

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Capital Improvements Program Committee (CIP)
Meeting Minutes – May 12, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the CIP was called to order by Chair Osgood at 4:03 p.m. Members present: Dave Osgood, Charlie Sheaff, Bruce Bohannon and Selectman Deborah J. Davis.

Absent: Steve Bittel, Jeff Goller and Francis Faulkner

Others Present: Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe, Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard, Daniel Scully and Katie Sutherland from Daniel Scully Architects, Dave Bergeron from Brickstone Land Use Consultants, LLC. Police Chief Tom DeAngelis, Fire Chief Norm Skantze.

Minutes:

Minutes from May 5, 2014 were considered. There was some discussion as Daniel Scully clarified some areas of the minutes. Discussion was held regarding whether or not the large room for Town Hall is optional, as indicated in the previous minutes. O’Keefe pointed out that once the cost numbers are determined, perhaps reconfiguration of the large room could be considered. Bohannon said he was not in favor of tossing out the large room concept. Sutherland said that the number of people needed for a large room accommodation should be determined. Bohannon said it should accommodate 100 people. Davis said that considering growth of the Town, the large room is necessary. There was also a brief discussion referring to the Scully contract and the nine sites to be investigated under the contract. No further action was taken. The Minutes were tabled until next meeting.

DISCUSSIONS/OTHER BUSINESS

Review draft programs and building assessments for Municipal Facilities Needs and Site Alternatives Analysis with Project Architect

Copies of the Brickstone Land Use Consultant, LLC Review of Town Owned Property, and Daniel Scully Architects report Building Assessment for Existing Swanzey Town Hall/Central Fire Department dated April 14, 2014 were referred to by the Committee members as “the program” in their discussion.

Fire Chief Skantze introduced a report showing map a number of measurements for calls to the Fire Department including busiest streets and response analysis in miles and minutes for the West Fire Station, the East Fire Station, the Central Fire Station, Safford Drive location, and the Carlton Road location. The report highlighted response times over ten minutes in duration. The Central Fire Station had the lowest number of ending locations taking more than ten minutes to reach. Skantze noted that the amount of time reported does NOT include the time it takes for volunteers to reach the stations prior to dispatching response vehicles. Bergeron suggested the report shows that one station wouldn’t be able to cover the whole Town.

A brief discussion occurred about the location of the Police Department. Police Chief DeAngelis said that because his staff is on patrol, location is not as much of a factor. Because they don’t have to respond to the station first, they can often get to a site before the Fire Department.

Scully introduced a revised design for the Department of Public Works (DPW) which reduced the program from 21,040 square feet to 18,170 square feet. Sutherland said that in this scenario the existing facility would be added onto and there would be 19 total parking spaces. The revision includes a new salt shed, and overall reduces the cost significantly.

Next there was discussion regarding the Recycling Center. Sutherland said they met with Solid Waste Manager Bob Osterhout and made storage space smaller, which is a function of how often the trucks come and go. Total area now is 19,645 square feet, where it was originally 24,437 square feet. Sutherland suggested that the reduction in space reduces the cost by \$1,000,000.

The committee reviewed the building design for the Recycling Center. Scully said the area currently being used is swampy and is built on a former landfill with junk underneath. He said it was questionable that it would support a new building. Maybe ten feet of trash is there. Scully said it would be expensive to build a building with modern loads on that site currently used by the Recycling Center. The subsurface trash would have to be removed before a new building could be built. Based on that assessment, Bergeron decided to consider putting the Recycling function into the existing DPW building.

Bergeron explained the design. A new building would be built for the DPW and move the Recycling Center into the old DPW building with additions as required by the program. The current Recycling Center would remain for storage of the larger materials such as construction debris. Dumpsters on the landfill are not a problem. He said that there is a lot nearby assessed at \$108,000 that directly abuts the DPW property. There is also property located nearby assessed at \$60,000. If the Town considered buying both at \$170,000 there would be enough land to accommodate DPW and Recycling for future growth. Construction is less expensive because you don't have to work around an existing function. Davis said that she likes the idea of keeping the same location for residents who are accustomed to using the Recycling Center.

Scully stressed that ultimately the Committee must approve one plan for them to develop. Davis noted that the Committee would have to confer with Director of Public Works and Solid Waste Manager before making a decision.

Bergeron went on to say that he looked at properties on NH Route 32 as possibilities for Town Hall and possibly for the Center Fire Department to remain on the same property with separate buildings. He noted there is a 3 acre parcel currently for sale not far from the present Town Hall designated as "Lot 8" for this discussion. It has enough space for parking and a larger Town Hall without leaving Swanzey Center.

The other property referred to as "12-2" was researched and found to be a 41 acre parcel, with some high land in the rear but the lower edge is 7 – 8 acres. The property has limited frontage on NH Route 32 and there is a small house at the front of the property. In this scenario, Bergeron suggested the Town could put the Police Department where the Town Hall is now. Town Hall Building is larger enough for the Police Department program. Bergeron suggested the Town could keep the current Police Department location for an impoundment area and serve as office space for the Cemetery Department and Emergency Management. The Cemetery garage would be left as is and the Town would not need an addition. You could provide long term storage in that property as well.

Fire Department needs to be located centrally, not remotely such as on Safford Drive. Fire Department needs at least 2 acres. Discussion was held regarding properties near to the center of Town and the values of each of the lots. Theoretically Lot 8 should fit since it is 3 acres.

Scully noted that based on the existing contract with the Town, the architects and Bergeron have a limited number of sites to research and examine. Scully asked for clarification regarding which sites the Town wants them to investigate.

Bergeron said one issue is whether or not the properties to be considered would be up for sale. The Monadnock Regional School District owns the land behind Lot 8. Davis said there are cross country trails on the back property. It is possible to build a Town Hall in the front of the property and Fire Department in the rear of the property. Visibility could be a problem for Fire Department exiting the property onto NH Route 32 however. As to the other lot under consideration, lot 12-2, Davis said that the owner is committed to providing a lot for her son on the property and did not think the owner would be willing to sell.

Bergeron suggested that the Town only needs 2 - 3 acres from the School District for expanding Lot 8. Discussion occurred regarding access by the Fire Department since there is a curve on NH Route 32 at that point. Bergeron said he looked at properties north of Swanzey Center, but that you run into issues regarding the flight path for the airport. He noted it is not legal to put a Fire Department under a flight path. Bergeron suggested talking to the Fire Marshall's office for details and explained that glide slope and side slopes are considered as part of the flight path. He said that because of the flight path issues, it would be difficult to get financing should the Town decide to put a Fire Station near the airport. Bergeron said he concentrated on the Swanzey Center area.

Discussion briefly occurred about the Wilcox Building and the Grange properties located across from Town Hall.

Scully also presented a design for the Keene Tree property which is 5 - 6 acres. Bergeron mentioned he had walked the property and reported that there are wetlands and the property is deep into the residential area surrounding it. There is a ten bay garage some 60 feet deep. They have an existing salt shed but it is small and needs work. It was noted that Director of Public Works Dunham has said it is not adequate. Scully said that the building is solid and it may be suitable for a reduced public works program. It does have office space in addition to the garages.

Sutherland said that they haven't looked at the Keene Tree property yet in regard to the Department's programmatic needs. That is an option to investigate further. Bergeron said that the concern is that you could not get everything on this site and the Town would end up with a split operation. It was noted that Dunham wanted 19 or 20 bays. It was reported that \$750,000 is the price being asked for the property. One option suggested by Sutherland would be to rent the Keene Tree property for temporary use. Scully suggested that the Fire Department could be housed there temporarily; however the West Fire Station is right around the corner and having the Central Fire Station there would not be good for responding to calls in other parts of Town.

Discussion occurred about the failure of roof trusses at Town Hall. Town could be held responsible and liable for damages if something happens because the Town has been informed in writing about the problems in the roof.

Bergeron presented another idea using the Homestead Woolen Mills property. Scully mentioned the Plan NH Charrette that occurred in 2012 and the need to have the Town involved if the property is going to be developed. Scully mentioned the option of moving the center of town to West Swanzey. Davis mentioned the potential for West Swanzey Water Company. Scully said the property at \$500,000 is relatively cheap. Bergeron said that the space could be utilized for Town Hall. Parts of the building are solid and some parts need to come down. Scully said that it is town asset. Discussion regarding opening up Winchester Street noted that action would remove some of the newer parts of the buildings. Scully said that the potential is very good for use of the property in a variety of functions. The expense would be renovation cost. The building is a shell. There is more electric infrastructure there currently than needed by the Town. It was noted that this potential for Town use was reviewed in the past and no action was taken. It was pointed out that in the Plan NH Charrette the plan was for taxable businesses to locate there. Scully said he could foresee restaurants and residential lofts as part of a Town Hall center.

Osgood said that he would rather not look at the Woolen Mill property. Scully mentioned that the Town has to think of what happens when a building is vacated. Sutherland suggested the Woolen Mill could work for Town Hall and the Police Department. A fuel bunker was said to have been removed year ago so that there isn't anything considered hazardous today.

Scully said that the Committee has to discuss whether or not the architects should follow up with Keene Tree, Woolen Mill, and Lot 8 on NH Route 32 (and the School District land), and the lots on Pine Street for the DPW and Recycling Center. Bohannon and Davis said that the set up for Pine Street looks good.

Discussion occurred briefly about the Keene Tree property. Someone noted that the Keene Tree building roof has to be replaced. Some bays could be partitioned off for storage.

Osgood said there are good options with Keene Tree, Lot 8, and Pine Street properties. DeAngelis was asked for his opinion and he said that West Swanzey is where business is happening. 50% of calls are over at West Swanzey for the Police, but locating the Police station there might not be easy to sell to the voters. Bohannon asked whether the Master Plan says anything about where growth in the town will occur. Skantze said the chances of manning two or three Fire Department locations in the future are remote. A brief discussion occurred about the location of Fire Departments in residential settings.

Discussion occurred regarding the SAU building which is located next to Town Hall. It was suggested that the Town consider buying it from the school district. The land there is narrow but with the land from Town Hall there is a total of about 2.8 acres. Scully is looking for direction from the Committee. He suggested that the Committee meet again with the architects on June 9, 2014.

Davis said she liked the DPW and Recycling Center plan that includes investigating the availability of extra land on Pine Street.

Motion was made by Sheaff to investigate further the expansion of the DPW site and adding land sufficient to include the Recycling Center at the same location as the DPW, with limited function to be maintained at the current Recycling Center location across the street. There was a second from Bohannon. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Bohannon said it will be cheaper to get two pieces of property on Pine Street, whether purchased or traded one lot for another. Sheaff said it was his opinion that the Committee should no longer consider the Keene Tree property. Davis agreed. Bohannon agreed. The Keene Tree property will no longer be under consideration.

The Homestead Woolen Mill was considered next and Davis said that she would like to see this option explored further; Bohannon would also like to explore the Woolen Mill for Police and Fire and even Town Hall. Sheaff said he would like to explore the Woolen Mill for Police and Town Hall. Osgood was against the idea. Consensus was for Scully to continue to include The Homestead Woolen Mill as a possible site for Town Hall, and Police or Fire Stations.

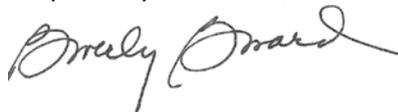
Lot 8 – and land behind it was considered next. Sheaff said yes definitely he would like to see this option pursued for the Fire Station and Town Hall. Bohannon said it would be also worth asking the School District about the SAU building next to Town Hall. It was agreed that the Town will investigate the openness of the School District to selling any of their properties to the Town. Everyone agreed, by consensus, to have Scully investigate further the potential for Lot 8 and the land behind it as a possible site for Town Hall and Central Fire Station.

Next meeting: June 9, 2014

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Osgood, seconded by Bohannon with all in favor. **Motion passed.**
Adjournment occurred at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

Approved June 9, 2014.