

MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS WORKING GROUP  
Room 4, Belmont town Hall  
MINUTES OF AUGUST 25, 2017

RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA

2017 SEP 18 PM 2:01

Members Present:

Roy Epstein, Phyllis Marshall, Pat Bruschi, Floyd Carman, Anne Marie Mahoney

Members Absent:

Jenny Fallon, Mark Paolillo

Present:

Police Chief Richard McLaughlin, Assistant Chief Jamie MacIsaac, Senior Planner Jeffrey Wheeler, Assistant DPW Director Michael Santoro, Budget Analyst Glen Castro, Library Trustee Gail Mann, Ellen Schreiber

Review Police Station and DPW Short Term Proposals

Anne Marie asked the Chief and Assistant Chief if they had any further comments on the SMMA proposals that the group reviewed on August 11. The police are still supportive of Option B with two concerns:

- A fire escape from the second floor is still needed. Presently the only escape is a rope ladder.
- Will a snow plow be able to get past the proposed elevator to plow the parking lot behind the building?

Pat and Phyllis confirmed that the triggers for both ADA and Building Code full compliance are construction costs only, not full project costs. All estimates from SMMA are construction costs.

Mike Santoro briefly reviewed the SMMA short-term proposals for the DPW which he approved. He reiterated that the DPW wishes to house employee facilities within the main building and not in a separate trailer.

The proposed short-term solutions that the police and DPW prefer total \$3.7 m in construction costs. Project costs will be higher. However, the group agreed that these figures are in a good range. Santoro reminded the group that there are also exterior repairs to the building that are needed and will increase the overall cost. Short-term is for the length of any potential bonding – not more than ten years.

Review Long-Term Proposals for Police and DPW

The group received six drawings from SMMA to consider. They included overlay outlines of the DPW yard, the area that includes the BMLD and Water Dept., the incinerator site, and the present library.

Before discussing these drawings and proposals, Anne Marie requested both police and DPW (and Light and Water) to provide estimates of the number of personnel who will be accessing the DPW, Light, and Water departments plus the police station should it be placed at the DPW yards. She wishes to quantify the additional traffic that placing a police station there would add to the Waverley St. area. It was noted that there is a possibility that a new access drive from a proposed police station could be added across the tracks and out to Pleasant St.

The group discussed the long-term drawings with the following questions and conclusions:

#### DPW

- Santoro was pleased with the proposed layout of a new DPW facility. (Fig. 1 & 2)
- The offices from the Homer Building could be added to a new facility at C Street.
- Recreation and Park maintenance could also move to C Street but need to maintain a presence in the Town Hall area since they deal more with the public. Pulling the public down to C Street would only create more traffic issues. More important to leave at least Recreation and a DPW window at the Homer building.
- Retaining the DPW yards in place has buy-in from the neighborhood.
- Santoro noted that moving the police to the DPW area would limit the vandalism at the yards.

#### POLICE at DPW SITE

- A new police station and enough parking will fit at the DPW yards with access from Woodland St. (Fig. 5)
- McLaughlin believes that placing the station there would work well.
- Puts the police close to vehicle services.
- Sets police apart at night.
- Allows police to do "command center" activities that are difficult to accomplish in Belmont Center.
- Allows for plenty of parking when police host an area meeting, training or joint exercise.
- Can bring Fire Department to Woodland St. quickly from Trapelo Rd. and Belmont Center.
- Building on DPW site means no relocation during construction.
- Present parcel could be sold or repurposed.

#### BOTH

- Drawings show there is space around entire perimeter for 30 foot buffer for Community Path.
- Jeffrey was comfortable with the 30 ft. space.
- Possibility of egress to Pleasant St. for both Police and DPW would be advantageous.
- The Town would have to initiate a process to claim Woodland St. which is currently not a Town road.

#### POLICE at CONCORD AVE. LIBRARY SITE

- A Police station would fit on the existing library site (Fig. 6) but not all the required parking.
- Additional parking would have to be on and around Concord Ave. which is not ideal.
- Having a Command Center at the library site would not work due to lack of parking, esp. in an emergency or bad weather.
- There is no room for training or parking for training.

#### POLICE at INCINERATOR, WAVERLEY SQ.

- While a Police station and adequate parking would fit on the incinerator site there is no interest in placing the police there. (Fig. 3 & 4)
- Police would go to the proposed Library site in Waverley Sq. if it meant they got a new building sooner. They will go anywhere to make a new building work for them.

#### Questions and Conclusions

- We have agreement to focus on the DPW site for a long-term solution for the Police Department.
- We have agreement to eliminate the incinerator site from consideration for our purposes.
- Phyllis will investigate if the trailer used at the Waverley Fire Station which is now stored at the DPW could be used for short-term function or storage.
- BMLD building on Concord Ave. is beginning the decommissioning process and storage should also be moved out. The potential sale, decommissioning and emptying out should be on a parallel track.
- Should the Hittinger St. BMLD building be decommissioned first due to the BHS project? Space could be needed in two years.
- Should we be looking at both sale and potential Town parking lot for the Concord Ave. strip?
- MCPWG needs to arrange tours of DPW and Police. Days, times and limit on numbers will be explored ASAP. Two dates for tours should be available on weekends. Anne Marie and Phyllis will coordinate dates with departments and activities of the BHS Building Committee.
- SMMA will be at our meeting on September 15.
- Be aware of Women's Club Showhouse when scheduling tours of the police station. (Oct. 7 – Nov. 5)

#### Library Trustees and Planning Board Idea

Anne Marie invited Gail Mann, Board of Library Trustees, to report on the meeting between the Trustees and the Planning Board about the idea of placing a privately developed library in Waverley Sq. Gail reviewed the following concerns voiced at the meeting:

- No support for a library in Waverley Sq.
- Operating cost is uncertain
- Lease/Rent cost and agreement is uncertain
- Location is not ideal for interface with schools
- Debt exclusion necessity or details are unknown
- Library does not want to be seen as rejecting a "free" library but too many uncertainties

The group expressed concerns about the timing of a library debt exclusion; their ability to raise enough money in donations; their plan to refuse state aid. The goal of the MCPWG was to lay out a program of timing and financing for DPW, Police and Library. We do not want the library to jump over that process.

Anne Marie invited Ellen Schreiber, who will be chairing the BHS debt exclusion committee to present her observations and concerns. With Ellen the group discussed what the debt exclusions should look like. Should we group the library with BHS? Should we put all four buildings on a single ballot? When will we do the short-term solutions for DPW and Police and how will we finance them? The group agreed that we need a "massive education effort" to make any debt exclusions successful.

The group agreed to schedule a separate debt and financing meeting.

Roy suggested and the group agreed that we need a library decision tree. We need to define the process for making decisions, forming a building committee, scheduling a debt exclusion, etc.

The group reviewed the points that had achieved consensus at the meeting:

- A new Police station and parking will fit at the DPW site off Woodland St. and the police are happy with that location.
- A new DPW facility will fit on their existing space, although reconfigured, and the DPW folks are happy with that plan.
- The Police like the short-term solutions provided by SMMA and, with the questions about fire exit and plow access, wish to pursue those ASAP.
- The DPW like the short-term solutions provided by SMMA and would like to pursue those ASAP.
- MCPWG needs to work with SMMA and others to provide accurate costs, timetables, and funding sources for these short-term solutions.
- MCPWG needs to finalize long-term solutions for the Police and DPW, provide accurate cost estimates and coordinate with library and BHS building plans.
- A separate finance meeting will be scheduled for MCPWG.
- A meeting with the DPW neighborhood will be scheduled ASAP to apprise them of the MCPWG conclusions and solicit their feedback.
- Tours of the DPW and Police will be scheduled for the public in September and October.
- Media "tours" of the DPW and Police will be arranged for cable television.
- MCPWG will no longer consider the idea of a privately constructed library in Waverley Sq.
- The incinerator site is no longer under consideration for MCPWG purposes.

#### Approval of Minutes

Minutes of July 21, 2017 meeting unanimously approved.

Minutes of August 11, 2017 meeting unanimously approved as amended. Roy abstained as he was not present for the meeting.

#### Future Meeting

September 15, 2017 at 9:00 am in Room 4 of Town Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Marie Mahoney