

**Center Harbor Board of Selectmen
and Building Advisory Committee
Public Hearing Minutes
Wednesday, December 14, 2011**

CALL TO ORDER: At 6:30 p.m. Chairman Randy Mattson called the Board of Selectmen and Building Advisory Committee public hearing to order. Selectmen Charley Hanson and David Hughes were present. Building Advisory Committee members Bob Chance, Keith Fitzgerald, Jackie Baker and Mary Alice Warner were present. Architect Gary Goudreau, Bonnette, Page & Stone Construction Manager Keith McBey, Police Chief Mark Chase, Fire Chief John Schlemmer, Meredith News Reporter Erin Plummer and Selectmen's Secretary Robin Woodaman and twenty-five (25) Center Harbor residents were also in attendance.

Ms. Mattson welcomed those in attendance for the public hearing to discuss the proposed renovations and additions to the Municipal Building. She introduced the members of the Board of Selectmen, Building Advisory Committee (BAC), Architect Gary Goudreau, Construction Manager Keith McBey, Chief Chase and Chief Schlemmer.

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT:

Mr. Hughes reported there have been a couple of different proposals for a Police Station, which were defeated. He explained the BAC and Selectmen have had meetings and discussed a lot of different ideas. Mr. Hughes reported on the BAC charge:

To work with the Board of Selectmen to determine the most cost effective plan for providing a fully functioning police space on the Town owned property adjacent or connected to the current Town offices and public safety facility, with consideration of space needs for other Town departments located in this complex.

Mr. Hughes reported the Selectmen and BAC looked at the whole use of the Municipal Building and are proposing moving the administration forward into a new addition and renovating the current administrative area and rear addition for the Police Department. He reported there is a cost estimate for the proposed project, which will improve many Town departments, but the final cost won't be known until there is a final design which is put out to bid.

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED PROJECT:

Mr. Goudreau presented the proposed project and reported the following:

- The proposal will square off the void in front of the Municipal Building with an addition, renovate the existing administrative space and construct an addition in the back of the building.
- The Fire Department's 420 square foot conference room, which is currently being used by the Police Department, will go back to the Fire Department.
- The current restrooms will be used by the Fire Department and new, ADA compliant restrooms will be constructed in the back of the building.

- The current Town Offices utilizes 1,800 square feet; the proposal will increase the space to 2,350 square feet.
- The proposed design increases the size of the current meeting room by 50%. The proposed meeting room will have a folding partition to allow for two (2) meetings in that room at the same time.
- The proposed design allows for separating the Town Clerk and Tax Collector office into separate offices, and will give Parks & Recreation a separate office.
- The previously proposed Police Station designs were for between 4,000 square feet and 4,700 square feet; the new proposal is for 2,450 square feet for the Police Station.
- The reduction in size of the proposed Police Station is attributed to using common services such as bathrooms, mechanical spaces and the lobby. Mr. Goudreau reported there is no holding cell in the proposed design, Police interviews will be conducted in the booking room, the evidence storage area, Chief's office and secretary's office are smaller and there is a single locker room, which would have a privacy lock.
- The rear of the building will be the primary entrance for the Police Department, but it can also be accessed from the front entrance.
- The Selectmen and BAC looked at models of elevation and settled on the best exterior image for Center Harbor.

DISCUSSION:

- **Proposed project cost:** Carol Thompson asked the cost of the proposed project compared to the project proposed last year. Mr. Hanson reported the proposed cost is close to the same as last year, \$1,100,000 and explained the cost would be reduced when the project is bid out. Ms. Mattson reported the Selectmen and BAC have wrestled with the proposed cost. She explained at the last meeting they discussed using approximately \$120,000 from the Public Safety Facility Capital Reserve Fund and additional funds from the Town's unreserved fund balance in hopes to reduce the bond to as low as \$850,000. She explained this project improves the function of the Town's departments.
- **Rationale in including municipal offices:** Gwen Bronson reported last year's proposal was for a Police Station and asked the rationale for including the municipal offices in this proposal. Mr. Hughes reported it is based on space needs and explained the new proposal will allow for separate offices for the Town Clerk and Tax Collector who currently share an office.
- **Storage:** Mr. Hughes reported the vault will remain the same in the proposed design and explained State requirements for record retention. He explained the Brooks House is used for cold storage. Ms. Mattson explained some Town records can be digitalized, but others have to be retained as hard copies. Ms. Bronson asked if the Town can anticipate the State coming up to date with their records retention processes; Mr. Hughes explained the State looks at things differently. Ms. Mattson reported the proposed design won't allow for all items stored in the Brooks House to be stored here. Mr. Hughes reported the proposed design has lower ceilings and attic trusses which will allow for additional attic storage. Mr. Goudreau reported 20% of the attic will be available for cold storage space. Ms. Warner reported there is additional storage in the proposed offices. Ms. Mattson reported the Fire Department

will get back two spaces; the conference room and the rear bay which will improve the Fire Department's storage. She explained separating some offices should also improve the storage situation. Ms. Bronson requested the Selectmen communicate with the Legislature, and pressure the Town's Representatives, regarding the terms of storage. She reported so much of the project is being driven by storage needs. Ms. Mattson reported the project is not driven by storage space. Ms. Bronson reported there has been discussion regarding the great need for storage.

- **Basement or crawl space:** John Thompson asked about construction either a basement or a crawl space to help with the space needs. Mr. Goudreau reported a geo tech engineer would be required to test the soil and water table. He explained a geo tech survey was performed when there was a proposal to construct a Police Station on the Brooks property and Morrill Park and reported they hit water at five (5) feet so it would not have been cost effective for a basement in that location. Mr. Thompson reported he feels it would be sensible to investigate this possibility. Mr. Goudreau reported that may raise issues depending on what the basement is used for and explained an elevator could be required.
- **Wall:** Richard Drenkhahn asked if the Cary Mead Meeting Room wall would remain the same. Mr. Goudreau reported it will and explained the sally port will extend 27' to 30' in the rear, but will be set in by one (1) foot.
- **Property line:** Mr. Goudreau reported the existing building is one (1) foot over the property line. He explained the proposed sally port and booking room will be one (1) foot in from the property line and the proposed addition will be in by 2'7" to keep it on the Town's property.
- **Construction selection process:** Chris Johnson questioned the construction selection process and asked if the lowest bid would be accepted for every phase of construction, or would consideration be given to local contractors. Ms. Mattson reported the Town has a purchasing policy in place which allows the Town to deal locally whenever possible. Mr. McBey reported in the public work format, it's worth extra costs to help local businesses. He explained items can be broken into pieces, and used an example of painting being contracted with local labor. Mr. Johnson reported when work is assigned to the local work force, the money comes back into the community.
- **Holding cell:** Mr. Thompson questioned a holding cell. Chief Chase explained there had been a lot of objections to including a holding cell and explained people thought prisoners would have been held overnight. He explained no one would ever have been held overnight; if a prisoner has to be held overnight he/she would be transferred to the County Jail. Chief Chase reported the proposed design's booking room will have a bench; a prisoner could be handcuffed to this bench if the officer has to leave the room. Gene Burgess reported there is a liability with a holding cell and reported it's good to put it off the design.
- **Juvenile arrests:** Mr. Drenkhahn asked if there will be sight and sound separation during juvenile arrests. Chief Chase reported the Police won't be able to bring in both juveniles and adults; one (1) or the other would be brought in.
- **Future growth of town:** Carol Thompson asked if the proposed design is based on the growth of the Town and asked how far into the future the new space will be adequate. Mr. Hanson reported the current Municipal Building is 41 years old, and

explained looking at past history and current information the new space should serve the Town well for over twenty (20) years. Mr. Burns explained there may be future state and federal government mandates that may require additional personnel and office space; there is not a lot of additional space available. Steve Condajani reported he feels the Town shouldn't wait; the decision should be made with the best information you have. Ms. Mattson reported the design is set up to run the government as it is now run. She explained a property owner could get approval for a 40 – 50 lot subdivision which would impact the Town. Mr. Hughes explained they don't have a crystal ball to see if someone will take 1,500 acres out of current use and develop it. Mr. Johnson suggested a study, with backup documentation, should be conducted. Mr. Burns reported the Planning Board is in the process of updating the Town's Master Plan and reported on workforce housing mandates, which the Town has no control over.

- **Separate construction projects:** Ms. Bronson asked if the Police Department proposed project could be separated from the rest of the proposal. Ms. Mattson reported it is a two (2) phase project; first the new administrative area will be constructed, then the current administrative space will be renovated for the Police Department. Mr. Hughes reported there had been a previous discussion regarding a two (2) story addition in the rear of the building for the Police Department, but explained this proposal is more feasible and addresses needs of many departments.
- **Post Office building:** Brendan Laffey reported hundreds of Post Offices around the country are being closed next year and asked what if the Center Harbor Post Office were to be closed. He reported the building would be vacant, he feels it would be ideal connected to this building and recommended this being looked into. Chuck Burns reported when he was a Selectman there was discussion regarding the Town asking the owner of the Post Office to grant the Town a right of first refusal if the building ever became available. He asked the Selectmen to follow up with this idea and approach the owners of the property. Mr. Burns reported he feels it is an ideal piece of property which could be utilized with additional offices. Mr. Burns reported he feels the Post Office is a future opportunity for the Town, but should not be considered for this project. Mr. Laffey reported if the Post Office downsizes and may only use ½ of the space, the additional ½ of the building should be looked into. Ms. Mattson reported she feels pursuing a right of first refusal is a good idea. Diane Drenkhan reported the Town would spend more to purchase the Post Office property and renovate the building than was proposed for a stand-alone Police Station which was proposed last year.
- **Hallways and bathrooms:** Mr. Johnson reported approximately 1,000 square feet for hallways and 600 square feet for bathrooms and asked if the design could be reconfigured for more usable space. Mr. Goudreau reported the meeting room is located to have views of the park and lake. He explained the original entry was next to the Fire Department (Radio Room), but was changed to allow access to the meeting room. Mr. Goudreau reported there has to be room in the lobby for two (2) offices (Town Clerk and Tax Collector) to have windows for customer service. Mr. Goudreau reported the building will be larger, which increases the number of bathroom fixtures per codes. He explained the codes are based on the possible number of people in the space. Mr. Hughes explained firefighters returning from a

fire could be covered in contaminated material; they will have separate bathrooms. Chief Schlemmer reported there are twenty-seven (27) firefighters and explained there was an original design which included a separate laundry facility and bathroom; the laundry was removed for the Fire Department's men's and ladies' rooms. There will be a wall separating the Fire Department restrooms from the lobby; there will be a door in the wall which will allow accesses to these restrooms.

- **Overall plan:** Chief Schlemmer gave the BAC credit for reducing the proposed design from the previous designs; he reported the proposed cost will likely go down. He reported the advantages to having the electricity, sewer, water and generator already on site. Bob Vogler applauded the Selectmen and BAC for their endurance. He reported they have gathered objections along the way. He explained the previous proposals were over \$1,000,000 and questioned if it will get voted down again. Mr. Hanson explained the prior proposals were for the Police Department; this proposal will be beneficial to more departments such as the Police, Fire, Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Code Enforcement, Parks & Recreation and Planning Board. Mr. Vogler reported the Fire Department would have gotten its space back if the other proposals had passed. Mr. Hughes reported the probability of having to come back to the voters for an addition for the other departments.
- **Square footage cost:** Barry Borella asked the cost per square foot. Mr. McBey estimated the cost will be between \$170 and \$180 per square foot, but will check that estimate.
- **Sally port and booking room:** Duke Kline reported he feels the sally port and booking room are not necessary. Chief Chase reported there are approximately sixty (60) arrests in Center Harbor each year and explained the cost per square foot to construct the booking room will be made up in the labor costs saved if the officer does not have to go out of Town to process a prisoner. He explained the sally port does so much more than a garage. Chief Chase explained, per court orders, in domestic violence matters the Police have to take cease guns and hold on to them. He explained the cruiser would pull into the sally port to unload the weapons. Chief Chase reported there would be a high liability for the Town if they had to unload the weapons from the cruisers while parked in the parking lot and explained this could happen when the Municipal Building and grounds were being used for family activities. Chief Chase reported unloading evidence in the sally port also protects the evidence from the weather. Chief Chase explained the cruisers have to be ready to respond and if they are in the sally port the ignitions can be turned off, but if they are parked outside during snow storms they have to be kept running.
- **Two (2) showers:** Mr. Kline questioned the need for two (2) showers in the building and suggested the Police and Fire Departments share a shower. Chief Schlemmer presented the scenario of the Police Department having a prisoner requiring decontamination; if they had to use the Fire Department's shower, they would have to go through the building and the same would apply if the Fire Department did not have a shower and had to use the Police Department's.
- **Meeting room:** Janet Stearns asked the capacity of the proposed meeting room; it will hold 90. She reported it is not large enough for Town Meeting. Mr. Burns explained meetings with over 90 people would go into the Fire Station as has been done for years. Mr. Goudreau reported two (2) meetings will be able to be held at the

same time with the room divider. Mr. Drenkhahn asked if the wall between the meeting room and the lobby could be opened to utilize more space. Mr. Goudreau reported it could, but there would be acoustical issues and it would be an added cost.

- **Police Department personnel**: Mr. Burns asked Chief Chase if he anticipates additional personnel. Chief Chase reported he does not.
- **Security**: Mr. Burns asked Chief Chase if there would be camera surveillance for security. Chief Chase reported there will be.
- **“What ifs”**: Mr. Thompson requested the Selectmen research possible “what ifs” in preparation for Town Meeting.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

- **Town meeting**: Barry Borella asked for assurance from the Selectmen that there will be provisions for adequate shelter at Town Meeting. Ms. Mattson reported the Selectmen have discussed this matter. Mr. Borella asked if it is possible to hold Town Meeting (business session) on a day other than the day of election. Ms. Mattson reported the Selectmen have discussed this possibility. Mr. Hughes reported it would have to be a Town Meeting vote to change the day. Ms. Drenkhahn reported the Inter-Lakes School Board changed its annual meeting day to a Saturday and reported there were less attendee’s on a Saturday than there were on a Tuesday evening. She reported it is individual’s civic duty to show up. Mr. Burgess said it should be put up for a vote. Mr. Kline reported the date for Town Meeting is not on the Town’s web site; this will be added.
- **Bond hearing**: Mr. Hanson reported there will be a bond hearing at a date to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT: At 7:45 p.m. Ms. Mattson adjourned the public hearing.