed the total project budget costs for options 1-3. Mr. Gladstone reminded the Board that the Standing Building Committee has not yet approved these numbers; they would rather ask for more and be able to turn money back than run out of money. Mr. Marks added that he believes they have captured the total costs for building in 2018. Mr. Paton added that options 1 & 2 would require a temporary relocation of Town Hall staff.

Mr. Gladstone said that the Board of Selectmen is faced with a decision: to recommend to the Standing Building Committee one option that Mr. Paton and Mr. Marks can then focus their attention on. He again reviewed the three options and their costs.

Selectman Heitin noted that this issue was discussed at Capital Outlay Committee meetings. The Town can afford \$9.9 million without needing an override. Mr. Turkington added that the current debt service is drawing down and the additional 2.5% translates into \$200,000 per year, so funds for the construction of a new Town Hall could come from the operating budget.

Chairman Roach pointed out that the existing Town Hall is too small now and not ADA compliant, and feels that options 1 & 2 are band-aid approaches, so option 3 is his choice.

Bill Croteau, a member of the Standing Building Committee, cautions taking the \$11 million figure. He believes that further evaluation is needed and encourages town officials to study and request input from the community in the form of public hearings.

Selectman McGrath echoes the comments of Chairman Roach. He feels the town should ensure that the right decision is being made, but move as quickly as possible. He too recommends option 3; he feels the town will likely save money now by building a new Town hall than putting a band-aid on the existing Town Hall.

Mr. Turkington suggests that the Board give the Standing Building Committee direction now, and plan a strategy for a fall Town Meeting, including public education and outreach.

Selectman Heitin stated that the Standing Building Committee has direction – option 3c.

Mr. Gladstone indicated that the Committee, the architects and the OPM will further refine project costs, and the Committee will do outreach. He publicly acknowledged the work of architect Kevin Paton, a Sharon resident.

Mr. Turkington read comments from Paul Remy, chair of the Commission on Disabilities, who expresses concern about adequate space needed for multiple wheelchairs during early voting, and the lack of adequate parking.

Residential & Recreation Overlay District By-Law and Memorandum of Understanding Discussion

Selectman Heitin explained that negotiations took place between him, Town Counsel and Mr. Turkington over the past several weeks and the Board's support of the following proposal will cause the litigation to be dismissed. Highlights of a proposal for a residential & recreation overlay district zoning by-law change at Spring Valley consist of:

- 52 clustered units (near the existing parking lot and tennis courts)
 - All are age-restricted (55+)
- \$502,000 to mitigate the cost of the emergency water hookup
- If the golf course ever ceases to exist, the land reverts to the town

Selectman Heitin noted that this proposal is better than earlier proposals and does not include any units on Edge Hill Road. The proposal is cash flow positive for the town, and severely limits the number of school age children. Mr. Turkington added that the zoning article attached to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is what will appear on the Annual Town Meeting warrant.

Town Counsel Richard Gelerman added that the Board of Selectmen needs to support the warrant article at Town Meeting and before other boards. As a result of signing the MOU, the litigation will be dismissed whether or not the zoning by-law article passes at Town Meeting. Mr. Turkington thanked Attorney Gelerman for his work in dealing with two other attorneys.

Chairman Roach asked Attorney Gelerman if the Board signs this MOU, could it change again. Attorney Gelerman pointed out that there may be some pushback from the Conservation Commission about a potential interbasin transfer. The proponent will likely use a wastewater treatment plant instead of going through Norwood, so it may not be an issue. He added that the area of the overlay district has been shrunk from earlier proposals.

Pat Pannone, member of the Planning Board, asked the Board to not sign the MOU until the Planning Board holds their public hearing. Attorney Gelerman explained that there is nothing in the MOU that requires the Planning Board to weigh in before the MOU is signed. Chairman Roach asked how long it would take for the Planning Board to hold a hearing and Mr. Turkington replied that it would be 3-4 weeks. Attorney Gelerman reminded the Board that the purpose of the MOU is for the Board of Selectmen is to sign and allow the process to move forward. If the MOU is not signed, the deal could fall through. Selectman Heitin added that this zoning article has been substantially vetted.

Selectman McGrath said that the entire Board of Selectmen supported the original MOU before the 2016 Special Town Meeting and believes this MOU is much better. He wonders of the risk of waiting for the Planning Board to hold their hearing first and the town losing this opportunity. He asked Attorney Gelerman what would happen if the Board waited a month for the Planning Board to hold a hearing before signing the MOU, Attorney Gelerman replied that anything can happen and the lawsuit could possibly move forward. He added that even though the MOU is signed, it does not foreclose the Planning Board's decision. It is important to sign the MOU tonight. He added that if necessary, the MOUs could be modified based on feedback by the Planning Board.

MOTION: To sign the Memorandum of Understanding as discussed, and look forward to comments by Planning Board, Finance Committee, and others; and that the MOU is held in escrow pending payment to all (Heitin - McGrath) 3-0 **PASSES**

Annual Town Meeting Discussion - Approve Warrant Article Order & Take Positions on Articles

This item will be taken up at the Board's March 28 meeting.

Topics not reasonably anticipated forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting

None.

Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn at 7:15pm
(Heitin - McGrath) 3-0 **PASSES**

List of Documents

- Draft zoning article
- Draft MOU
- Town Offices design options