

Master Plan Implementation Committee

Minutes of March 15, 2011

The meeting was called to order by Ed Forsberg, Chairman, at 6:00 pm in the Main Meeting Room, Town Hall.

Committee Members Present: Ed Forsberg, Dick Power, Al Goetz, Dominick Ianno, Dick Nottebart, Roger Turner, Mary Kent, Bruce Norwell, John Desmond, Mike Berry

Visitors Present: Don Anderson, Superintendent of Buildings; Bob O'Brien, DPW Director

Staff Present: Don Johnson, Stephanie Mercandetti, Maura Therrien

The purpose of the meeting was to conduct interviews with Town department heads regarding their departments' needs for new or renovated space for their ongoing facilities needs. Don Anderson, Superintendent of Buildings, and Bob O'Brien, DPW Director, were present for this purpose.

Ed started the meeting by referencing correspondence received and an update on the Spring Brook project:

- The Board of Selectmen sent a letter notifying the MPIC that on Friday, 3/18 at 11:00 AM in the Senior Center they will be conducting a public forum on the Walpole Woodworkers site. Mary will attend the forum on behalf of the MPIC.
- The Ponds Committee sent a memo inviting the MPIC to attend their meeting with the Conservation Commission at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, 3/23.
- Ed noted that a Capital Budget request for \$80,000 has been filed for downtown revitalization. Stephanie distributed a spreadsheet detailing project costs and sources of funding. The project is beneficial as it serves as a gateway to the downtown, enhances the downtown municipal campus, and makes good use of underutilized green space in the downtown. Ed also noted that we need to tie up loose ends with Al French or Denny Nackoney of the Bay Circuit Alliance, who might have some funding available for contribution toward this project. The amount of \$700 is needed for a match.

Don Anderson then spoke relative to the Town buildings and his department's needs. It was duly noted that his department's purpose is to maintain what we have, not to plan for other departments' needs. His department is in good shape, building maintenance is fine. He oversees nine people: six DPW workers and three custodians. His department is headquartered within 4,000 square feet on the back of the main garage at the DPW Yard on Washington Street.

The Washington Street DPW facility has seven repair bays; the bigger trucks need bigger bays with drive-throughs, and lifts. There is a new salt shed building and a workshop. Mary asked, where would we put the diesel fuel holding tanks for DPW vehicles? Bob expanded on that thought, noting that the DPW vehicles had a difficult time getting diesel fuel in the snowstorms.

Don A. went on. The Town needs its own kennel. The old pump house on the corner of Norfolk and West Streets is in good shape to refurbish with kennels. The estimated cost for this conversion is \$85,000.

Blackburn Hall is old and solid, well used by the recreation department, outside needs work, could be used for office space. Dominick suggested retrofitting the exterior of Blackburn Hall, done properly to preserve the historical look. Regular maintenance is ongoing, but the interior may be used many ways. Roger said, the MA Historical Commission is enthusiastic about getting Blackburn Hall on the State Register of Historic Places.

Don A. continued on. The Police Department needs a new station. Prisoner control, the training room, and the dispatch area are particular concerns with the present building.

The Fire Department main station was built in 1955. New trucks are bigger so bays are off to the side, piecemealed together. East Walpole Fire Station has some water issues but is in useable condition. South Walpole Fire Station is not manned either, needs a boiler, used as a gym and to store vehicles. Al suggested tearing down the old fire station and building the new one right there.

Dick N. asked whether Fire and Police departments should stand alone or be in a combined facility? Don A. responded, I have no opinion; my department heats and maintains.

Don A. went on. The Council on Aging area in Town Hall has a good sized kitchen area and the floor has been redone, but the Council on Aging should be asked, does it fulfill their needs?

Library - old (present) library: the Housing Partnership is involved in a feasibility study to develop the building into affordable housing units: the architect performing the study designed fourteen dwelling units, mostly single units but the state wants more family units. The East Walpole Library building is nicely renovated but lacks parking spaces.

The School Department has plans and ideas. Recently roof work has been done on some of the schools. The High School is renovated. Some schools need new windows.

Dominick asked, what would happen to the old library, fire, and police buildings if they were empty? Don A. responded that empty buildings are not good abandoned; they must be heated and maintained. Dick N. asked Don A., do you have a facility plan in your mind for the old buildings? Don A. responded, as of now, there is no plan for the old library; it needs work and has limited parking. John said, this is a good question. Who would know about decommissioning old buildings? Mary said, maybe we could all discuss demolition and reuse. Dick P. said, Don A. maintains, he does not plan.

Master Plan Implementation Committee
Minutes of 3-15-11

Don J. asked, how does the retrofit of buildings for energy conservation measures work in with our Green Communities planning grant? Don A. responded, NStar has given the Town \$100,000 for energy conservation measures in lighting.

Dominick asked, are there any Town Hall issues? Don A. responded, not major issues, the metal roof is good for fifty years, the cupola may need work, and the basement has water but not flooding.

Bruce asked, is there a practical use for the Walpole Woodworkers' buildings if dismantled? Don A responded, I have to look at them. Are they prefabricated? Where can they be used? John asked, could they be used as garages?

Dominick asked, can we reject options? Ed responded, we find facts, compile data, and refer to the Board of Selectmen.

Don A. mentioned how Franklin funds their capital improvements, providing a copy of a memo that had been sent to architect Kevin Uniacke from Jeff Nutting, Franklin Town Administrator. Mary was interested in other towns borrowing money to develop their Capital Improvement Plans, how they go back after paying it off to borrow more, avoiding overrides. Schools are included.

At 7:30 pm, Dominick moved to adjourn, Mike B. seconded. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,