

Town Office Planning Committee  
Draft minutes 6/1/21 meeting

Meeting called to order at 5:59 pm.

Members present in Town Office: Mary Linehan, Beth Preston, Rebecca Seibel.

Members attending by zoom: Morgan Smith, Art Hanchett and Bill Risso. Lisa M Bragg, John Freitag also attended by zoom.

Mary reported to selectboard at their last meeting, who expressed support for this committee and the statement of work prepared by Bill Risso. The statement will be reviewed by the committee and any comments can be submitted for the next meeting.

Mary presented a table comparing the current v, proposed town office space needs, after consulting with the Town Clerk and Selectboard. Mary stressed that the proposed work space requirements are conservative and may need to be increased at the time of final design. Art commented that a four-person meeting space would be required to be larger. Discussion regarding the possibility that if the committee proposes a 2000 sq ft building, there may be future problems if the needs is greater.

John Freitag suggested we look at all the proposed plans for renovating the current town office, not just the final plan presented in the Community Building Restoration Project 2020. He offered to help in any way possible.

Beth, Morgan and Rebecca reported on the list of town-owned properties that might be possibilities for a new site for Town Office. Some sites are clearly not usable. After some discussion, it is clear we need to add some considerations to the site list, including adequate septic and energy sustainability. Bill will start creating a list of weighted criteria to allow for a scored evaluation of the sites.

Discussion about “flood plain” and the limitations of what existing maps can determine.

Art presented a detailed draft strategy for communication with the community. He suggested: 1. a survey; 2. engage community groups for short presentations; 3. engage community committees for short presentations; 4. 2 community forums, in person & zoom; 5. written report.

After much discussion, and a reminder that our goal is to advise the selectboard, who will be responsible for deciding to accept or decline. Consensus that a community forum to present our ideas and the process of how we got there is appropriate. A mailing at the end of June for a mid-July meeting was suggested. Mary suggested we all review the slide show of the presentation from Moretown as a useful model for how to provide information to the town. Art will need help from all to create a presentation with slides/graphics.

Noted that it will be important to stress the urgency of this project --the building is increasingly in decline, crowded and insufficient for the town's management needs.

Modification to May XX meeting minutes: Bill will develop site evaluation criteria in coordination with the committee and a site evaluation mechanism. Motion approved to accept the minutes with the modification.

Meeting adjourned at 7:58pm.

Rebecca Seibel, Reporting Clerk