

**NOTES OF OCTOBER 10, 2012 RYE TOWN HALL SPACE NEEDS
AD HOC STUDY COMMITTEE**

Revised Final Revision C – 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: Mel Low, Phil Winslow, Paula Merritt, Beth Yeaton, Curtis Boivin, Peter White, Priscilla Jenness, Paul Goldman, Cindi Gillespie, Michael Magnant, Peter Kasnet. Arriving late: Gregg Mikolaities, Present from the public: Lee Arthur (Recreation Director), Janet Stevens (Recreation Commission), Mark Luz (Recreation Commission), Peter Crawford, Victor Azzi, Cecilia Azzi, Alex Herlihy (arrived near end of meeting), Mae Bradshaw (Chairman, Heritage Commission)

Curtis Boivin presides

Vice Chairman Boivin announced that Chairman Ned Paul would not be present and that Mr. Boivin would be presiding at this meeting.

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the prior meeting were approved unanimously after minor corrections.

Presentation by Curtis Boivin of Net to Gross Square Feet Calculation

Mr. Boivin addressed the issue of reconciling the Net and the Gross Square Feet. Mr. Boivin revealed that the figure obtained from CAD was 12,681 square feet.

Editor's note: for a more detailed discussion of the various terms and their meanings, see the notes from the September 26, 2012 meeting. Passed out at the October 10 meeting, and attached to the Agenda, were several pages of floor plans and itemized space listings. Mr. Boivin's figure is an apparent reference to a total of 12,681.07 sq. ft. that appears on the page entitled "Space Inventory" that was attached to the agenda. This document appears to list each of the areas included in the AG design. At the September 26, 2012 meeting, Mr. Boivin stated that he had spoken with Art Guadano of AG Architects, and that Mr. Guadano had agreed to release the AutoCAD files so that the circulation portion of AG's design could be calculated. Out of the 12,681.07 sq. ft., 2291.69 sq. ft. is stairs, lobbies, entries, vestibules, corridors and elevators. These are normally considered circulation areas. The figures for the departmental and circulation areas that appear in the "Space Inventory" do not match those that appear in the four pages that appear after page C-4 of the AG Report. That document is available at www.town.rye.nh.us, by clicking on Departments, then Selectmen's Office, Town Hall

Space Needs Study, then Final Rye Study. The figures listed on the “Space Inventory” page appear, however, to match the AG floor plan drawings that appear after page D-4 of the AG Report. Attached to the Agenda are copies of the drawings that appear in the AG Report, with cross hatching added. It appears that Mr. Boivin obtained the drawings, in electronic form, from AG Architects, and was able to print out the actual square feet of the various areas, arriving at a total of 12,681.07 sq. ft. for the cross-hatched areas.

Vice Chairman Boivin continued by asserting that a 20 percent increase from the 12,681 square feet is 15,286 square feet. *Editor’s note: this is apparently an adjustment for circulation, however the arithmetic seems to be slightly off as 1.2×12681 is 15,217.* Mr. Boivin then indicated that he changed the 10 percent to 20 percent and arrived at 11,550 sq. ft. as a conservative number.

Editor’s note: apparently Mr. Boivin took his figure of 9525 net square feet from the analysis that he presented at the September 12, 2012 meeting, and multiplied it by 1.2, arriving at approximately 11,550 square feet. Again, the arithmetic appears to be slightly off as 1.2×9525 is 11,430. Thus, the process appears to have been (1) determining based on the AutoCAD files that the correct figure for additional circulation in AG’s design is 20 percent and then (2) applying that 20 percent, rather than the 10 percent that he had previously used, to his net square feet of 9525 to arrive at 11,550 sq. ft. as a new Gross Square Feet figure. See notes of September 12 and 26, 2012 meetings. The net result is that Mr. Boivin, apparently now convinced that his original 10 percent assumption was too low, is now applying a 20 percent adder for circulation, which raises his prior space need of 10,478 sq. ft. to 11,550 sq. ft.

Looked at more conventionally, by first subtracting the areas in the AG design that constitute the stairs, lobbies, entries, vestibules, corridors and elevators, one arrives at $12681 - 2292$, or 10,389 Net Square Feet. The AG Gross Square Feet of 15,090 is 45.2 percent more than this Net Square Feet figure, calculated after excluding all areas that are normally considered circulation. The equivalent Net Square Feet figure for Mr. Boivin’s analysis is 7842 sq. ft., which excludes 1683 sq. ft. in circulation areas that are specifically enumerated as various lobbies, corridors, stairs and elevator. Dividing 11,550 sq. ft. by 7842 sq. ft. yields 1.473 or a 47.3 percent adder to get from Net to Gross Square Feet by Mr. Boivin’s revised analysis, approximately the same factor.

Mr. Boivin then indicated that he arrived at 6735 sq. ft. required for the addition. That amounts to a footprint of 3368 sq. ft. or approximately 80 by 40 feet. The current building is 73 by 39 feet, thus the addition would be approximately the same size as the current building. *Editor’s note: exactly how Mr. Boivin arrived at this figure is unclear as the current building is 6168 sq. ft. according to the AG Report. Even accounting for the removal of the porches (approximately 456 sq. ft.), the total space implied by the 6735 sq. ft. addition is somewhat more than the 11,550 sq. ft. need.*

Recreation Department presentation

Mr. Boivin then indicated that Keriann Roman of the Recreation Commission was unable to be present. Janet Stevens of the Recreation Commission spoke instead. She stated that the Recreation Department is fragmented, with 15 disparate sites and a currently suboptimal situation. Recreation is unique in its needs, with Town Hall space used for a variety of things, such as planning, preparation and registration. Items are

stored in the geothermal and other spaces, at the church and in the sewer department. The need of the Recreation Department is for 900 sq. ft. to meet current needs only. The adequacy of that space for future needs is questionable. *Editor's note: Mr. Boivin's plan provides 680 sq. ft. for Recreation, while the AG report provides for 900 sq. ft.*

Ms. Stevens referred to the Rye Recreation Master Plan and the CIP plan. *Editor's note: the 2011 Master Plan is available on the Town's web site by clicking on Departments, then Recreation, then Rye Recreation Development Master Plan 2011. The Master Plan at 16-17 refers to a \$1.5 million Community Center project, which is listed as \$3.498 million in the 2011 CIP plan. The Community Center estimate is referred to as a "place holder" amount in the Master Plan, "with the true development costs to be determined." The Master Plan goes on to state that "[i]t is of great interest to note however that, with the potential renovation and/or replacement of Town Hall within the future, there might be a great opportunity to join the Town Hall and Community Center projects to produce a more flexible space that is greater than the sum of the parts."* Ms. Stevens spoke of a multi-purpose building with cost and other details to be determined, but with the anticipation that it would be completed within a five year time horizon. She does not seek to raise competing interests, but looks forward to working with the Space Needs Committee.

Vice Chairman Boivin asked whether the Master Plan considered relocating the department. Ms. Stevens replied that survey results reveal that a Recreation Facility is among the top 5 priorities. While they currently have wonderful relations with the schools, this is subject to a new Memorandum of Understanding being negotiated every two years. They are working out of two modular units with less than 2000 sq. ft. available for their programs. A temporary septic replacement had to be rebuilt.

Mark Luz of the Recreation Commission then spoke and distinguished between program and administrative needs. The intent of the facility was more oriented towards the former and not necessarily towards the latter.

Lee Arthur, Recreation Director, then spoke. If the department is located at Town Hall they need space. Not all of their storage needs are paper. The space is not efficient and they are concerned about the reduction in storage space in Mr. Boivin's plan. *Editor's note: passed out at the meeting was a four page list of all of the items that Recreation stores, at the Town Hall, the Safety Complex, the Old Police Station, the Recreation House, Recreation Modular, Recreation Snack Shack, Recreation Storage Shed, and the Congregational Church. It states that "Dry, non-mold and pest-free storage located in one space is needed for storage."*

Vice Chairman Boivin replied that Recreation Storage in his plan still amounts to a doubling of the current amount of storage. *Editor's note: his plan lists 126 sq. ft. currently for Recreation files and storage, with 250 planned. The AG Report had provided for 400 sq. ft. of storage.* Ms. Arthur replied that sometimes they have four people working in the space. It's currently highly inefficient. *Editor's note: According to AG's analysis, Recreation currently has 354 sq. ft. for 3 people, or 118 sq. ft. per employee. This compares to 10 persons (part-time employees counted as .5) occupying the remaining 5814 sq. ft., or 581 sq. ft. per non-Recreation employee.*

Member White asked whether Ms. Arthur had an estimate of Gross Square Feet for the 15 locations. Ms. Arthur stated that she could provide that for the Committee. Selectman Jenness interjected that they need to look at administration of programs

eventually being off site. Member Winslow stated that the analysis should be in cubic feet as some storage may go vertically upwards and some not. Ms Arthur replied that some of their storage is stacked vertically and some is not. Vice Chairman Boivin stated that the Committee wants flexibility. The question is what is the minimum. That's the way they came up with the conservative numbers.

Further discussion on square footage needs

Member Winslow asked a further question about the 12,681 sq. ft. figure. Mr. Boivin responded that this was a Net Square Feet figure, not including the walls and some of the circulation space. Some discrepancies were noted between the drawings and what was provided. *Editor's note: This is an apparent reference to the pages after C-4 of the AG Report compared to the "Space Inventory" list attached to the meeting agenda which was apparently derived from AG's AutoCAD files used to generate the drawings.* For example, Mr. Boivin continued, there is a major difference in the lobby space, the drawings providing for a much larger space. The meeting chambers are 765 sq. ft. on the drawings, compared to 500 sq. ft. *Editor's note: The latter is the figure in the AG Report.*

Member White asked whether the Committee had an update on the storage space. A quantitative presentation was promised at the last meeting. Member Winslow agreed. Vice Chairman Boivin responded that the 11,550 sq. ft. is the conservative figure for Gross Square feet, 9625 being the figure for Net Square Feet. *Editor's note: actually 9525 per Mr. Boivin's analysis.* This compares to AG's 11,608 Net Square Feet. *Editor's note: both of these figures include some of the circulation spaces, including vestibules, lobbies, corridors, stairs and elevator.* Mr. Boivin explained that the 12,681 sq. ft., plus the walls, plus the unhashed area adds up to the Gross Square Feet.

Member Winslow asked about the 3368 sq. ft. Mr. Boivin explained that that figure is the Gross Square Feet divided by two for a two story building. That footprint is nearly what the current Town Hall is. The footprint could be further reduced if they go to two and a half stories. For example, there could be sub-ground storage. In response to a question from Member Merritt, Vice Chairman Boivin explained that the 80 by 40 foot footprint satisfies the need with no basement or attic use. He's not proposing that there be no basement or attic use.

Member White referred to a nice presentation on the filing cabinets and square feet last time. There's now over 1100 sq. ft. for storage. He wants to confirm that number. Member Goldman referred to 4-5 line items that say storage. Member White indicated that that was available at the last meeting. There was a quantitative analysis as to the cabinets, and a planned follow up on the square feet. He wants to test the 1100 sq. ft. by looking at that.

Member Goldman asked whether, in the Committee's opinion, these figures are valid. Vice Chairman Goldman responded that the vault increased in size from 58 to 180 sq. ft. Ms. Yeaton indicated that this would enable her to keep ballots for 22 months.

Member White referred to a schedule that Member Winslow had asked for. Member Winslow indicated that this was a schedule of cubic feet. Member White confirmed that this was what he was looking for.

Vice Chairman Boivin responded that he encouraged everyone to look at the spaces. He feels comfortable that tripling the size of the vault is a good number. He feels that the number for the building is a good number. For Recreation, he said 250 sq. ft., and they want 400 sq. ft.

Selectman Jenness asked whether the needs of the Supervisors of the Checklist had been taken into account. Vice Chairman Boivin responded that this was listed under the Committee Work Room.

Vice Chairman Boivin continued that he had looked at the sq. ft. figures and the Town had hired an architect to look at them.

Member Goldman referred to the action items from last time relating to the CAD study and storage. He added that this information was meant to address those.

Vice Chairman Boivin indicated that overall there was a 25 percent reduction. Hopefully this is a reasonable amount. *Editor's note: This is an apparent reference to the reduction from AG's 15,090 sq. ft. to Mr. Boivin's new figure of 11,550 sq. ft., taking into account the increases after his new circulation assumption. This is actually a reduction of 23.5 percent.*

Vice Chairman Boivin indicated that a range should be provided for the Selectmen. There's the AG figure, his figure, and the Concerned Citizens figure. He doesn't think the space need can go below 10,000 sq. ft. AG was generous at 15,000 sq. ft. If one uses 11,500 sq. ft. plus or minus 1500 sq. ft. the range is 10,000 to 13,000 sq. ft.

Member Merritt asked whether the 12,681 sq. ft. figure was at the upper bound then. *Editor's note: this figure is the net figure on the "Space Inventory" after deducting some of the circulation space from AG's design.* Mr. Boivin responded that this figure was net.

Mr. Mikolaities stated that 6975 sq. ft. is woefully inadequate. To look at the space as doubling is way too simplistic. He thinks Cindi did a good job. *Editor's note: This is an apparent reference to Cindi Gillespie's comparison of the sq. ft. per employee of other towns.* He suggested taking out the high and the low. *Editor's note: If Ms. Gillespie's data are adjusted to exclude Newington at 1892 sq. ft. per employee (the high) and Atkinson at 283 sq. ft. per employee (the low), the 633 sq. ft. per employee average drops to 602 sq. ft. per employee.* The Committee cannot advocate to the residents a doubling of the size. The preliminary 15,000 sq. ft. was fine tuned down to 12,000 sq. ft. He believes that another 10-20 percent reduction could probably be achieved. *Editor's note: A further reduction of 20 percent would result in a space need of 9600 sq. ft.*

Responding, Member Winslow stated that the voters will want to look at (1) what the increase is, (2) Cindi's analysis, and (3) the AG analysis. Member White responded emphatically that he rejects the third item. The voters resoundingly rejected the AG building plan. A bottom up approach is needed.

Member Goldman stated that the voice of the employees, whom he called "the customers," must be considered. He did not buy AG's circulation figure, which was too rich. This has been reconsidered. It's not 5 percent, but it could be 15-20 percent. Responding to Member White's point that 1600 sq. ft. is becoming communal town space, Member Goldman said that if they want the most efficient figure then the Great Hall should not be restored to its prior use.

Member Merritt indicated that she is hearing that a separate building is being discussed. Couldn't they agree on a number of square feet for the project and then look at the best arrangement for those square feet?

Vice Chairman Boivin responded that they may want to discuss that tonight. Nearly a doubling of the size is needed. Roughly speaking, 12,000 sq. ft. is needed. The building could not be remodeled and have everything fit back in.

Member Low interjected that the original plan included everyone's needs. Unfortunately, the ballot item allocating additional funds for a study that could have reduced the need to 11,000 to 12,000 sq. ft. was voted down.

Member Goldman asked about "boundary conditions" and the fact that preservation of the Great Hall seems to have been agreed to. Member Low indicated that the Great Hall could be used for meetings. Vice Chairman Curtis indicated that a 500 sq. ft. meeting room was removed as the Great Hall could be used for meetings.

Selectman Jenness asked what would go in the downstairs. Vice Chairman Curtis responded that offices would go there. Town Clerk and Member Yeaton interjected that AG's office layout could still be used. Member Boivin responded that AG's arrangement was efficient, but there's a problem with the aesthetics. Town Clerk Yeaton asked about whether there would be an addition or a stand-alone building.

Member White then interjected that he had tried to get the Heritage Commission on the agenda. Vice Chairman Boivin explained why this had not occurred and then indicated that the Heritage Commission would be heard next.

Mae Bradshaw presentation on behalf of the Heritage Commission, Victor Azzi outlines his two building proposal

Editor's note: a packet of information from the Heritage Commission was passed out at the meeting.

Ms. Bradshaw, Chairman of the Rye Heritage Commission started by stating the Commission's objective, which is to recognize and protect historic structures. Alex Herlihy did a lot of research on the Town Hall. The prior design was defeated two to one in 2012. The issue is what are the aesthetic needs.

Peter Michaud came to speak to the Heritage Commission in March. *Editor's note: the Heritage Commission minutes for their March 29, 2012 meeting were part of the packet passed out and are also available on the Town's web site by clicking on Minutes & Agendas, then Heritage Commission under Meeting Minutes.* He said that the Town Hall should be rehabilitated, integrating the new with the old. Unique features include the spiral staircases, the tin roof over the Great Hall and the exterior roof line. Compatibility is the issue. Any addition must be subservient to the primary building, which must remain the focus. An addition larger than the existing building must not be permitted. Member Boivin has suggested an addition of the same size as the existing building. Mr. Michaud would not support such an addition.

Ms. Bradshaw continued, stating that Mr. Michaud had urged the filing of an application with the State Register of Historic Places. That has been done, and Exhibit Three of the packet is a translation of that, with some formatting problems.

The Heritage Commission is concerned about the size of any addition. They have looked at a separate building. That would alleviate concerns about damaging the foundation through the addition of a basement.

Member Merritt asked what Mr. Michaud's opinion was as to the type of architecture, and whether it should be built to blend in. Ms. Bradshaw responded that compatibility assumed similar materials and appropriate size.

Member Merritt asked whether the townspeople were upset when the porch was added. *Editor's note: this addition currently accommodates the Recreation Department and, below it, the building department files.* Ms. Bradshaw responded that, in 1977, the Town voted to remove the porch, which was added in 1974.

The Heritage Commission had taken several votes at its last meeting. One of the votes was to remove the porches back to the 1890 addition. *Editor's note: the 1890 addition added a stage at the back end of the Great Hall. The stage is currently occupied by the Town Administrator's office.* The Heritage Commission had also considered an addition at right angles and had unanimously voted against that.

Town Clerk Yeaton interjected that the bottom section of the porch was enclosed in 1990. Selectman Jenness interjected that it appears that the section with the belfry was also an addition at some point.

Ms. Bradshaw asked whether everyone had a copy of the letter from Victor Azzi. *Editor's note: a copy of this letter was passed out at the meeting. Mr. Azzi's letter proposes a second building as the best solution for the Town's space needs and cites a number of reasons why this is appropriate, including aesthetics and ease of construction without disturbing ongoing Town Hall activities.*

Ms. Bradshaw continued, stating that the proposal was to take off the porches and replace the space with an addition for handicapped access. Member Kasnet noted that there must be two means of egress. Vice Chairman Boivin stated that a remote stairway must be half the diagonal distance across the building. The existing back stairway does not meet that requirement.

Vice Chairman Boivin asked whether Mr. Michaud had an opinion about the architecture of the Congregational Church. *Editor's note: The Rye Congregational Church is adjacent to the Town Hall.* Ms. Bradshaw replied that this had not been researched. Member White interjected that Mr. Michaud would say that the Church additions were not subservient. Member Low noted that the building had burned down in 1959.

Member Winslow asked about the economics, noting that there were redundancies. He asked about connectivity between the buildings. Ms. Bradshaw noted that a basement connector could be used for storage, or a room like the training room in the Public Safety Building. *Editor's note: this is a large conference room in the basement of that building.*

Finance Director and Member Gillespie noted that Epson has a similar arrangement. It looks like a little village.

Town Clerk Yeaton asked about shared walls and the added cost of a separate building. Ms. Bradshaw responded that an addition to the existing Town Hall might require workers with pickaxes to avoid damaging the foundation. That would cost more. Ms. Yeaton then asked about the need for two elevators. Ms. Bradshaw replied that elevators are only \$100,000.

Member Kasnet indicated that an addition to a prior structure can be done. The new foundation may need to be offset. There's a definite advantage to a stand-alone building, which would be very efficient. Duplicating the elevator and fire access would require additional space, however. He largely agrees with the two building plan though. However, there may be an issue for the personnel of having two distinct buildings.

With regard to the issue of the addition overpowering the building, the basement and attic space could be used to get the mass down.

Member White asked about the Heritage Commission's square footage recommendation. Ms. Bradshaw responded that the Commission had voted for a maximum 20 foot addition, a footprint of 20 by 36 feet. Member White commented that if the addition were too large, Registry approval might be denied as the building would be too distorted. Ms. Bradshaw indicated that more than 20 feet would not be subservient.

Member Goldman asked what the existing Town Hall would be used for under this scenario. Victor Azzi responded that it would depend on whether Recreation is in or out. The consensus seems to be that they are in. His proposal says that this facility would be devoted to Recreation due to the absence of a need for adjacency. Member Goldman asked whether this meant that one building would be Town business and the other a cultural/recreation center and business meeting space. Mr. Azzi replied that this could be the case.

Member Yeaton commented that she wished that this proposal had been made earlier than three meetings before they were done. Mr. Azzi makes a lot of valid points. Mr. Azzi responded that they hadn't been sitting on this proposal. It came to a head after frustration that other options didn't seem to work. Since the group has collectively reached a conclusion that the total need is 9000-11000 sq. ft., this leads to a large addition. The issue is then what can be done if the integrity cannot be maintained. The consensus is that it would be good if everything is on this site. This leads to the two building option. Cecilia Azzi commented that the Library and Fire Department projects did not happen right away.

Vice Chairman Boivin stated that he sees possibilities with this option. There are pros and cons. There is doubling up of the elevator, heating and egress functions. On the other hand, the existing Town Hall is in effect a three story building. An adjacent building would be two stories, alleviating the mass issue. He wonders whether a hybrid approach with a connection would be appropriate.

Member Mikolaities stated that he found Mr. Azzi's report to be great and he applauds him. Multiple buildings would be very attractive. However, he gets back to the Committee's charge. They will be going to the voters to bring professionals in. They would be getting there sideways if the debate focuses on one, two or three buildings.

Vice Chairman Boivin suggested that it be put on the ballot as a separate building versus an addition.

Member White stated that consensus should be arrived at against too large an addition.

Member Goldman said that the proposal was good, with fresh thinking. It's not a foregone conclusion, however, that there cannot be a compatible addition. The output should be a warrant article funding a study as to what the right design is. Unfortunately, speaking for himself and not the Budget Committee, of which he is a member, they ran

into a problem at the last deliberative session. The proposed concept spread like wildfire. All that was requested was further study.

Member Winslow stated that the voters are looking at three things. First, evaluation of other facilities. They should be informed that these were looked at. Second, they were to come up with the square feet requirements. Tying this to the cost will be difficult if there are two options.

Member Goldman responded that there is a reasonable consensus on space needs. This could result in any number of possible designs.

Member White asked whether he was comfortable with the cost efficiency clause. *Editor's note: The Committee's charge directs it to "[s]eek an economically sound proposal to resolve the space needs of the Town..."* Member Winslow responded that he felt that this issue was being sidestepped.

Member Low interjected that one of the most important things coming out of the Committee's investigation was the amount of the Town's debt. There's very little debt. The Town can afford this project. The Town is afraid after the Public Safety Building experience. He doesn't know that the existing building cannot be added onto.

Member Goldman responded that what happened was the historically bad taste issue and the Public Safety Building issue entered the discussion. Voters saw the concept and it spread like wildfire.

Member Low commented that everyone is convinced that they should remain here.

Ms. Bradshaw commented that an 80 by 40 foot addition to the existing 73 by 39 foot building makes for an addition larger than the current building. She asked whether the Committee thought this was acceptable.

Member Curtis responded that 2 ½ stories plus a basement would reduce the bulk. Member White raised the issue of whether the windows would be compatible under this scenario. Ms. Bradshaw asked about the roof line.

Town Clerk Yeaton stated that they are just about there on space. The goal is not to write a warrant article or do the design. The Selectmen will come up with the warrant article.

Member Mikolaities suggested that money be recommended for a professional. Then the following year there can be a determination of whether an L-shaped or two building design is best. The year after that there could be a vote for, say, a \$2 million addition plus a \$2 million rehabilitation of the existing building.

Selectman Jenness indicated that she was hearing what they had hoped to hear.

Member White commented that money should be spent to provide access to the Public Safety Building conference room. It's a small amount of money. Vice Chairman Boivin commented that there might be an issue if there was grant money used for the building.

Mae Bradshaw's comments about possible opposition to a large addition

After Peter Crawford, a Town resident, commented that it was 8:15 p.m., Vice Chairman Boivin then opened the meeting up to public comment.

Ms. Bradshaw clarified that the two members of the Committee that are on the Heritage Commission did not vote on the recent decisions relating to Town Hall.

Editor's note: Selectmen Jenness and Member White are on the Heritage Commission.

She continued that, if the proposal is a 40 by 80 addition, there will be vociferous opposition and a petitioned warrant article. The Town offices will end up over at the Public Safety building.

Victor Azzi's further comments

Mr. Azzi started by saying that words and terms of art are important. AG's work had resulted in programming and a schematic design. The proposal in the warrant article was to continue with the "Design Development" phase. There are architects on the Committee and they know the meanings of these terms of art. Design Development is done once a schematic design has been agreed to. Given this, it cannot be said that what was presented was just a concept.

Additionally, if there's any issue with regard to grant money and the Public Safety Building he is unaware of it. He'd like to see any evidence of this. *Editor's note: Mr. Azzi was a member of the Committee responsible for the Public Safety Building.*

Peter Crawford's comments

Mr. Crawford spoke, agreeing with Mr. Azzi's comments regarding the words "Design Development." The warrant article had initially stated that the funds being voted were to "complete design development," but this was amended at the deliberative session to read "furthering design development," after it became apparent that there was insufficient support among the residents for the design that had been proposed. Arguing that this was just a concept is revisionist history.

Mr. Crawford stated that he agrees with the Heritage Commission's conclusion that the building necessary to accommodate 12,000 sq. ft. would be too long. His diagram that he presented at the last Space Needs Committee meeting was also presented at the Heritage Commission's meeting. He also agrees with the Heritage Commission's conclusion that an L-shaped building is unacceptable.

However, he does not agree that 20 feet is the maximum addition that could be accommodated. He was at the Heritage Commission meeting and some of the members felt that the maximum was 20 feet, others 30 feet, and Priscilla Jenness indicated that the maximum should be 2/3 of the main body of the 58 foot building. That would mean that an addition of about 39 feet would be acceptable. He has, in previous discussions before this Committee, argued for a 34 by 42 foot addition, connected to the 1890 addition after removing the porches. He feels that this is the maximum that would be acceptable.

The warrant article approved by the voters four to one earlier this year must be considered. The last sentence provides for comparison with the square feet per employee of other towns. Cindi Gillespie has done that analysis and arrived at an average of 633 sq. ft. per employee, although that figure includes Newington with its huge auditorium. Multiplying the 13 employees by 633 gives about 8100 sq. ft. Adding the space of the Great Hall to that gives a figure of about 10,000 square feet. An addition of 34 by 42 feet would permit 10,000 square feet to be accommodated if a basement is provided, which

would permit Recreation to remain in the building. Without a basement, there would be about 8400 sq. ft. available, which would accommodate the needs with Recreation moved out.

Mr. Crawford stated that he disagrees with the 12,000 sq. ft. figure that the Committee appears to be arriving at for the total need. Further reduction should be possible. For example, the Town Clerk is still at the 1100 square feet figure in the AG Report. In addition, the total of the storage areas that are separately identified appears to be 1255 square feet, and there is more in the work areas that is not separately identified. At the last meeting, Member Winslow requested that the storage needs be quantified in terms of cubic feet. Member White repeatedly requested this analysis during the current meeting. Mr. Crawford thought that Mr. Magnant had agreed to provide this during the current meeting.

Mr. Crawford continued that he had done his own analysis, counting filing cabinets displayed in the photographs displayed by Mr. Magnant at the last meeting. Assuming five drawer files are used, the most efficient storage from a floor space standpoint, the space need for storage is less than 300 square feet, including a factor of two applied to provide room for passage between cabinets and the opening of drawers. Some storage needs may not have been accounted for, but if the analysis is missing some items then someone needs to show him where it is incorrect. The difference is nearly 1000 square feet. The storage needs need to be quantified or he will raise it again at the Deliberative Session. It's not enough to simply come up with a figure for square feet without quantifying the cubic feet to be stored. For example, an area with boxes spread one deep on the floor might have the floor space fully occupied, but the material could be moved to five drawer lateral files and occupy much less floor space.

While with a green field facility the difference between 10,000 and 12,000 square feet would not make much difference, here the existing facility is about 6000 square feet. That means the difference is between a 4000 square foot and a 6000 square foot expansion, half again as large. That makes all of the difference between being able to accommodate the added space within an aesthetically acceptable addition or not. If the requirement is 12,000 square feet, the two building option is the only feasible one.

Ms. Bradshaw interjected that Mr. Crawford was saying that the Committee needs to sharpen its pencil.

Vice Chairman Boivin pointed out that the Concerned Citizens analysis ignored circulation space. *Editor's note: Mr. Crawford was partially responsible for that analysis.* Mr. Crawford responded that that was not the case. The analysis incorporated 30 percent additional for circulation, compared to 10 percent in Mr. Boivin's analysis at that time. Mr. Boivin's analysis had separately broken out figures for some circulation areas, while the Concerned Citizens analysis had included all circulation in an overall 30 percent adder. The net result was that the circulation figures in the two analyses were quite close.

The choice of building configuration is a tough issue, Mr. Crawford continued. Some of the voters will not want an addition that will significantly alter the appearance of Town Hall. Others may be put off by the perception that a facility of approximately equal size is being proposed as an addition. He thinks that Victor Azzi did a fantastic job with his analysis, and he agrees with 90 percent of it. However, he is concerned with how the voters will perceive the two building option. It will seem like the Town Hall is

moving to a new facility of equal size, with the old facility left for the occasional meetings in the Great Hall and perhaps Recreation. It's one thing to say that the Great Hall should be restored and that the Town is a little short on space, leading to a bump out of the back. It's quite another to say that a facility of equal size is needed. There's a major difference between how the two will be perceived by voters.

With regard to Recreation, Mr. Crawford said that he continues to believe that they should be moved out. Ms. Stevens of the Recreation Commission stated that they want their own facility within five years. Why build a building to accommodate Recreation long term when they may be moving out short term. Not everyone is aware of the high participation in Recreation Department activities. Support for a separate new facility for Recreation may be higher than is believed and could accommodate the stated 900 square foot need together with replacement of the modular facilities and other facilities for the use of residents.

Member Goldman stated that he felt that Mr. Crawford was threatening to induce the voters to reject any warrant article if the Committee does not agree to a lower space need. He stated that he felt that Mr. Crawford had a responsibility to support the Committee's recommendations given his frequent attendance at its meetings. Mr. Crawford responded that his comment was made in the context of his frustration over the lack of response to Member Winslow's request to data on the cubic feet of materials, that was promised by Mr. Magnant, and raised three or four times, to no avail, by Member White during the ongoing meeting.

Subsequently, after Mr. Magnant took exception to Mr. Crawford's contention about Mr. Magnant's commitment. Mr. Crawford clarified that the commitment had been made by Mr. Magnant in the presence of Chairman Paul after the prior meeting had adjourned.

After further discussion on the cubic foot analysis and concerns arose as to how the data could be provided by Town Hall staff, it was agreed during the meeting that Mr. Crawford be given access to gather information for the cubic foot analysis.

In response to Member Goldman's comment that the customers are the employees, Mr. Crawford disagreed. He stated that the customers are the taxpayers and the voters. Member Goldman disagreed, arguing that the needs of the employees must be taken into account. Mr. Crawford agreed that that is also necessary.

Lee Arthur's comments

Lee Arthur, Recreation Director, then spoke indicating that she had recently learned that the Great Hall was under consideration to be the Community Center. There had been a promise that the Fire Station would provide that. There is concern all over Town as to where Recreation would be located and distress over the Town's ability to deliver following unkept promises relating to the Fire Station.

Each town has its own programs. Comparing Recreation departments is like night and day. Comparisons to other towns must incorporate a vision as to what a town wants to be. It's not just an issue of using averages.

While she doesn't have authority to speak for the Recreation Commission, the department has needs now. If it's going to be 20-30 years before something is built, that's a problem.

Alex Herlihy comments

Alex Herlihy, chairman of the Rye Historical Society, stated that he doesn't know what the voters will support. We're part of the process. He's glad that Mr. Mikolaities mentioned a warrant article. Money is needed to further design.

Referring to Priscilla Jenness' two thirds extension, he stated that he personally would support a 38 foot extension. He agrees that if the extension is too large it will be voted down. As Mr. Crawford says, the departments' needs for more space may well make the addition too massive.

Mae Bradshaw's comments regarding Records Retention

Ms. Bradshaw recommended to the Board of Selectmen that a Records Retention Committee be appointed, as is required by law. Selectman Jenness responded that this is under consideration. Ms. Bradshaw then stated that the issue would then be their problem. An answer is needed for the Deliberative Session.

Cecilia Azzi's comments

Cecilia Azzi, a Town resident, commented that there had been talk that we would all be in this together in March. *Editor's note: this is an apparent reference to the election next year, or to the Deliberative Session, which will actually be held in February.* She continued that she felt like an outsider in the process. She felt that there were voices that the Committee did not want to hear.

Ms. Azzi continued, stating that Member Mikolaities cautioned at one meeting that the Committee should be cautious lest what they said would be published. Whether what is said appears in the Rye Civic News or is reported by Joey Cresta in the Portsmouth Herald is irrelevant. What is said should be in the Committee's minutes.

The issue of people's credentials has arisen. The credentials of the people working on the issues are very good. She warmed up when the Committee responded favorably to one of her ideas. Three meetings ago she felt that she would have been shut down.

Vice Chairman Boivin interjected that members of the community are welcome to participate.

Town Clerk Yeaton stated that she emphasized in the first meeting that she wanted transparency. That's why the minutes are posted and materials put on the web site. She is sorry if Ms. Azzi did not feel that the process is transparent enough.

Ms. Azzi referred to the Committee being afraid that someone would write about something.

Member Goldman responded that he felt that they had tried their best to be inclusive.

Ms Azzi responded that she sat through meetings that were opened up for public comment at 8:15 p.m. Other people were excluded at that point.

Whereupon, Member Low moved that the Committee adjourn, which was seconded and unanimously approved.