

**TOWN OF ENFIELD
MUNICIPAL FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 12, 2019

Present: Tracy Young; Mark Tarantelli; Shirley Green; Jean Patten; Ryan Aylesworth, Town Manager; Maynard Southard; Rob West

Guests: Dominic Albanese, Library Trustee; Francine Lozeau, Library Trustee; Joellen Courtney

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM.

The first order of business was approval of the meeting minutes from July 22, 25 and 29. Motion to approve the July 22 meeting minutes made by Ms. Green. Seconded by Ms. Patten. Mr. Young pointed out a misspelling of the name “Trumbull” in Trumbull Nelson Construction. Vote to approve as amended; unanimous (Ms. Patten abstains as she was not present for the meeting).

Ms. Green made a motion to approve the July 25 meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Mr. Aylesworth. Vote to approve unanimous (Mr. Tarantelli abstains as he was not present for the meeting).

Ms. Green made a motion to approve the July 29 meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Mr. Tarantelli. Vote to approve unanimous (Mr. West and Mr. Southard abstain as they were not present for the meeting).

The next order of business was review and discussion led by Mr. Aylesworth of draft maps that had been produced to represent the geographic distribution of Fire & EMS calls over a three year period. The maps demonstrate that the greatest concentration of calls over the past three years originated in the Enfield village area. Within the village area, the segment of the US Route 4 corridor between the Great View Roller Rink and Family Pharmacy reflected substantially higher call volumes than the residential streets connecting to Main Street and Shaker Hill Road. Mr. Aylesworth explained that mapping police call data was a bit more challenging given that the aggregate numbers of calls were an order of magnitude higher and because members of the Police Department typically respond to calls while on patrol as opposed to from the station. Members of the committee expressed a desire to have maps generated that separate fire calls and ambulance calls. Mr. Aylesworth said he was also working to ensure that the calls for service depicted on the maps reflected only those calls of an urgent nature (i.e., structure fires, alarms, motor vehicle accidents, etc.) from those that were not (i.e., requests for a burn permit).

The group then discussed the proposal for Phase I and Phase II environmental assessment services that Pathways Consulting had prepared at Mr. Aylesworth’s request for the Shedd Street property. The group discussed the merits of proceeding with an assessment in the immediate future vs. applying in October for an EPA brownfields grant administered by the Regional Planning Commission. Consensus emerged that the presence or absence of legacy contaminants on the Shedd Street property would be unlikely to impact the committee’s decision about whether to recommend that the site be redeveloped for a municipal use or further subdivided and sold as residential housing lots. The committee expressed the opinion that if the site was deemed highly advantageous for a future municipal facility the costs of remediation would not act as an insurmountable barrier. Likewise, the committee expressed the opinion that if it was deemed highly advantageous to sell the Shedd Street property the costs of remediation would not change that decision. Mr. Aylesworth indicated he would obtain additional information from the Regional Planning Commission in regards to the timing of the brownfields grant award notifications. It was also suggested

that the Town should ask Pathways about the possibility of beginning to collect field samples prior to knowing the outcome of the grant award and also prior to winter weather making field work more challenging. The general consensus of the committee is that the Town should make every effort to have the costs of the environmental assessment offset so long as the timeline for having the work done enabled final results to be available before the end of 2019.

Committee members then went around the table and shared their individual perspectives and preliminary impressions regarding how to best address the Town's current municipal facility needs.

Mr. Tarantelli spoke first and expressed the viewpoint that the ambulance building on Depot Street is completely inadequate and that the ambulance service needs to vacate that space as soon as possible. Mr. Tarantelli said that he believes bringing the Fire Department and Ambulance Department under one roof makes total sense, but, at present, he wasn't completely sold on the merits of bringing the Police Department under the same roof. Mr. Tarantelli acknowledged that there may be economies of scale by having the police facility be physically integrated with fire and ambulance, but noted that communities with all three functions under one roof still have a clear line of physical separation between the police department and fire/EMS.

Mr. Tarantelli went on to say that he feels that the Town of Enfield would benefit greatly from a Town Hall analogous to what the committee toured in Sunapee. A building that is relatively compact (albeit considerably more spacious than the existing municipal office space in Whitney Hall) but logically laid out and well appointed. He felt the space was very professional. It is Mr. Tarantelli's view that Whitney Hall should be entirely used by the library, potentially including the third floor presently occupied by Shaker Bridge Theatre.

Mr. Young spoke next. Mr. Young believes that construction of a public safety facility that houses police, fire and EMS is of critical importance. He sees very compelling advantages associated with having all functions under one roof and thinks there are simply too many hurdles to renovating the Police Department's current space to be an adequate 21st century police facility. The advantages he sees bringing all three departments under one roof include shared spaces for administration, training and emergency operations, fitness facilities, shower and locker facilities, and more. Mr. Young also believes that sharing walls and utilities will be much more economical in the long run and promote cohesiveness among personnel. Mr. Young said it was his belief that such a facility should be designed and constructed in a way that was "modular and scalable" to allow for future growth. Mr. Young pointed to the expansive basement space that was developed for the Police Department within Sunapee's public safety facility. This effectively doubled the Police Department's usable area and gives them tremendous space for storage and future growth. Mr. Young said that the merits of constructing a public safety facility with a useable basement should be thoroughly explored in Enfield's case.

Like Mr. Tarantelli, Mr. Young also liked the "food court" quality of the Sunapee and Hartford municipal offices. He feels that a layout that allows the public to gain access to multiple departments and customer service centers from a central receiving area is incredibly efficient. However, Mr. Young believes that Whitney Hall is better/best used as the home of municipal offices. He believes that municipal offices should occupy the basement and first floors and provide for a large meeting room and potentially other smaller meeting spaces on the upper most level (current home of Shaker Bridge Theatre).

Mr. Young believes the best future use of the existing police facility is to double both the building's length and width (the resulting structure would be approximately 64' X 100') to allow for the first floor (street level) to become the new home of an expansive single level public library. An elevator would need to be added to the rear of the building to promote ADA accessibility and facilitate access to the upper level from lower level parking behind the building.

Mr. Young believes the resulting basement area (which will have also increased in size by threefold) will make an optimal location for eventual home of the Enfield Recreation Department. The space would support offices, activity rooms, and ample storage. Mr. Young believes this would free up the Community Building for expanded use by other groups.

Mr. West spoke next. Mr. West expressed the strong opinion that the ambulance service needs to be moved out of its existing location on Depot Street. Like Mr. Tarantelli and Mr. Young, he believes that this facility is incapable of effectively serving the ambulance into the future and believes that the Union Street fire station is in a similar situation in terms of the feasibility of renovating and expanding that space to the point where it could serve effectively as a 21st century fire station. Mr. West advocates for collocating the Police Department with the other public safety functions. He believes that there will be considerable economies of scale in doing so, and sees advantages in having shared training, administrative, and exercise facilities. He especially believes it important to collocate these functions under one roof when it comes to having a centralized emergency operations center (EOC).

Mr. West expressed uncertainty about the optimal location for a public safety complex, but indicated that he did not believe it would be wise to site a facility of that sort in a location with low public visibility.

Mr. West went on to say that he believes that the Town's municipal offices are in dire need of an upgrade and expansion as the current space in the basement of Whitney Hall is entirely too cramped, dingy and poorly laid out to serve the Town's needs effectively into the future.

Mr. West was blown away by the quality of design and construction of the Sunapee library. He likened it to a library at the college he attended. He expressed the belief that the Enfield public library needs considerably more space and nicer space, but is currently unsure as to the best approach to make that happen.

Ms. Green spoke next. Ms. Green expressed the belief that fire and EMS need new space and feels it would be most economical to collocate the Police Department into a shared public safety facility.

Ms. Green prefers that the Enfield public library ultimately be housed in a standalone one-story building, but acknowledged that a significantly renovated Whitney Hall could be gorgeous. She believes that if a standalone library is not feasible, building an addition off the rear of Whitney Hall – to allow the library and municipal offices to continue to occupy the same shared structure – would be an attractive option.

At this time Ms. Lozeau (guest) expressed the opinion that a 6,400 square foot library along the lines of what Mr. Young had proposed with a by significantly expanding and renovating the current police facility would not provide adequate space. She cited previously completed architectural studies that suggested the appropriate size for Enfield's public library is between 7,500 and 10,000 square feet.

Ms. Patten spoke next. She indicated that she shared many of the views that had already been expressed. She believes that fire and EMS definitely belong together, and that the current ambulance facility in particular is completely inadequate.

Ms. Patten indicated that she genuinely feels poorly for municipal office staff every time she visits Whitney Hall because the existing office space is very undesirable, cramped, and not conducive for the work being done. If the Police Department was to be relocated to a new public safety facility with fire and EMS, she believes that municipal offices should ultimately migrate into the vacated police station following major renovations and significant expansion (likely in the rear of the building) to allow for

adequate office space for all municipal staff and a sizeable meeting space for boards and committee meetings and other official functions.

Mr. Southard spoke next. Mr. Southard expressed the view that it was most optimal to house police, fire and EMS into one shared public safety facility. He then said that accessibility of such a public safety facility is of paramount importance. Mr. Southard does not believe that the Shedd Street property is advantageous for the future site of a public safety complex due to its poor accessibility. At this time other committee members signaled their general concurrence with this view and pointed out that fire engines responding to calls along US Route 4 would likely have to depart Shedd Street via Union Street (a very indirect and inefficient route) due to the challenges or dangers of attempting to turn onto US Route 4 via either of the Baltic Street intersections. Committee members pointed to very poor visibility to the east by the intersection at Mickey's and poor visibility and nearly impossible lefthand turn to the west by the intersection at the Baltic Mill.

Mr. Southard went on to say that, in his view, Whitney Hall should be the home of the library and that the library should have the ability to occupy the entire building. He sees the Shaker Bridge Theatre as a bonus for the space.

Once the Police Department is rehomed to a new public safety facility he believes the current police facility should become the home of the municipal offices following complete renovation and considerable expansion. The viewpoint was expressed that the size of the building would likely need to at least be doubled in order to allow for adequate receiving area and ultimately meet the personnel workstation and group meeting space needs of the municipal offices.

At this time Mr. Albanese (guest) expressed surprise that members of the committee did not appear to be more interested in building an addition off the rear of Whitney Hall, to be coupled with major interior redesign and renovation, such that the building would have the capacity to continue housing both municipal offices and the Enfield public library.

Mr. Aylesworth indicated he would refrain from offering his own viewpoints and preferences into the public record at this time.

The final order of business was a brief discussion surrounding the scheduling of the next meeting. Mr. Aylesworth said that it would not be problematic if the committee opted against trying to insert an extra meeting between now and the next regularly scheduled meeting (August 26) because it would give department heads time to respond to his request for a detailed written accounting of their respective facility needs. It was agreed the committee would next meet on August 26 at 6:30 PM in the Public Works conference room.

Ms. Patten motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. West seconded. Vote to adjourn unanimous (no abstentions).

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 pm.