

December 1, 2015 Meeting of the Facilities Implementation & Strategic Planning Committee

Members present:	John Hadley	Kevin McCormick
	Christopher Rucho	Siobhan Bohnson
	Patrick Crowley	James Dugan
	Janice Ash	Ray Bricault
Members absent:	John DiPietro	
	Marcia Cairns	
	Phil Mallet	

Mr. Hadley convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Approve minutes of previous meetings

Motion Mr. Rucho to approve the minutes of September 23, seconded by Ms. Bohnson, all in favor.

Motion Mr. McCormick to approve the minutes of October 14, seconded by Ms. Bohnson, all in favor.

Motion Mr. McCormick to approve the minutes of October 28, seconded by Mr. Bricault, all in favor.

Council on Aging

Janice Ash reports that after the Bethlehem Bible Church purchase was defeated by town meeting, the Council on Aging felt they needed to get more responses from the residents on what they wanted. They did a petition signing at the election and almost 300 signed saying they wanted a new building for the seniors. Mr. Rucho states that he didn't see the petition and asked what it said. Ms. Ash added that it didn't mention money and only mentioned they would support a new building for the seniors. They also asked for suggestions on locations or whatever and she thought it was a good start. She will get the Board a copy of what was signed.

Jack Curran, Council on Aging member, read a statement from the Council on Aging standpoint. He noted that the letter sent to the COA from FISP and the subsequent article, which appeared in The Banner expressed frustration and they totally agree with the frustration from FISP. The COA was also frustrated because they found themselves back at square one. There was some suggestion that COA members had not been supportive of the proposal and maybe engineered its failure, but that was not the case. They attended all the presentations in support of the purchase and spoke at town meeting. From day one they all recognized this was not the ideal situation and we got to the Bethlehem Bible Church by default. They tried to identify different properties in town for rehab, we put out an RFP, no one replied and Bethlehem Bible Church was after the fact. Almost immediately there was concern voiced that it was too big, location issues and people said the proposal was to placate the seniors. The COA was supportive. It is important to distinguish that the Friends of the Council on Aging is a separate group who work with the COA and the Center to generate time and money. The COA thought the Friends were on board and listed them as being in favor of the building. They met with them yesterday. The COA didn't formally go to the Friends and when the Friends saw the proposal they were not in support of it. The COA was shocked by learning this. It was then that they felt the proposal might have some problems. They met with the Friends yesterday and their goal is to get back on the same page. He thinks trust is important and they would like a new building for an important segment of the community, in a cost effective way, and one we can all be proud of. They would like to have a similar result as the town had with its town hall. Mr. Curran advised that

resident Bob Chisholm is working with a group of town residents to help identify an appropriate location.

Mr. Hadley asked Nancy Barakian, Chairman of the Friends what happened. Ms. Barakian states that she supported it in the beginning and as people read about it, things changed along the way. Mr. Hadley asked what changed. Ms. Barakian replied, there were concerns about safety for the seniors, the driveway was an issue and the Friends then voted not to support it any more. Mr. Rucho asked how many people are on the Friends. Ms. Barakian advised ten. Ms. Bohnson noted that with regard to the driveway, we did have an expert come in and look at it. She added that we do not want to run into this again and questioned what the role of the Friends is and are you constantly raising money? Ms. Barakian explained that the Friends support programs by raising funds, they do one major fund raiser a year and other smaller ones. She added that all of them have heard people say they didn't like the location or the road getting to it. They didn't think it would be safe for the seniors. Mr. Hadley asked, what about the building itself, was that an issue because it wasn't brand new. Ms. Barakian doesn't know if that was an issue. They would like a building they could be proud to look at. One of the things that concerns Mr. Bricault is how do we know this will not happen again. Whatever seniors are talking to you are telling you one thing and we are hearing something else. He doesn't want this be a waste of time and wants to make sure they are going forth with something that will be supported. Audry Cleary, member of the Council on Aging, states that she doesn't know why there was not good communication between the two groups., She feels that there will be much more contact between the COA and the Friends. Mr. Curran added that he thinks there were some issues in the past. He was aware that there was a little bit of a division between the two groups. There was not an ongoing interaction with the Friends and they thought they were on board. He thinks they should have let the COA know there was a problem. Mr. Hadley asked if they are going to come up with a plan and presentation. Ms. Ash reports that they have a sub-committee of the COA and some Friends members as well. They have been pursuing getting information and they will bring it forward. Tonight they are not ready to discuss anything. Mr. Chisholm states that he is on the subcommittee and has spoken with the Director about the proposal not being approved. They are independent of the COA and their attitude is that any property suggested would be considered. The BBC is on their list. Committee members have conducted several field trips, 14 properties were looked at and it has been narrowed down to 5. They will meet again on December 7th and hope to present a report to the COA on December 14. Mr. Hadley thinks it is a good idea. Mr. Bricault states that one of the key things for him is we evaluate this and be crystal clear on differences between wishes and needs. Mr. Curran reports that they discussed potential proposals and there was discussion about the fact that there was a bottom line as to what the effect would be on the tax rate because debt was coming off and because it would reduce the tax rate. He would like to maintain that portion of the tax reduction for the senior center. Mr. Bricault advised that it depends on when the roll off happens as they are on fixed schedules and it is question of when it happens. Mr. McCormick added that once the money comes off, it is off and we can't hold the debt.

Mr. Crowley explained that we have to look at the set of facts and circumstances and present it to the townspeople. Mr. Curran asked the committee to do whatever is possible. Mr. Hadley states that we will do the best we can to sell it to the town. Mr. Rucho states that until he knows what it is, he cannot say what he is going to do. He added that it is safe to say that we will have to renew the lease for 127 Hartwell Street as it is set to expire in June.

Process for Police Station Project & Review Sample RFQ to hire a Project Manager

Town Counsel prepared the process, which we need to follow. The first item is to issue a Request for Qualifications to hire a Project Manager. Mrs. Lucier received samples from five towns who have recently approved police station projects. Mr. Hadley recommends starting the project in

late spring or early summer, and it will take eight to ten months to build from groundbreaking. FISP would like the responses back in one month. Then we hire the architect who will put together the drawings to go out to bid. The project amount in the RFQ for the project will be changed to \$2.7 million. FISP will be replaced with Board of Selectmen. Mrs. Lucier will send the amended RFQ to town counsel for review and request we follow the fastest process possible. Ms. Bohnson questioned whether we should include a photo. Mr. Dugan will make himself available to look at conceptual drawings. If members of FISP do not send in any other amendments, Mrs. Lucier will send it to town counsel by noontime tomorrow. Once town counsel approves, it will be sent to FISP via email and it will be on the agenda for the Board of Selectmen's December 16th meeting. If there are any issues, FISP could have a quick fifteen minute meeting prior to the Board meeting on the 16th. Mr. Crowley stressed the importance of having somebody independent watching the project so we have an eye protecting the town. Mr. Crowley asked how the review would be done. It was agreed that FISP will recommend to the Board. Mr. Bricault questioned whether people would be comfortable with having the RFQ out for less than 30 days. No one seemed to have an issue. The Board agreed to vote on this in two weeks. Mr. Bricault would like to know the number of responses which are coming in. We will also ask town counsel if a municipality can give performance bonuses for a firm coming in ahead of schedule.

The next meeting will be on January 27th.

Motion Mr. Rucho to adjourn at 7:55 p.m., seconded by Mr. Bricault, all in favor.

Approved: January 27, 2016