

Police Facilities Advisory Committee

The Police Facilities Advisory Committee was established by the Board of Selectmen to assist them with decisions related to the improvement of the New London Police and Communications facilities. The committee will meet with professional consultants including the project manager from Colliers Project Leaders, to evaluate plans, data and information compiled by the consultants for the purpose of advising the Selectmen on the preferred path to take in improving the facilities to be used by the police and dispatchers. The committee will also assist the Selectmen in efforts to educate the public on the various options available.

The issue of how best to improve the police facilities has been before the town for decades. The most recent major improvement was in 1999/2000 when the police and dispatching departments were relocated from the basement of Whipple Memorial Town Hall to the space that was vacated by the town office staff in the Harold W. Buker, Jr. Town Office Building. The Selectmen and Town Clerk-Tax Collector offices were moved at that time to their current location in the Academy Building. Town Meeting 1999 approved an appropriation of \$1,470,000 to renovate the Academy Building for the town offices, renovate the Buker building for the police and dispatching departments which included adding a sallyport and dispatching center. The project also included adding offices for the District Court which was a requirement of the State to keep the District Court at that location. The Recreation Department now occupies the court space with the exception of the judge's office which was combined with the dispatching center this past summer because new dispatching equipment could not fit in their existing space.

The Selectmen understand that many people have firm beliefs in how the issue of the police facilities should be resolved. Members of this committee agree to set aside their current beliefs on the best resolution to this issue and to approach this task in an open manner, willing to change positions after consideration of information that is provided during this process. All members agree to be respectful of differences of opinion and to work together in a collegial manner.

Members agree that the existing police and dispatching facilities are not adequate and must be improved. The options available are:

1. renovate the existing facilities,
2. remove the existing facilities and build new on the same site (with or without the addition of the abutting property),
3. build new police facilities on a new site, or
4. renovate an existing building on a new site (for example the Stahlman building).