

**TOWN OF ENFIELD  
MUNICIPAL FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 19, 2019**

**Present:** Phil Shipman, Tracy Young, Mark Tarantelli, Shirley Green, Erik Russell, Rob West (excused at 5:58pm), Jean Patten, Maynard Southard, Ryan Aylesworth (Town Manager)

**Guests:** Keith Thomas (CIP Committee), Bob Cusick (CIP Committee), Dan Kiley (CIP Committee), Roy Holland (Police Chief), Mr. John Dale of Bread Loaf Architects

**Excused:**

**Call to Order**

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

**Review and Approve Meeting Minutes –November 12, 2019**

It was pointed out that Mr. Kiley's was misspelled ("Kylee") in the draft November 12 minutes.

Ms. Patten requested that the word "approximately" be inserted before "\$280,000" on Page 1.

Ms. Patten pointed out a typo on Page 3 where it should read that frost walls would need to be four to five "feet" in depth.

Mr. Shipman asked that "...recommendations made are not binding and can be changed if necessary" on Page 2 be revised to say "...recommendations made are not binding and final decisions will be made by the Board of Selectmen."

Mr. Shipman asked that a revision be made on Page 3 so that a sentence would read "It was noted that adding/subtracting a bay would influence the cost approximately \$100,000."

Mr. Shipman asked that sentence two of the second to last paragraph on Page 3 be revised to say "Mr. Aylesworth noted that there may be usable materials (subject to quality) on the site already..."

Mr. Southard motioned to accept the minutes as amended. Ms. Green seconded. Vote in favor of the motion (9-0).

Ms. Patten motioned to accept the nonpublic minutes as written. Mr. Young seconded. Vote in favor of the motion (9-0).

Mr. Aylesworth made a motion to seal the nonpublic minutes. Mr. Young seconded. Vote in favor of the motion (9-0).

**Discussion of Bread Loaf's Latest Conceptual Designs**

Mr. Dale walked the committee through some preliminary conceptual designs for Town office and library renovations/expansion. In doing so, Mr. Dale provided a breakdown of overlapping/shared spaces between the library and municipal offices.

Mr. Dale provided the committee with four different broad options with regard to library and municipal office renovations/expansion. Three of these options solely focused on renovations and expansion of Whitney Hall (the current home to both Town offices and library). The fourth option involved the Town offices moving into a renovated/expanded variation of the existing police station and Whitney Hall (with renovations) remaining the home of the library.

Although precise cost estimations were not available at this time, Mr. Dale was able to rank order each of the options in terms of price so that the committee could get a sense of where each option would fall relative to one another.

During this portion of the meeting, there was a significant amount of discussion about the Shaker Bridge Theatre and the best approach for renovating/redesigning space in Whitney Hall given the possibility that the theatre may elect to relocate to a new facility at some point in the future. For this reason, several members of the committee expressed the belief that primary consideration when renovating or expanding Whitney Hall should be given to the needs of the municipality for Town functions. Mr. Southard, sharing his perspective as a member of the Enfield Village Association board, expressed the belief that the theatre conveys a wide range of direct and indirect benefits to the community that should be taken into account as the committee aims to strike to the right balance. The group expressed consensus that it would not make sense to simply set the theatre space aside and pursue an extensive renovation/expansion to Whitney Hall without renovating the upper level. As such, the general opinion was the upper level should be renovated to become an open multi-purpose room that would be designed and managed/maintained in a manner that allows multiple functions accommodating those activities – which could include Shaker Bridge Theatre – deemed in the overall best interest of the Town.

To minimize the need to expand the existing footprint of Whitney Hall and also reduce the need for the upper level theatre space to be laid out in a manner that accommodated needs of both the existing theatre group and local officials for meeting space, Mr. Aylesworth inquired about the possibility of the existing police station being converted to a multi-purpose meeting/hearing room (first floor) with the walkout basement then being utilized by a community group that would otherwise operate out of the municipal office space. It was decided that this possibility should be further contemplated moving forward.

The committee provided Mr. Dale with feedback on what they saw as pros and cons of each layout from the standpoint of program delivery. Mr. Dale indicated he would incorporate this feedback when creating more detailed conceptual designs for those options that will receive additional consideration because they are in line with the needs of Town personnel/officials and the residents of the community.

**Public Safety Facility**

Mr. Dale presented an updated site plan depicting an approximately 15,000 square foot public safety facility situated on a particular parcel of interest along the US Route 4 corridor. Discussion ensued regarding possible modifications that would be needed in order to make the site a suitable location for a public safety facility.

Mr. Aylesworth shared new information regarding the changing availability of certain federal grants that had previously been identified as likely sources of matching funds. Agency guidelines have changed and Enfield's relatively high median income and other factors will make the Town less eligible for grant funding it would have otherwise been eligible for in past years.

Mr. Shipman noted that he and Mr. Aylesworth had discussed this matter prior to the meeting, and Mr. Shipman expressed the sentiment that, while he personally hates debt, if the committee ultimately determines that certain facility upgrades are needed in order to provide desired public services, then the committee should support whatever level of financial investment is needed to achieve that. If that means the Town needs to borrow more money due to changing availability in grant dollars, then he would support the Town borrowing what is needed for the projects to move forward. Mr. West signaled agreement with that philosophy.

Mr. Aylesworth provided the committee with estimates of annual debt service payments property tax rate implications if \$6 million was borrowed based on current interest rates for a 20-, 25- or 30-year loan. Mr. Aylesworth said he was operating under the belief that at least \$1 million of the total cost would be offset by funds raised privately by the library for library-specific upgrades. Mr. Aylesworth estimated that the estimated debt service would increase the tax rate by \$0.53/\$1000 to \$0.69/\$1000 depending on the length of the loan repayment period.

Mr. Shipman reminded the committee that its charge is to make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen that are tied to program/service needs. It would then be the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen and Town Manager, in consultation with other Town boards and committees as appropriate, to determine what proposals will be presented to residents at Town Meeting once the financial implications are thoroughly analyzed. Other committee members signaled concurrence with this stated approach/understanding.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, December 3, 2019 @ 4:00 PM (DPW Facility)

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Tarantelli made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Southard seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion. (9-0)

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23pm.