

**NOTES OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2012 RYE TOWN HALL SPACE NEEDS  
AD HOC STUDY COMMITTEE**

Final Revision B – Provided by the Rye Civic League

*NOTE: These are not the official minutes of this meeting. They are prepared by the Rye Civic League from notes taken during the meeting by members and are not prepared after listening to recordings of the meeting. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of these minutes, including the review by those RCL core committee members in attendance at the meeting.*

Town Hall committee members present: Cindy Gillespie, Lucy Neiman, Phil Winslow, Beth Yeaton, Mel Low, Ned Paul, Curtis Boivin, Paul Goldman, Priscilla Jenness, Peter White, Peter Kasnet, Gregg Mikolaities, Paula Merritt, Tom McCormick, Michael Magnant

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the prior meeting were approved unanimously.

Presentation by Cindy Gillespie of other town halls and average square feet per employee

Ms. Gillespie had sent surveys to 38 towns and visited a large number of town halls over 2 Saturdays. Fourteen responses were received. She showed photographs of the exteriors of the Town halls that she visited. Questions asked in the surveys were:

1. How large the town hall was
2. How many employees work there, full and part time
3. Other facilities
4. Hours of operation
5. Departments occupying the town hall
6. ADA compliance
7. Age of the building
8. Renovations done
9. Adequacy of storage
10. Adequacy of meeting rooms

Ms. Gillespie described each of the buildings as she showed the slides:

1. Allentown. The building is in deplorable shape.
2. Atkinson. 3 full time employees are housed in a beautiful 15 year old building. Storage is inadequate. *Editor's note: Ms. Gillespie's tabulation shows 10.5 employees. She indicates that part-time employees are counted as .5.*
3. Auburn. Completely remodeled in 2011 and 2012, on the inside only.
4. Barrington. 6 unit condo building is leased. Abandoned prior building which was full of mold.
5. Belmont. Converted theater.
6. Bow. Beautiful building.

7. Brentwood. Looks small but is very long. All ADA compliant. Police department is downstairs. Beth Yeaton relates that it is very nice inside.
8. Conway. ADA compliant with elevator.
9. Durham. Space needs study was done. Members already have this in their binders. Population had been projected at 12,000, is already 14,000. Looking at combining with library in a big complex. Gregg Mikolaities stated that he is working on this project. *Editor's note: The July 16, 2012 Durham Town Council minutes reflect an awarding of the architectural contract for Durham Town Hall renovations to AG Architects. AG Architects had the initial contract for planning the Rye Town Hall and had proposed a 15,000 square foot town hall for Rye, incorporating the existing building, in 2011-2012. Further funding for this process was decisively defeated in early 2012, leading to the creation of the ad hoc Space Needs Committee.*
10. Epping. Has cardboard over windows.
11. Exeter. Town office building across street from Town hall. Both are nice. The square feet in the tabulation is for just one of the buildings. *Editor's note: presumably this is the office building.*
12. Fremont. Old grange in sad condition. Barely ever open.
13. Greenland. Very nice, modern building. Beth Yeaton states that there is a nice amount of storage.
14. Hillsboro. Public library is in a section. Needs work.
15. Hollis. The portion with the original tower is in bad shape.
16. Kingston. Beautiful building.
17. Lee. Tiny building.
18. Litchfield. Police department is in the same building.
19. Lowden. Stone with wood structure. Appears to be an addition.
20. New Castle. Doing space needs study, looking at renovating.
21. Newington. Very unique. Conference room for 50 people plus a large meeting hall with a commercial kitchen suitable for 250 people. *Editor's note: independent investigation reveals that the meeting hall is approximately 3850 square feet, and the kitchen 816 square feet.* Old town hall with elevator on back for ADA compliance is available for functions, is always booked.
22. Newmarket. Rough building. Old. Police in basement.
23. Newport. Deplorable shape.
24. Northfield. Hall partitioned for offices.
25. North Hampton. There is an old town hall building, but town functions now use the upstairs part of the fire station. Tom McCormick indicated that only 2 people work in the old town hall: recreation and the TV person. \$210K was just invested in that building. *Editor's note: Mr. McCormick is the Town Accountant for North Hampton.*
26. Plaistow. Building is in poor shape.
27. Raymond. Tiny building.
28. Sandown. Added onto in 1990 with same white clapboard style.
29. Seabrook. Gorgeous building.
30. Stratham. Former school. Huge building, of which a portion is the library. Beth Yeaton relates that "Donna" has worked there and that there is a lot of

room. *Editor's note: This is an apparent reference to Donna Decotis, Rye Assistant Town Clerk. Independent investigation reveals that the town hall portion is approximately 10,500 square feet.*

31. Weare. Similar building to Rye Town Hall. Used for functions. Has carriage sheds.
32. Wolfeboro. Deplorable shape. Mike Magnant interjected that there is a mandate regarding ADA compliance.
33. Kittery. Gorgeous building with police in back.
34. York. Survey returned indicates 22 full-time employees. *Editor's note: Spreadsheet tabulation indicates 6800 square feet, for 309 square feet per employee.* Phil Winslow asked how York fits all these people in. Ms. Gillespie responded that storage is off site, board meetings are at the library, although there is a small conference room. There are no part time employees. The 1811 building has no elevator.

Ms. Gillespie then discussed the spreadsheet that she used to calculate the average square feet per employee. Although she obtained data for Stratham, she excluded that town from the average as the library is included in the building. She stated that the average size of the town halls in towns responding to the survey (excluding Stratham) is 5964 square feet, and the average number of employees is 9, giving an average square feet per employee of 750. *Editor's note: in fact, 5964 divided by 9 is 663, not 750. Furthermore, the more accurate figure for the average number of employees is 9.42, which yields an average square feet per employee of 633. The 750 square feet per employee figure appears to be calculated by computing separately the square feet per employee for each town, then taking the average of those figures. This increases the average because the square feet per employee for Newington is 1892, which has a large effect on the average. Newington includes a very large auditorium in its space. While the 633 figure is still skewed by the inclusion of Newington, taking the average square feet per building and dividing by the average employees does not skew the data by nearly as much because the size of the Newington building is only somewhat more than average and its number of employees only somewhat less than average.*

Member Peter White questioned the inclusion of Newington, with its large function hall, in the figures. A reference was then made to the 77,537 total square feet and 122.5 employees that appears on the spreadsheet. Dividing the first figure by the second yields 633 square feet per employee. *Editor's note: this is the same 633 computed above. The difference is that the calculation in the paragraph above first divides both the square feet and the employees by 13. Dividing both the numerator and the denominator by the same figure necessarily yields the same result, in accordance with the laws of algebra.*

Ms. Gillespie indicated that one of the books of photographs would be left at the Library.

#### Bottom up analysis of space needs

Chairman Paul then indicated that Mr. Magnant and Member Curtis Boivin met with the department heads and generated a third set of figures for

square footage needs which may be compared with the current use and the space need that AG Architects came up with. A spreadsheet with three columns: current square feet, proposed square feet, and committee square feet, was passed out. This spreadsheet shows total square feet as follows:

Current	6,975
Proposed	15,090
Committee	10,478

*Editor's note: the first two figures appear to come from the "Final Rye Study" report from AG Architects. The spreadsheet includes in the total 557 square feet used for storage at the Public Safety Building, as did AG's report. However, it excludes 174 square feet of storage at the Old Police Station that was included in AG's total. This report is available at [www.town.rye.nh.us](http://www.town.rye.nh.us) by clicking on Departments, then Selectmen's Office, then Town Hall Space Needs Study, then Final Rye Study. See the pages after C-4 for the space summary.*

Chairman Paul also passed out a similar spreadsheet put together by a group of concerned Rye citizens that projects a space need of 8,288 square feet. During the meeting, Chairman Paul indicated that Mr. Boivin's analysis was a good start, but generated a result that was still above that of the Concerned Citizens. *Editor's note: the Concerned Citizens analysis assumes that the Recreation Department is moved out of Town Hall, while Mr. Boivin's analysis assumes that they remain.*

Curtis Boivin then took the Committee through his analysis. He stated that elimination of the Meeting Chambers results in a major savings of 500 square feet. He proposes that the Great Hall be used for this purpose, and that it be made partitionable down the middle. While AG eliminated one of the spiral staircases, and replaced it with a kitchen, he has provided for retention of both spiral staircases.

The Town Administrator's office has been reduced in size from 275 to 200 square feet. Mr. Boivin passed out a drawing showing a desk, two filing cabinets and a credenza in both spaces, and indicated that 200 square feet is sufficient.

The office for an assistant to the Finance Director was eliminated. The 270 square feet is adequate for both the director and an assistant.

The Town Clerk needs a lot of space for storage, according to Member Boivin. Member White questioned the need for storage in paper form. Member Boivin replied that the current needs must be met, and state law complied with. The spreadsheet shows 451 square feet for the Town Clerk currently, with 1100 square feet proposed by both AG and the Committee.

Chairman Paul requested documentation on this issue. Member Yeaton requested a couple of minutes, but was then unable to provide the documentation. Peter Crawford from the audience indicated that he had done some research on the issue and could discuss, however, Chairman Paul indicated that it was not yet time for public comment.

Member Winslow asked whether the department heads were comfortable with the space figures. Member Boivin noted that most felt that a 200 square foot office was adequate if circulation was provided in a hall external to the office.

The Recreation Department, however, did not agree with the reduction in their storage from 400 to 250 square feet.

The Building Department does not need an assistant's office of 240 square feet. This could be accomplished in the existing department space. In addition, there is a reduction in the file storage space from 600 to 500 square feet.

Member White asked whether electronic files might be more efficient, given the cost of \$225 to \$250 per square foot for construction. Chairman Paul indicated that the storage needs would be added up at the end. He indicated that some of the documents are large and would be expensive to scan.

While discussing the Recreation Department, Member White questioned whether they are best suited to remain at the Town Hall. Chairman Paul responded that they must remain until there is a better plan. Member Neiman asserted that there is no room at the schools. Town Finance Director and Member Gillespie noted that any rental fees required for them to occupy a different facility must be considered. They are currently paying for their "over 55" program at the church.

Town Administrator Magnant noted an error on the spreadsheet. The reference to "Public Access" should be to "Assessing."

Member Boivin continued describing his analysis. The "Storage" category has been zeroed out. The Public Safety Building space can be used, said Members Boivin and Paul.

The Kitchenette has been removed. There can be a galley sink and small refrigerator in the break rooms on each floor.

Member White asked whether the Committee Work Room is a conference room. Kim Reed, Planning Director and present in the audience, but not on the Committee, indicated that this room would have mailboxes, a table and copier for use by various committees.

Stair 1 has been reduced from 400 to 200 square feet, which is still sufficient to meet ADA requirements. *Editor's note: Three stairs appear in the spreadsheet. It appears that Stairs 2 and 3 are the spiral staircases at the front of the building.*

Summarizing, Member Boivin indicated that there is a total of 9525 square feet of interior space. He has researched the issue and determined that 10 percent, rather than the 30 percent used in AG's analysis, is adequate for circulation. He said that hallways are already provided, but there needs to be a fudge factor for people moving around within departments. *Editor's note: both the AG analysis and the Committee's analysis include additional space that is normally considered circulation, broken out in categories, such as vestibules, lobbies, corridors, stairs, and elevators. These total 1738 square feet in the AG proposal and 1683 square feet in Member Boivin's analysis. When these figures are considered, AG provides an additional 52.9 percent for circulation, and Member Boivin's analysis 33.6 percent.*

Member Winslow indicated that there's a savings of 2033 square feet. *Editor's note: apparently he's referring to the Net Square Feet before circulation is added, which is actually a 2083 square foot savings.* Then there's another 2500

square feet saved in the reduction from 30 percent to 10 percent in circulation. They must be sure of this number.

Member Paul indicated that 18% was saved and an additional 20% in the circulation. That's a good first move. Member Winslow asked what would happen if the circulation was 20% rather than 10%. Town Clerk Yeaton asked about 15 or 20%. Member Boivin replied that he thinks 30% is excessive. Chairman Paul asked if this can be tested by putting it on CAD. Member Boivin replied that this could be done, but it takes time. Kim Reed asked what the current circulation is. Member Boivin replied that the upstairs is really a corridor now.

Ms. Reed noted that the lobby is jammed around the time that dog licenses and beach permits are being issued. Member White asked about ways to automate these functions electronically. Town Clerk Yeaton stated that this has been offered, but not many take advantage of it. Member Neiman noted that part of the problem is that there is an additional charge.

Member Boivin confirmed, in response to a question from Member Goldman, that preserving the Great Hall was a fundamental driver, and that, though partitionable, there were no offices there.

Chairman Paul indicated that the Great Hall was always in. They don't need to look at an option without preserving it. The windows should be retained.

Member McCormick noted that the circulation is actually 12% if one deducts the 1698 square feet for the Great Hall from the 9525 net square feet and divides the 953 square feet of circulation into that difference. Member Boivin indicated that he will need to talk with Art Guadano regarding his source for the 30% circulation assumption. *Editor's note: Art Guadano is the principal of AG Architects.*

Member White indicated that they should not only look at the reduction from the AG analysis, but also the increase from the current space. They also need to talk about the Recreation Department and storage.

Member McCormick indicated that they also need to talk about longevity. They don't want a "band aid" solution. Member Boivin replied that needs over 50 years were taken into account.

Someone noted that AG had proposed a 116% increase in space from what is occupied currently. This analysis reduces that requirement to 50%. *Editor's note: both calculations yield a misleadingly low figure for the expansion percentage as they include off site storage at the Public Safety Building in the "before" space figure, but, apparently assuming that these records are returned to an expanded Town Hall, exclude any space at the Public Safety Building from the comparable "after" figure.* Member Mikolaities cautioned that the 116% should no longer be mentioned. It will be in the paper tomorrow.

#### Other issues

Chairman Paul then indicated that head count should be discussed. Member White indicated that AG projected 16 full time in 2030, which figure is 12 if Recreation is excluded. *Editor's note: the apparent source for these*

figures, page C-1 of the Final Rye Study, includes numerous inaccuracies. For example, AG asserts that there were 10 full-time and 19 part-time employees in 2012. This compares to Ms. Gillespie's spreadsheet, which asserts that there are now 13.0 employees, with part-time employees counted as .5. Member White noted that this is not a large increase. Furthermore, additions would probably be at a non executive level, which could be accommodated with smaller offices.

The discussion then moved to the cost. For 3750 square feet of additional space at \$250 per square foot, the cost would be \$875,750 according to Member Boivin.

Chairman Paul commented that it would be less expensive to add on at the Town Hall rather than the Public Safety Building, because the square footage requirement is 3500 rather than the 7000 build out analyzed at the Public Safety Building. *Editor's note: A January 24, 2012 AG Architects letter asserts that the build out of the area over the equipment bay at the Public Safety Building would be 7759 square feet, with a cost of \$1.15 to \$1.37 million. This letter is available on the town's web site. See instructions above for locating the "Final Rye Study."* Member White commented that the estimate for building out the second floor of the Public Safety Building included independent access with an additional elevator. His proposal is to redeploy the firemen over the equipment bay. Member Boivin replied that additional septic and water capacity would still be needed.

Member White indicated that firefighters do not need elevator access, as they are able bodied. Selectman and Member Jenness replied that she was not sure about this as they must be able to work if they are injured.

Member Boivin stated that he wanted to get this option off of the table. Do they need to put numbers to it? Member Goldman noted that they already have numbers on the interactions between departments. Member Paul noted that pros and cons are required with numbers for Article 27. Selectman Jenness replied that that is what they will have to do.

At approximately 8:15 p.m., Peter Crawford, a Town resident asked when public input would be permitted. Chairman Paul permitted public comment.

Mae Bradshaw, a Town resident in the audience questioned whether space for the spiral staircases had been properly taken into account.

Mr. Crawford discussed the analysis done by the Concerned Citizens. This was a group of several people meeting for discussions, and then a smaller group actually analyzing the figures. He noted that their analysis arrived at 8288 square feet, with the Recreation Department moved out. Space for additional employees will be generated by scanning records over time, freeing up storage space. Even after subtracting the Great Hall, and particularly after considering that the large Court Room would no longer be needed with the Great Hall available, the analysis provides significantly more space for employees and records than there currently is.

In addition, Mr. Crawford stated that he has investigated the legal requirements for records retention. There is no requirement that originals be retained. The law includes a long list of types of documents and their retention periods. Those with a retention period of less than 10 years may be stored

electronically. That is not acceptable for documents with a longer retention period, however microfilming is permitted.

Member Goldman questioned Mr. Crawford's qualifications to discuss Town hall space needs, to which he did not have an opportunity to respond due to frequent interruptions from Committee members.

Member Mikolaities interjected that Ms. Gillespie's numbers should be validated and voted on. He stated that the square feet per employee is either 633 or 750. 633 times 13 employees is 8200 square feet, multiplying by 750 gives 9750 square feet, he said. Allowing for an increase in head count, 633 times 16 employees is 10,000 square feet, multiplying by 750 gives 12,000 square feet. *Editor's note: While the arithmetic is approximately correct, as noted above the 750 square feet per employee is obtained only by including Newington, with its large assembly room, in the calculation, and by also computing the square feet per employee for each town separately before averaging the figures, rather than adding up the total square feet and dividing by the total employees, which yields 633, even with Newington included. The effect is that Newington, which has only 5.5 of the 122.5 employees in the 13 towns, has an inordinate impact if its 1892 square feet per employee is averaged with the other towns. In addition, see above regarding the accuracy of AG's head count figures.*

Member Mikolaities then asserted that the need was for between 10,000 and 12,000 square feet. It is not 6000 square feet and it is not 15,000 square feet.

Mr. Crawford responded that it will be 2-3 years before the Town Hall is renovated. That will provide more than adequate time for documents to be scanned so that storage needs may be reduced. In addition, the Recreation Department will need to be relocated during construction in any event, as all plans that have been considered involve removing the porches from the back of the building as a first step. *Editor's note: the porch on the second floor houses the Recreation Department.*

Member McCormick responded that scanning would dramatically increase IT costs. Member Goldman asserted that an IT specialist could cost \$100,000 annually, a cost that would continue indefinitely. Member McCormick stated that North Hampton did an analysis of this issue 3 years ago and it was not feasible. Town Administrator Magnant stated that nobody had scanned records. It would be manpower intensive. Member McCormick acknowledged, however, that North Hampton's retention program had gotten rid of two tons of paperwork.

Member Mikolaities stated that the Recreation Department costs must be carried. He was involved with the decision relating to the modular units at the Recreation Department. The worst thing he did was to put space down there. Town Clerk Yeaton indicated that renting a modular adjacent to the Town Hall for temporary housing of the Recreation Department would be the least expensive way to accommodate them. Member Low indicated that there is an empty gym at the church that could be used. *Editor's note: this is apparently a reference to the Congregational Church adjacent to Town Hall.* Member Goldman acknowledged that Mr. Crawford has a good point. They must reach a conclusion on the Recreation Department.



Chairman Paul asserted that there was no room elsewhere to house the Recreation Department. If the Town Hall is going to cost \$2-3 million they should provide the additional space to accommodate the Recreation Department.

Member Neiman suggested that they should determine that electronic storage is beyond the scope of the Committee's charge.

Member White stated that there is currently 557 square feet at the Public Safety Building devoted to Town records with excess space there. Why couldn't storage at the Public Safety Building be doubled, he asked. Chairman Paul agreed. Town Clerk Yeaton stated that old documents must be retained. Locating them at the Public Safety Building means that someone must be sent over to obtain these documents. Chairman Paul spoke to follow up on Member McCormick's comment. They must get rid of the junk.

Member Goldman stated that the plan must have clear assumptions as to data storage, Recreation Department and head count. He likes having things a mouse click away. But the customers are in the room. A transition plan is needed.

After Member Low moved to adjourn the meeting adjourned shortly after 8:30 p.m.