

**Fire and Ambulance Building Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes, 3rd MTG**  
**Thursday October 19th, 2023**  
**10:00am – 12:30pm Select Board Room**

**Members Present:** Carl Mabbs-Zeno, Tony Cassady, Carol Nelson, Mandy Sliver, Sarah Steinberg Heller  
**Staff:** Seth MacLean, Chief Ed Walker, Gretchen Rae  
**Selectboard Liaison:** Bill Taylor

**Visiting:**

Nicole MacStay – Town Administrator  
Fash Farashahi – IT Director  
Marisa DiBiaso – Hoyle Tanner  
Keith Kelley CM – Harvey Construction  
Jason LaCombe – SMP Architecture  
Paul Leveille – Resilient Buildings Group

*All in attendance referenced within will be referred to by their first names.*

**Meeting Minutes for Approval September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023:**

- *Motion:* Bill made a motion to accept draft minutes with amendments
- *Vote:* Tony seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Town IT / Storage Space Discussion – Nicole and Fash**

- Rationale for the need for IT backup systems and paper records storage to be built into this design.
  - Nicole explained the timing is opportune. The Town's network plan requires 2 methods of information backup.
  - Paper files are currently retained in the basement of the Townhouse which is not climate controlled and is prone to flooding in the old building. Record retention is required by law.
  - This new Fire and Ambulance Building is expected to be the last major building in a minimum of 30 years so this is the window of opportunity to make these upgrades.
  - Fash shared that he and Nicole have discussed with the CIP committee the status of the Town's technology needs now and as the Town grows.
    - Carl asked Fash how long into the future the proposed set-up in this design will be sufficient, Fash answered for at least 30 years in conjunction with duplications held in the Cloud (virtual). As more and more data is held virtually, there's less physical space needed even with decades of growth.
  - Nicole added that the current paper copy filing system needs a better management plan if we are to also have enough physical space for the files maintained by law such as tax and personnel files.
    - Jim Hassinger in the audience asked if this portion of the building's costs could be considered by the CIP committee to find funding outside of this project budget. These IT and recordkeeping requirements aren't only about the needs of Fire & Ambulance but rather a need for all of Town business and should other departments be covering some of the costs.
    - Nicole answered that this approach may overcomplicate things if the whole building is funded through a special warrant article.
- Jason stated that the plan currently houses 6 server racks with front & back access and a work counter with storage. Fash needs more details on cabling and drops.

## Plan Review Updates - Jason

- Tweaks to fitness room space with equipment layout from info given by Fire staff.
- Minor modifications to kitchen area.
- Training room with furniture layout options (about 40 chairs) (EOC space and technology needs considered)
- Current building sq ft 23,626, cut down about 800 sqft.

## Hoyle Tanner Site Plan Review – Marisa

- Initial site design by Ironwood with Hoyle Tanner taking over this work.
- Grading and truck maneuvering and plan for stormwater addressed. This site is “a very, very tight site” in order to do the detention and treatment required by DES. \*Biggest challenge of the site is space for the stormwater and the lack of slope to the land.
  - Changes to plan recently made: consolidated entrances to a gated DPW parking lot, 99 parking spaces, circular driveway in front of PCC is up for discussion due to a few concerns. An option to consider is to reconfigure the gravel drive for DPW land to the side of the PCC.
    - Mandy and Nicole shared that further off-site conversations need to be had including recreation, food pantry and farmer’s market people about changes to the front of the PCC while designing the shared space of the new Fire Station building.
  - Carl asked what the status of conversations with the Conservation Committee about the wetlands is. Seth said they have been in contact and are trying to schedule a session between them and Hoyle Tanner in November. Nicole provided feedback that there is a goal of the ConCom to see a design with improvements of the wetland functions.
  - Ed suggested instead of a sidewalk from Rt. 101 and people cross in front of the apparatus exits, to paint a stripe for walking/biking width along road.

## Energy Model Updates - Paul

- Revised Energy Model presentation
- Line by Line changes from feedback from the Peterborough Energy Committee (*handout available*)
- Discussion about the involvement of self-produced electricity through a proposed solar array vs. electricity delivered through a supplier and which one is designed into this plan.
  - Carl asked if this committee is charged with deciding that money within the project budget is about paying for the power from Eversource or the infrastructure costs (proposed 515 panels @ approx. \$750,000) negotiated through a power/purchase agreement deal, i.e., alternative funding options. Mandy has asked that this discussion continue at a later meeting.

## Mechanical Systems Discussion with Budget Impacts – Jason & Keith

- Keith shared “high-level” costs of some mechanical systems options not already discussed at the last committee meeting.
  - **Baseline** and current modelling, code compliant, typical building use (gas-fired boiler, VRF) pricing= **\$50sq ft \$1.2mil mechanical systems.**
  - Premium cost options=
    - **Electric** boiler adds about \$10 to base price = **\$60 sq ft \$1.4million, or \$200,000 premium.**
    - **Water Source** (with intent to become ground source) heat pump **\$75sq ft or \$400,00 premium** for a total of \$2mil for mechanical system. Moving to **geothermal** (32 well drilling and earth work) is **approx. \$105 sq ft adding an additional \$500,000** (+\$400,000 for water source) now totals \$2.5million for project’s mechanical system.
    - **Air Source** Heat Pump, **\$70sq ft, \$300,000 premium** above base.

- Keith looked at current municipal buildings in town with **biomass** & VRF systems. (electric or gas boilers) and he believes that he could do this system with the Fire Station Building and meet the budget cap (equal to the baseline system) or potentially come under budget.
- Bill brought up the topic of grants or rebates to pay for these premium systems, but the topic needs greater fleshing out before a cost analysis can be accurate.
- Jason reminded the committee that there is a lot of moving parts in a multimillion-dollar project so if this committee feels strongly towards one system than another, Jason's team could start looking at other areas of the design to cut to NOT go over budget.
- Bill pointed out three questions: "What are the upfront/installation costs, long term operating/maintenance costs, and environmental (green energy) impacts of the systems proposed.
- Jim reminded the group that the Town's warrant vote received a high 70's percent approval for the 100% renewal energy usage goals. Sarah countered that there will also be voters whose priority focus will be costs of the HVAC systems, not how green the energy use is. This committee must find a balance when making design decisions.
- Seth commented that solar (all electric) is at the top of the Energy Committee's list of system goals and has scalable phasing for growth.

**First round of committee voting to provide the design team with a direction to focus for a mechanical system used as basis of design:**

- *Motion:* Bill made a motion to choose a biomass system and use cost savings towards solar.
- *Vote:* Sarah seconded.
- *Discussion:*
  - Biomass can't be fully electric with solar power. Biomass burners may debatably come from a renewal energy source, but the system is still putting carbon into the air.
  - Energy committee members are requesting one week review time to analysis the information provided today. Mandy did not think we had an additional week to analysis the information further.
  - Keith amendment suggestion for consideration of making a decision today and not postpone: *biomass or electric boiler*, either could be engineered to swap.
  - Carol does feel that the information presented today is too much and too important to decide today.
  - Seth acknowledges that these are difficult decisions but he's clear that his charge has been to have numbers in-hand when the town begins budget season.
  - Carl suggests that if another meeting about this topic is required, then a meeting needs to be scheduled.
  - Jason did share that he personally likes biomass options and it's a boost for our local economy, especially in a timber-filled State but that said, he wants the committee to narrow down and agree on one direction to take the design efforts so that a draft budget (value engineering) could start.
  - Tony asked if a funding source does become available in 60 days to any of the options discussed, can that then change which system is chosen. Keith answered yes but requires a redesign.
- *All opposed. Motion didn't carry.*
- *New Motion:* Carl proposes to gather again with this committee, Design Team and Energy committee a week from today (Thursday Oct 26<sup>th</sup>).
- *Vote:* Tony seconded.
- *Discussion:*
  - Sarah thinks the committee should make a decision today.
- *Carl & Tony in Favor, Mandy, Carol, Sarah & Bill opposed. Motion didn't carry.*

- *New Motion:* Bill proposes a water source heat pump as basis of design with energy source TBD.
- *Vote:* Sarah seconded.
- *Discussion:*
  - Keith and Jason will make this a viable and on-budget design proposal. Jason is confident that the Fire Station will function as a Fire Station.
  - Ed shared that it's important that residents of this Town are comfortable in the operations of this building, including the goal of clean energy. The goodwill efforts made in consideration of the Energy Committee will go a long way in getting this building approved of.
  - Carol asked what is the deadline for the decision on boiler energy type. Jason's plan is to discuss with the engineers a water-source heat pump system, electric boiler, and cooling tower. Jason also reminded the group that there's still 8 months left to formalize all the current moving parts and to make modifications from this baseline.
  - Carol believes that the committee should vote on Biomass today and move on.
  - Sarah suggested an amended motion to combine both this motion and Carl's earlier motion of meeting again next Thursday Oct. 26<sup>th</sup> for further discussion on energy source options with a water source heat pump system. Jason shared that at the next meeting on Thursday, that this committee either redirect the focus or affirm the energy source decided on today.
  - Tony asked Keith to provide all costs referenced in the systems discussed earlier in the meeting.

**AMENDED MOTION PER SETH:** "Option 2 is the preferred basis of design, pending approval with more discovery with this committee reconvening next week ahead of the public session to confirm the decision."

- **All in Favor. Amended Motion carried.**

**Public Visioning Session Planning:** Mandy & Seth to meet later to confirm outline for the public forum (offline to schedule).

Comments: Carl provided updates to his community meet & greet events at the Farmer's Market and the Recycling center. Great responses from the community.


**Next Building Committee Meeting:** Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup> at 5pm, Peterborough Library 1833 room

**Next Listening Session:** Thursday, October 26th at 6pm, Peterborough Library 1833 room

Motion to Adjourn meeting at 12:29pm, All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Gretchen Rae, Business Manager DPW

BUILDING COMMITTEE Co-CHAIR: Carl Mabbs-Zeno

 Signature