

March 1, 2022

**Building and Facilities Committee
Police Station Site Review Subcommittee
Minutes of 3-1-22; P.D. Training Room**

Members Present: Chief Cobb, Cardillo, Hoglund, Bowers, Vance; Marashio; Absent: Keith

Also in attendance: Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator; Janet Haines; Bill Helm

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

1. Approve Minutes of February 15, 2022

The minutes of the previous meeting of February 15, 2022, were reviewed by the Committee and were then approved unanimously.

2. Discussion of each member's rankings/pros and cons list

Peter Hoglund inquired of Chief Cobb whether she had been able to check on police department calls to specific areas of Town as discussed at the last meeting. She responded that she had looked into it but that the program used does not provide that information.

Chief Cobb introduced for discussion the topic of each member's analysis, which they did after the last meeting, of the pros and cons for each site and the spreadsheet ratings they had prepared. Paul Vance noted that he had not heard members' in-depth views, and he would like to have everyone's thoughts. He suggested that the committee could perhaps take each site one at a time and talk about that site. Chief Cobb noted that she had taken a quick pass at the checklist and found that as she looked at the issues it affected her thinking. Joe Cardillo stated that there was no easy way to do it, and as we go through each person's thoughts it will probably lead to different assessments of rankings. He gave as an example the ranking of Town identity, and that each member of the committee would have different ideas in mind.

Peter Hoglund agreed that understanding the ranking could be a problem. Joe Cardillo noted that rankings help each member to decide where each site falls in the broader comparison. Paul Vance suggested that "Town identity" is an issue that has significant differences for different sites. For example, the Bewley site would remove the police station from its present visibility. Joe Cardillo agreed that that could detract from Town identity. Paul Vance suggested that it was important to advise the BFC when the committee makes its report of all the differing views and opinions.

Chief Cobb noted that the police department does not by itself provide Town identity. Nancy Marashio stated that when the committee was discussing the Town parking lot across from the Library it raised the question whether using that site for a police station would change Town identity – should it be changed by using that site; or should it be left alone? The committee chose to leave it alone. Joe Cardillo suggested that all kinds of things affect the sense of Town identity.

Chief Cobb then inquired of the committee whether it wished to proceed by discussing each site individually first, or by discussing the categories and the spreadsheet ratings. Bob Bowers stated that he thought it would be better to discuss the pros and cons as to each site, site by site. Nancy Marashio and Peter Hoglund agreed.

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Chief Cobb then invited discussion of the Bewley site. She noted that there is a wetlands issue as presented in the materials and appraisal for that site provided to the committee. She also noted that the size of the parcel, seven acres, was big enough to meet the needs identified. Paul Vance commented that the wetlands and the steep slope might limit the availability of space for other substantial town uses. Nancy Marashio noted that the parcel size allowed for any future needs. Chief Cobb stated that David Keith was not able to attend as he was in court but wanted her to bring to the committee his thought that the parcel size allows for storage and possibly emergency management use.

Joe Cardillo stated that the wetlands issue is something that would have to be addressed by an engineer and could not be resolved by the committee at this point. Bob Bowers stated that he had approached the pros and cons evaluation by noting that for the larger lots (three of them), they would meet all of a number of the stated categories, so that these would not have to be addressed individually. Those were: parcel size; 1 story; probably a basement; 14,000 gsf; is on public water and sewer; vehicle service as defined; vehicle charging stations; "hardening" to the extent that term is intended to mean sufficient lot size for separate parking of police vehicles and officer personal vehicles; and has sufficient size for future needs. Peter Hogle stated that he understood "hardening" to be a secure area for police vehicles and personnel personal vehicles. Chief Cobb agreed that this is what was intended by the term "hardening." Paul Vance suggested that there would be a need for more spacing at sites in the middle of Town for this purpose.

Joe Cardillo stated that some sites would work for a one-story building or a two-story building, while others would be able to accommodate only a two-story building.

Chief Cobb continued the discussion of the list of categories as applied to the Bewley site and stated that the review by Beltronics concluded that the site meets the needs. Bob Bowers raised concerns about how well the site could be "hardened" given its siting in a wooded area and abutting Hilltop, a residential area, with the lighting that would probably be necessary; that it does not in his mind fit the criteria of being in the commercial corridor because of its location; and that it is not accessible by sidewalk or biking, which he believes are important attributes of availability. Chief Cobb disagreed, saying it is well within the commercial corridor at that location. Joe Cardillo agreed it is in the commercial corridor but expressed concern that it doesn't fit in with the Town identity.

The category of high need was then addressed, and Paul Vance stated that it did not seem to be an easily defined term. What do we mean by that? Chief Cobb noted that police officers are on patrol throughout town; they don't stay in one place waiting for something to happen. Paul Vance suggested that it is an issue that the committee should note that it gave thought to but could not sufficiently define to assign a specific value to it. This would then be an area that the BFC and the Selectmen could give whatever value they thought appropriate. The committee agreed with that idea.

Nancy Marashio stated that it was very important to take into account the Master Plan and the conclusion of the residents in that process that Town identity was the foremost issue. Chief Cobb noted that she understands that any change from the current status is difficult. She then

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noted that David Keith had asked her to bring to the committee that he felt this site was on the outskirts of what would be defined as the main corridor. Paul Vance reiterated that visibility is an issue, especially if it is a one-story building. Chief Cobb stated that other towns have located their police stations where there is less visibility, so that is not necessarily a drawback. Nancy Marashio stated that a sense of community is important and that she is not sure if this location is consistent with a sense of community. Joe Cardillo noted that some will see this site as good, as it would give the police department a large parcel where they would have what they felt was needed; but to him Town identity involved a sense of place, and this was not consistent with his thinking on it. Paul Vance suggested that part of the committee's role is to point out to the BFC and the Selectmen the various issues that may be important to residents.

Chief Cobb stated that the site was large enough to meet future needs. The committee agreed. Nancy Marashio stated that she still had concerns as to the existence and location of the high-power electric lines at that site. Chief Cobb then noted that David Keith had raised with her and asked that it be brought up to the committee the question of at what point do we take cost into account. Peter Hogle stated that he had done some cursory research on general costs of new construction for police stations and that the estimates for new construction of a 14,000gsf police station would be in the neighborhood of \$7,500,000. Bob Bowers informed the committee that this was something the BFC had raised as an issue that needed to be addressed, but that at the present this committee had been charged only with determining what sites might meet the requirements for a new police station. Determining costs is a necessary next step, and there may be other things that will require attention. As to costs, they would include purchase price, site development, costs of construction, and maybe some other concerns; but unless and until that determination was assigned to this committee, we should be looking only at whether a site would actually work. Paul Vance asked if we shouldn't pass along costs of purchase where we have that information. Bob Bowers agreed that we should clearly pass along any information of that nature which the committee had acquired.

Bob Bowers then diverged from the subject to note that he had been approached by a resident suggesting the Village Green parcel, which is located directly across Main Street from Whipple Hall. This same person had now noted to him that the Village Green parcel was for sale, owned by Chris Broom. He wanted the committee to be aware of that suggestion in case anyone felt it should be pursued. He noted that the actual parcel for sale was quite small and to be useable it would probably require simultaneously looking into the possibility of purchase of the land behind it, a house, owned by Mr. Coy. The committee felt it was not a parcel that should be pursued at this time.

Chief Cobb then turned to an analysis of the Bonanno parcel and noted that its size indicates it would meet the needs identified and its availability was possible but the shape is challenging. Paul Vance stated that it would not work for a one-story building and would have to be a two-story building with the lower floor opening to the rear because of the slope of the land. Joe Cardillo had informed the committee at the beginning of the meeting that he had a previously scheduled meeting and would now have to leave. He stated that he liked the way

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the discussion had proceeded and would like to continue in that vein for the other sites. The committee agreed that this would be a good way to proceed at future meetings. Joe Cardillo then left the meeting.

Bob Bowers stated that he thought the Energy Committee should look at this site to determine any solar value and issues and should look at all the sites to provide advice. There followed some discussion on the issue with the conclusion that a determination regarding solar issues did not need to be made in selecting a site, but that those issues should be looked at later in the process as it would relate more to the construction of a building than whether the site itself would work. Chief Cobb then stated that she had serious concerns about the site as to the need for hardening as it was abutted by residential areas. Paul Vance agreed that that was a real issue and raised concerns. Nancy Marashio stated that the height of the communications tower in that location was also a serious concern. Chief Cobb noted that the Beltronics review indicated that it might be necessary to have a taller tower at this site than would be the case at most of the other sites. Paul Vance had a concern that the configuration of the lot and the steep slope might require the station to be sited well back from Main Street. After some further discussion the committee decided to remove this parcel from further consideration.

Chief Cobb then asked if the committee wished to begin a discussion of the TDS site, and the decision of the committee was to take it up as the first item at the next meeting. This would allow for both Joe Cardillo and David Keith to be present for the full discussion.

3. Preparation of list of top sites to submit to BFC

Deferred.

4. Other business

None.

5. Next meeting date

The next meeting will be on March 15, 2022, at 1:00 p.m., in the P.D. Training Room.

Action Items

1-25-22

- A. Chief Cobb will send out the agenda for meetings the Friday before each meeting.

6. Motion to adjourn.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Bowers, Recorder