

## NOTES OF JULY 25, 2013 RYE TOWN HALL COMMITTEE MEETING

Final Revision B – Provided by the Rye Civic League

Present: Selectmen Craig Musselman, Priscilla Jenness. Beth Yeaton, Victor Azzi, Peter White, Paula Merritt, Michael Magnant, Cyndi Gillespie, Kim Reed (the last three were sitting in the audience).

### Call to order (6:34:02 p.m.)

Selectman Jenness called the meeting to order and each of the members described his or her qualifications. She stated that she would be in charge for a very brief time, until a Chairman is elected. Peter Kasnet was present and indicated that he was a builder and was on the prior committee. Selectman Jenness noted that he was not a member, but was visiting. *Editor's note: At the August 15, 2013 meeting, it appeared that Mr. Kasnet had been appointed a member. It is not clear how or when this was done.*

Selectman Jenness noted that Lucy Neiman and Bill Epperson were on the committee, but were not present. Selectman Musselman added that Paul Goldman was also on the committee and not present. Selectman Jenness stated that the Recreation Commission has been asked to send a representative. Selectman Jenness stated that there would be 10 voting members, plus 3 non voting members (Kim Reed, Cyndi Gillespie and Mike Magnant). Beth Yeaton is a Town resident and is elected, so will have a vote. *Editor's note: There were 6 voting members present and 3 that were enumerated as not present, so the 10 apparently includes a Recreation Commission representative to be designated.*

### Summary of work and charge (6:38:00 p.m.)

Selectman Jenness indicated that a warrant article had been approved by the Town Meeting in March 2013 and that the Town Hall Committee had been established by the Board of Selectmen by vote on July 8, 2013. There may be a maximum of 15 members, all town residents. The initial term will end on March 31, 2014. The report is due on December 19, 2013. Selectman Jenness then read the charge:

- o To review all responses to the Town's Request for Proposals for Proposals (RFP) for Architectural Services for the Renovation and Addition to Town Hall and Facilities Master Plan, interview qualified candidates and make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen on awarding the contract to the selected architect or engineer.

- o To review and consider the final report of Robert E. Doyle on the 1899 Trolley Barn Building (i.e. former police station) and determine if and how it influences the Town's space needs.

- o To work with the architect or engineer throughout the process as necessary, to refine programming of Town Hall space needs, to include long term recreational needs at this site.

- o To work with the architect or engineer to formulate at least two schematic designs that incorporate the Town's visions and needs, to include an addition to the existing Town Hall building that respects the integrity of the existing building. The second shall include a separate, new town office building, which also respects the historical integrity of the existing building.

- o To initiate a Rye Town Facilities Master Plan by collecting data and identifying all town facilities, their conditions, potential functions and town facility needs, for the next 30 years. To insure that the public is provided opportunities for input and is informed throughout the process through the use of various tools and methods to include; public meetings, presentations, and electronic media.

- o To report back to the Board of Selectmen on the process and the committee's recommendation for appropriate next steps for the town to take, no later than December 19, 2013.

#### Organization and initial questions (6:41:00 p.m.)

Selectman Jenness noted that no clerk will be needed as Dyana Ledger will be taking notes.

Peter White asked whether the name should be the Town Facilities Committee rather than the Town Hall Committee. Selectman Musselman agreed that the scope was broader than just Town Hall, but stated that the name should remain the same.

Paula Merritt asked about the schematic design being the end product. She argued that she felt very strongly that a 3D model should be available for the public to look at. A 3D model would permit people to see depths and the height of the church behind the building.

Victor Azzi responded that she apparently had in mind a physical model of the immediate neighborhood. This is often done, but costs money. These days, computer 3D models permit the building to be rotated and viewed from various angles.

Selectman Musselman stated that the scope and budget did not envision a physical model. At this stage a concept is envisioned. There are "math problems" with respect to an addition fitting. The next step, after this year could involve computer 3D modeling. At this stage, he anticipates that the focus would be on deciding whether the expansion would be in this building or a separate building.

Mr. Azzi concurred, indicating that what Ms. Merritt proposed would be in the design development phase, the next phase.

Ms. Merritt stated that she was concerned about a schematic design being presented and people not liking it. Mr. Azzi responded that it should be possible to have renderings done of three dimensional designs on two dimensional paper. Selectman Musselman confirmed that this would be a different process from that before. Town Clerk Beth Yeaton commented that, last time, the design was presented as a concept, but people took it as something else.

*Editor's note: Ms. Yeaton was apparently referring to the design done by AG Architects in 2011, which became the basis for a rejection by the town, 484-830 of funds to continue with design development, during the 2012 election. That resulted in a 2012 Town Hall Space Needs Committee that reduced the space requirement from the 15,000 sq. ft. proposed by AG Architects to 10,500 sq. ft., plus or minus 10 percent, and 2013 Warrant Article 4. That warrant article, provided for schematic designs of two options: expansion of the existing building, and construction of a separate, additional building. It provided for \$60,000 in funding to provide these designs, and passed 699-384.*

Presentation of Rob Doyle on results of 1899 Trolley Barn (Old Police Station) study (6:51:00 p.m.)

Selectman Musselman suggested that organizational issues be addressed at the next meeting, inasmuch as four persons are missing. He introduced Rob Doyle, an architect from Dover. Mr. Doyle is also with one of the five firms that submitted a proposal for the Town Hall schematic design assignment, which he had not anticipated.

Mr. Doyle stated that the following was done:

1. Structural systems analysis
2. Septic feasibility study (the existing septic system has failed)
3. Architectural assessment of the building envelope
4. Environmental assessment, including mold, asbestos and lead paint.

This included visual examination, testing and samples.

Mr. Doyle stated that the building is a timber frame structure in good shape for its age, with minor repairs needed. The soil in front of the building is very good for a septic system and would present no issues. The front is the only place that it would fit.

Although some lead paint was found, there is very little. Twenty-four tests for asbestos were all negative.

However, mold was found. There is a high water concentration, mainly in interior partitions. Spore counts are high and the furniture stored in the building has mold. The exterior walls are not a problem as far as mold. The mold appears to have developed over time as there was no active heating system. It is not the most toxic mold, but is of a type that typically develops in basements during the summer due to wet conditions.

Inasmuch as the mold is at a very high level the recommendation of RFT, which was subcontracted to evaluate the mold, is that all porous organic materials should be removed. *Editor's note: The name of the firm is based on what was heard on the video recording. Some of the letters may have been heard incorrectly. Nevertheless, it is clear that Mr. Doyle is referring to the conclusion of the subcontractor, not his own conclusion.* This includes the flooring, carpeting, wallboard, and paper-backed insulation. His firm recommends that the interior framing also be removed. They are essentially recommending that the building be gutted to start fresh, even if it is to be used only for storage. This would eliminate a problem for the future.

In response to a question from Mr. Azzi regarding the source of the water, Mr. Doyle responded that it was sense that it was coming through the slab. It is a slab on grade that, due to its age, probably did not have a vapor barrier. At one point there was a water leak around the chimney but this had been eliminated. The roof is relatively new and the siding is OK.

Ms. Yeaton asked about moisture around the building. Mr. Doyle responded that the water was at an 80 inch level. The building is not well sealed and, over time, the moisture has built up due to the lack of heating.

(7:03:55 p.m.)

Mr. Doyle then outlined the three approaches to renovating the building. The first is a minimal one, to use the building only for storage. No septic system would be provided but there would be heating and a ventilation system (no air conditioning). The front of the building would be restored to its historic character with windows and vinyl siding. All three approaches removed a section of the building to restore its historic character.

In response to a question from Selectman Musselman, Mr. Doyle indicated that the building, renovated at this first level, would not be suitable for archival storage. Air conditioning would be required for that.

(7:07:45 p.m.)

Mr. Doyle then discussed the second option which was to devote the building half for storage and half for offices. There would be space for four employees, including two in a reception area, two offices, a conference room and a bathroom.

In responses to a question from Ms. Yeaton, Mr. Doyle indicated that unlike the first option, mechanical equipment would be located in the attic. Mr. Azzi questioned whether it would fit under the roof. Mr. Doyle stated that it would, if it was placed over the offices or bathroom, which would have 8 foot ceilings.

This option would include air conditioning, Mr. Doyle stated.

Selectman Musselman asked about natural light and the existing windows. Mr. Doyle responded that the southern exposure is at the rear of the building. Appropriate locations of offices and windows could make the natural lighting adequate.

Mr. Doyle continued, stating that the siding for this option would be cement board or cedar clapboards. Ms. Yeaton questioned why this option would not include vinyl siding as well. In her 20 years at Town Hall there have been problems keeping paint on the building. Ms. Merritt commented that she personally does not have enormous issues with vinyl. There are many buildings in the Historic District that have vinyl windows as the Historic District Commission was never informed of them. *Editor's note: Ms. Merritt a member of the Historic District Commission.*

Mr. Doyle indicated that the cost estimate for this option included a septic system and repaving the parking lot. The lot holds 10 cars now, it might be 8 in the new lot, once ADA requirements are addressed. This would be adequate for the proposed offices and a few visitors.

(7:14:20 p.m.)

Mr. Doyle then stated that the high end option would add program spaces, including two small areas and one larger one. The larger area could accommodate 30 persons, perhaps for yoga. The smaller areas could accommodate 12-16 people.

Peter White asked whether this option was also for four workers. Mr. Doyle confirmed. He suggested that additional parking for visitors could be provided through the use of parallel parking across the road adjacent to the cemetery. This would involve

taking out a portion of the stone wall. A number of members present reacted, with several discussions going on at once.

Mr. Azzi said that cutting into the cemetery for parking was a bad idea and suggested that people could walk from the Town Hall in about 3 minutes. Ms. Yeaton indicated that that is too far, particularly in the winter when it is icy. It is also down a hill from the Town Hall, she said. Selectman Musselman indicated that a sidewalk and crosswalk would probably be needed. It would be a bit of a hike. It could perhaps be used for Zumba participants he said.

Mr. Doyle agreed that, beyond a certain number of people, parking becomes an issue.

This option includes more air conditioning, windows, doors and partitions. A walkway is also included in the cost.

Selectman Musselman discussed a somewhat different parking option across Central that the Board of Selectmen had rejected as a bad idea. It involved an 18 foot notch in the wall adjacent to the cemetery and a parking lot.

*(7:19:15 p.m.)*

Mr. Doyle then summarized the costs. Demolishing the building completely would cost about \$45,000, or \$17 per sq. ft. for the 2500 sq. ft. building. For the first option, involving partial demolition and construction, the cost per sq. ft. would be \$73. That is relatively cheap and would be less than new construction.

Peter White asked why Public Works couldn't do the demolition with a backhoe at a much lower cost than \$45,000, given that there were no hazardous material issues. Mr. Doyle acknowledged that the costs might be somewhat conservative. For example, removal of the foundations was planned, where it might be possible to bury them and build on top.

Ms. Yeaton stated that she was not in favor of completely demolishing the building. There are great storage needs. Where would the lifeguard stands and greenhead traps that are stored there now be stored? In response to a question from Selectman Jenness, Ms. Yeaton stated that election equipment is not stored there, but rather in a trailer.

Mr. Doyle continued, stating that the mid-level option would cost \$122 per sq. ft. That is still less than new construction. Selectman Musselman commented that that would reuse the structure, foundation and roof that are there now. He asked how that would compare to adding space to another structure. Mr. Doyle responded that new construction would run \$170 to \$180 per sq. ft.

Mr. Doyle stated that the high end option would run \$160 per sq. ft. The entire building would be at an office level. This figure is comparable to new construction.

Selectman Musselman commented that the group located in the building would need to be one with fewer needs of interaction. Ms. Yeaton responded that she had thought that the last group had decided that the offices needed to be together. Perhaps Recreation could be located there, but there would be parking issues. Selectman Musselman asked about there being lots of cars when registration is being done. Ms. Yeaton responded "oh yes." She acknowledged, however, that major registrations are done at the Recreation Building.

Ms. Merritt asked about a more sophisticated listing of storage requirements, with different numbers than the first committee. Mr. Maganant responded that there was a game plan to start this. *Editor's note: 2013 Warrant Article 8 , which passed 662-431, provided \$25,000 for studying storage needs.* Ms. Merritt stated that considering the 1899 Trolley Barn for storage might be putting the cart before the horse. If they are lucky, perhaps the buildings proposed for Town Hall can accommodate the storage needs. Selectman Musselman stated that this would be possible, particularly if the separate building option is chosen. Mr. Azzi stated that part of the charge includes reviewing the programming. Selectman Musselman stated that, given the discussion, it appears that it is not likely that recreation programming space could be located there. They would need to look at the Great Hall or elsewhere. Ms. Yeaton stated that most of what is in the 1899 Trolley Barn now is not related to Town Hall.

(7:32:55 p.m.)

Mr. Azzi asked what the dimensions of the building were. Mr. Doyle responded that the interior was 2500 sq. ft. of usable space. Mr. Azzi stated that he had seen a figure in the Doyle report of 100 ft. by 30 ft. Mr. Doyle stated that the building was approximately 32 ft. by 81 ft. *Editor's note: According to the data for 37 Central Rd. (the 1899 Trolley Barn) on visionappraisal.com, the building is 33 ft. by 81 ft. with a small additional bump out. The total "living area" is 2372 sq. ft. plus 420 sq. ft. for the garage, located within the structure, a total of 2792 sq. ft. The visionappraisal dimensions are typically to the outside edge of the exterior walls.*

Presentation of the Report and the discussion of the Trolley Barn building having concluded, Mr. Doyle left the meeting.

#### Discussion of Architects' proposals for Town Hall (7:35:00 p.m.)

The discussion then turned to the proposals that had recently been received relating to the Town Hall. Selectman Musselman stated that five proposals had been received. He suggested that, given the relatively small number, all of the bidders be interviewed. That would permit the interviews to proceed without the need for a meeting beforehand to generate a short list. There would probably be three candidates on the short list in any event, he suggested.

Mr. White and Mr. Azzi concurred with Mr. Musselman's recommendation. Mr. Azzi noted, however, that there would have been a benefit to discussing the proposals prior to the interviews, which benefit would be lost by eliminating the short listing step. It was agreed that they would meet just before the five interviews for an hour to conduct an initial discussion.

Mr. Azzi asked whether they had received the full packages that had been submitted. He noted the lack of a transmittal letter from one proposal. Mr. Magnant confirmed that one had not been received, and stated that everything submitted had been provided except the fee envelopes, which were sealed. In response to a question from Mr. White, Mr. Magnant described the process relating to the fee envelopes, which was that the evaluation of the proposals (which included no stated fee) were done first and then the associated fee envelope or envelopes were opened depending on the evaluation

of the proposals. Selectman Musselman clarified that recent policy has been to select only the preferred firm, open its fee envelope, and then negotiate with that firm.

Ms. Merritt asked about further evaluation of the Public Safety Building as an option. JSN had already done a study on this, at the behest of AG, she said. *Editor's note: This work, done back in 2011, had concluded that using the area over the equipment bay of the Public Safety Building for Town offices would be at least as expensive as constructing a new addition to the Town Hall. Mr. Azzi strongly disagreed with that conclusion and opinion, both at the time, and since then.* Selectman Musselman and Mr. Azzi confirmed that the Town had moved beyond considering the Public Safety Building as an option. Selectman Musselman acknowledged, however, that this building, along with the Public Works facilities, would be one of the elements considered when the Facilities Master Plan was done, in accordance with the charge.

#### Scheduling of future meetings (7:48:05 p.m.)

Selectman Jenness indicated that there were two items on the agenda for this meeting that had not yet been done. The first was the election of a Chairman and a Vice Chairman. The second was the scheduling of the next few meetings. With regard to the former, it was generally agreed that the elections would await a later meeting due to the continuing absence of certain members.

It was then agreed that the next meeting would be August 15, starting at 3:30 p.m. The first hour would be devoted to initial discussions, and would be followed by the 5 interviews, lasting approximately 45 minutes each. Each interviewee would be informed that there would be 20 minutes for a presentation, 20 minutes for questions and answers, and a 5 minute break between interviews.

When it was realized that the Conservation Commission would be meeting at the Town Hall on this date, and that the Committee wanted to use the room, it was suggested that the Conservation Commission could be moved to the Library or another facility.

The timing of the project was then discussed. The architect would not be under contract until September 1, Selectman Musselman said. The technical presentation would be needed by December, in time for a warrant article for the following year. In accordance with the charge, the Committee would need to complete its work by mid-December. That meant that the architect would need to have his work done by December 1.

Ms. Merritt asked what the subject of the warrant article would be. Selectman Musselman responded that it could be funding of the design phase.