

**TOWN OF ENFIELD
MUNICIPAL FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 28, 2019

Present: Ryan Aylesworth (Town Manager), Phil Shipman, Tracy Young, Rob West, Mark Tarantelli, Erik Russell, Shirley Green

Excused: Jean Patten, Maynard Southard

Guests: Phil Neily (Building Inspector), Jim Taylor (Director of Public Works Department), Melissa Hutson (Librarian), Dr. David Beaufait (public)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

The meeting began with the approval of the May 13, 2019 minutes. Motion to approve was made by Ms. Green. Motion seconded by Mr. Young. Approved unanimously (7-0).

Mr. Aylesworth explained that the primary order of business would be a detailed tour of the Whitney Hall building and for Committee members to ask any questions they had about the building's current condition, past/present maintenance issues, and the buildings overall compatibility with current/future municipal needs.

In the course of the tour, Mr. Aylesworth, Ms. Hutson, and Committee members highlighted a number of significant limitations with the facility's design and layout that posed real safety concerns and/or negatively impacted the efficiency of town and library operations. The site visit primarily focused on the interior of the building. Highlights of the tour included the following:

External:

- The building is historically significant and should continue serving as an important asset to the community.
- The building is generally structurally sound and is situated in an advantageous location.
- The building is structurally capable of being enlarged either laterally.
- The overall aesthetic appearance of the building is undermined due to the presence of chipping paint, missing/deteriorated siding, gaps under the eaves, etc.
- The building's current siding has deteriorated to the point where maintenance is not a viable option (it needs to be replaced).
- The siding could be redone in a material that would require less upkeep and lower cost for replacement while still maintaining New England clapboard/shake aesthetic.
- Although the foundation is in relatively good condition for a building of advanced age, there are many cracks and holes that allow water and pests to gain entry.
- The railings and pillars on the front porch area were replaced and painted within the last 10 years.
- The existing layout in the Town Offices presents a wide range of internal traffic flow issues that generate confusion among members of the visiting public.
- The Town Office space is dark and dingy which sends an uninviting message and does not leave a favorable impression to the visiting public.
- Available space does not adequately support existing staffing and does not allow for future growth (i.e., the hiring of additional staff) in order to meet the Town's future needs. Most staff

members are currently operating out of office/work spaces that are significantly undersized for their intended purpose, which results in reduced privacy and productivity. Several professional functions, including building/health inspection, planning & zoning, and human services, that should be physically based in Town Hall are instead based in the DPW building due to inadequate space available in Whitney Hall.

- The lack of a large meeting room capable of hosting Selectboard meetings and other public meetings that garner ample attendance is a major hindrance to the building.
- Although staff are devising a plan to begin more aggressively digitizing physical files to promote efficiencies, the building does not have the capacity to permit additional storage and recordkeeping without being enlarged.
- The presence of the Friends of Mascoma food pantry in the rear of the basement area presents a number of operational concerns. First, this is a sensitive area where the building's utilities (boiler, hot water tank, electric boxes, security control panel, IT network switches, etc.), is located. Second, the large volume of people that utilize the food pantry on Thursday afternoons often causes congestion issues that undermine employee productivity as well as depriving food pantry patrons a reasonable amount of privacy.
- The existing library space is undersized and does not lend itself to the services provided in a 21st century library.
- Although having Shaker Bridge Theatre occupy the upper level of the building provides a wide range of community benefits, it also poses issues to overall building operations (i.e., the upper level space could be repurposed in a number of ways that directly supports the municipal services we are attempting to provide our residents). At the same time, we want the theatre to have a quality space within the Enfield community.
- Kitchen facilities in the Town offices are inadequate in that the tight space results in objects protruding into the main hallway.
- Bathroom facilities are generally adequate.
- The security of the Town Office's on-site/physical server is not an immediate issue, but there are concerns for security and use of space. Suggestion to possibly store the Town Office server with Enfield Police Department server.
- The building's heating system is functioning suboptimally given how the zones are configured relative to the locations of thermostats.
- There are very few windows to let in natural light. Using air conditioning units in the summer also impacts the availability of natural lighting.
- The building does not possess a central cooling system, which considerably reduces energy efficiency. Independent portable air conditioning units have been installed in windows
- There is a lack of space available for private conversations. Town Clerk tends to take people into the conference room for privacy.
- The conference room can only comfortably hold 10-12 people for a meeting.
- The hallway and counter area can be noisy and distracting on busy days. Sometimes people will just walk down the hallway looking for someone immediately available which creates secondary issues relating to site security and privacy

Second Floor – Library

During the site visit, the Committee asked the Librarian, Ms. Hutson, questions regarding the layout, use, and projected needs for updating the library.

The Committee inquired if a second floor would be of benefit to the library. Ms. Hutson acknowledged that a second floor would not be ideal and would require more staff to support the functioning space.

Committee members posed questions about using security cameras to help compensate for the additional space but it was acknowledged that this would create secondary privacy and security issues.

- Almost 14,000 patrons visited the library in 2018 (an increase from 2017). The Committee inquired as to if there were any drops in attendance during specific seasons. Ms. Hutson confirmed it remains steady throughout the year.
- Currently functioning in about 3,000 square feet of space; would benefit to increase to 8,500-9,000 square feet. In this recommendation, Ms. Hutson notes that one section would be a large room for hosting larger programs and/or events.
- There are notable constraints on space for utilization by groups who meet in the library. The largest table seats six. Group attendees can (inadvertently) block off access to different areas of the library while meeting.
- The library currently has two full time and one part time staff member. Ms. Hutson noted that when the library is open there are typically three staff on duty; it would be of benefit to have two more full time staff members.
- There is a lack of staff dedicated space, such as a break room.
- The kitchen is small and cupboards are used as storage for library materials (crafts). A larger refrigerator would be more accommodating to the needs of staff.
- Ms. Hutson and Committee members observed that modern libraries have smaller stacks and compact shelving and present as a more open community space
- The utilization of libraries is shifting to being a community and social space. Ms. Hutson has observed the library used for:
 - a social work space for patrons who telework
 - citizens seeking assistance with computers and electronic bill management
 - clients using computers for job searches
 - a social space for meetings, etc.
 - assistance with printing/faxing
 - access for information; direct assistance to the community
- Computer space does not seem to be an issue. Most people coming to the library tend to bring a personal device for use. The current number of computers is sufficient to meet public needs.
- Having the library in proximity to the Enfield Village School is a priority as there are currently nine classes of EVS students that walk down to the Town Library during the school day to check out books. Committee members inquired if there was a library at EVS. It was confirmed that there is a library but it is limited and is currently undergoing renovations. Classes from EVS have been walking down to the town library since 1974. In addition, Ms. Hutson noted that the visit to the library helps stimulate more family interaction with the Town Library.
- There is a lack of space for the technical aspects of library functions – such as covering and labeling new books. There is one small table in the middle of the library that is difficult to work with as patrons are in the space and making sure the materials are secure (tools safely stored from children, etc.)
- In terms of looks and usability the space is not up to date
- Structural concerns include drafty windows and hearing the theatre above.
- Cooling the space in the summer requires three air conditioning units in the windows to manage effectively.
- There is a vault located in the library where historical materials are stored.

Third Floor – Theatre/Storage space

Mr. Aylesworth informed the Committee of the background of the use of the third-floor space. The theatre has been leased by a performance group, Shaker Bridge Theatre, for several years.

Mr. Neily addressed the Committee regarding code concerns and challenges with the use of the space. The stage is not usable as a performance area because it is not up to code. Current codes require sprinklers to be located under the stage. When there were updates to the sprinkler system on the third floor, there were issues with funding and the sprinkler system was not installed under the stage. The stage is also not load bearing. The stage was originally used by the town for town meetings, graduations, and school plays. Instead of using the stage the group uses the middle of the floor space to perform ‘in the round’, which is a popular form of performance.

Committee members observed spots on the ceiling and questioned if they were current or old. It was acknowledged that this was unknown, but most likely due to condensation that builds up in the attic and then drips down to the ceiling and not due to a leak in the roof. There were also many large lighting fixtures that were set up around the room. They were all authorized and properly anchored. Committee members questioned the electricity usage of the group. Mr. Aylesworth confirmed that the third floor did not have a separate meter, and therefore the electricity usage is included in the rent the group pays. Mr. Aylesworth confirmed that the original rental agreement was for \$100 a month, but has since increased to \$350. Under the original agreement, there were no restrictions on how the group used the space. It was acknowledged that there are many holes that have been drilled into the original floor for production purposes. In recent years it has been required that the group use a large wood platform placed in the middle of the floor to avoid further damage. Dr. Beaufait noted that the large platform and the light fixtures posed some challenges to the use of the space during elections.

Committee members discussed whether there was any financial benefit to the town to have the group there. It was agreed that while there was no financial profit, it did have an indirect benefit of drawing people to the town for commerce. It was inquired as to what the space would be used for if it wasn’t rented out and the Committee unanimously agreed it would be used as a meeting space for larger groups. The Committee continued to the storage in the mezzanine and the cupola. The library has additional storage in this area for seasonal collections, crafts, and items that can be checked out (but do not fit on the current shelving). The mezzanine that overlooks the theatre space is only used for limited theatre lights and lighting controls. The area behind the mezzanine overlook was walled in during previous renovations and is now utilized as storage for theatre materials and old town records. Mr. Aylesworth indicated that the Town Records Committee is forming a procedure to digitize these files.

After finalizing the tour of the building, the Committee returned to the meeting room in the Town Offices to proceed with the agenda.

Committee members discussed the use of the parking lot and its benefits and challenges. Mr. Tarantelli and Mr. Russell noted that there is a common theme among more modern structures that parking is expected to be in the back of the building. It was noted that with the current location of the building that there was limited availability for any other options at this time. There was a question about the use of parking in the front of the library. It was noted that there is an issue when trying to leave the municipal driveway that cars parked near the curb in front of the library or the police station block the view of traffic. There was question on the marking of the spaces.

Dr. Beaufait acknowledged that we have Whitney Hall and it’s going to need repairs. The Police Department building is in good structural shape, but perhaps it is not an ideal layout for the current use. Is there a way to combine the Town Office space across the driveway and use private areas available in the police building and more public needs located in Whitney Hall? Committee members acknowledged there

would be challenges with communications and indicated a need to transport paperwork inter office communications. Mr. Tarantelli acknowledged that the way the police building is built we could use the existing footprint for the library and build up if necessary. Mr. Aylesworth reiterated that this group was created to consider any and all options and to find the balance between best layout, which would likely come at a higher cost, versus using some variation of what we have at more minimal cost. He additionally stressed the need for Committee members and local officials to ask themselves what kind of impression we want our buildings to give our residents and visitors.

The Committee then discussed the proposals presented at the meeting on May 13th, 2019. Mr. Russell asked for elaboration on why it was noted in the documents to be easier to keep the Town Offices in the Whitney Hall building. Town Hall was not mentioned in the Deed or relevant clauses which imply it is possible to move them. Is there a reason why one set of offices would be harder to extract versus another? Mr. Aylesworth referenced the mention of the library in the Deed, and confirmed that an attorney was being consulted for further assistance.

The Committee also discussed the need for an additional administrative staff member as a shared position for the Town Offices; however, it was noted by Mr. Aylesworth that this would not be ideal as the current office space would not allow for the addition of more staff. It was also acknowledged that having an additional cross-trained team member that could capably serve as a 'utility infielder' would help provide coverage for a number of municipal functions in the town. Current office space also does not allow for functions such as Human Services to have a centralized or private location in Whitney Hall. Currently the person in that position has to meet people in their homes or meet at the DPW facility on Lockhaven Road. Mr. Aylesworth noted four town functions – Planning/Zoning, Building/Health Inspection, Human Services, and Recreation – that should be centralized in whatever building houses Town Offices, but currently are not due to current space issues.

Mr. Tarantelli agreed that if there was a faction in town that would lay claim to the library, or location of it, that it would be in the best interests of the Committee to know in advance and have discussions with people in good faith to work something out. Mr. West and Mr. Young agreed that it would not be advantageous to go through a lot of work and not receive the support from the town as well as the Library Trustees. Mr. Aylesworth stressed the need to understand the Deed as it was written to be able to plan accordingly for any functions that should or should not be relocated in the planning process. He noted an example; the Deed for Huse Park explicitly states that the parcel shall be used as a "park," but does not define the use of the word "park." However, NH case law has ultimately determined that a "park" is a place of leisure and recreation unless otherwise stated in the Deed. As such, it would be problematic if the Town redeveloped the parcel for use as something other than a community park.

Mr. Aylesworth requested any questions that the Committee may have for Mr. Neily or Mr. Taylor. It was asked of Mr. Neily if he felt the report was fair and accurate to his knowledge of the building. Mr. Neily confirmed that he agrees with the report. He also acknowledged there is a concern among contractors who do not want the general public to know their business and who need and want privacy to discuss their construction plans. These preferences should be taken into account if/when existing Town office spaces are redesigned in the future or when a new municipal building is designed.

Committee discussion then continued on whether the governance of the Whitney Hall building belongs to the Library of Trustees or not. Mr. Aylesworth understands it to be that the Trustees would have governance over the space that is the library, but not the building itself. Clarification on the understanding of the governance was requested and the Committee agreed to defer further discussion until the historical documents could be reviewed by Town Counsel. Mrs. Green confirmed that there was consensus from the Library of Trustees to move the library to a new building when a new building was proposed. Mrs. Green also expressed concern to be sure that donors were kept apprised as discussions continue about library

changes and improvements. Mr. Aylesworth confirmed that the legal review was in progress and that he would be bringing a summary of Town Counsel's legal opinion to the next Committee meeting for further discussion, and a memo would be posted to the public regarding the findings. Mr. Aylesworth acknowledged concerns to communicate with donors and Committee members to be sure they are consulted in the process.

The Committee then discussed an energy audit that was completed in 2011. Findings indicated there were varying levels of recommendations. The Committee confirmed that the report was the beginning phase of the project and no further actions were taken at the time of the study. Mr. Aylesworth acknowledged having read the report when he started his position as the Town Manager a couple years earlier, but felt it was in the best interest to complete a comprehensive facilities study prior to making changes. He acknowledged that some items could be addressed immediately, such as basic lighting upgrades, while other items may take time to secure funding. This would allow time for further reassessment, collaboration, and the ability to consider all prospective funding regarding the recommendations. Mr. Russell inquired if NH SAVES allows municipalities to participate. He noted that they have a commercial program but does not know further details. The funding would be particularly helpful to address the concerns about building insulation. Mr. Aylesworth agreed to look into NH SAVES for further information.

The conversation turned to available sources of funding and Mr. Aylesworth explained that funding for either a new municipal building or extensive renovations of Whitney Hall is a bit more limited than the funding available for something like an emergency services complex. In the case of an emergency services complex, FEMA has funding as does USDA Rural Development (loans and grants available). Loans generally carry much lower interest than conventional bank financing and can stretch up to 40 years. In theory, available federal grants could offset up to 50% of the total project cost for an emergency services complex, and Mr. Aylesworth believes that Thornton, NH, recently received this level of cost support for a public safety complex.

Mr. Aylesworth reminded Committee members to turn in their "quad charts", which were presented at the last meeting, to be able to compile and organize thoughts on building notes.

It was unanimously agreed that the agenda item for Committee members to share their latest "Big Idea" was tabled for the next meeting due to time constraints.

The final order of business was discussion of the next meeting taking place on June 10, 2019. Mr. Aylesworth proposed completing three separate site visits during this meeting. The Committee will convene at 4pm at the Union Street Fire Station. The Committee will then continue to the Shedd Street building, followed by the Depot Street Ambulance building.

With no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53PM without objection.