

## MINUTES

### Fire Station Building Committee

April 12, 2012

Approved

#### Attendees:

Jack Petropoulos  
Susan Daly  
Lynwood Prest  
Jeremy Januskiewicz  
Michael Bouchard  
Halsey Platt

#### Minutes

Mr. Petropoulos opened the meeting at 5:05 with a background briefing on the purpose of the meeting. The committee had presented an overview of the site selection to the Board of Selectmen on Monday, April 9. At that time, the committee stated that it would like additional information on an aspect of the Station Ave site, and requested that our recommendation be deferred until this meeting.

The committee had requested a conceptual site plan on Station Ave showing an uncompromised internal and external fire station program situated on the site. A plan was prepared by Dore and Whittier. Some members of the committee were expecting that the plan show the co-location of a GELD building and a fire station building, and demonstrate the issues that might be involved with building placements. The plan received only showed the location of an uncompromised fire station on the site. Some members of the committee allowed that the plan did demonstrate that there is very little room left on the site for another building. Discussion of the plan suggested that the fire station could be moved further into "pre-disturbed" wetlands buffer areas, and potentially have room on the site for the two buildings with programs. Discussion also identified that a shared driveway could cause operational conflicts with the size and coincident use of GELD and fire vehicles. Further issues identified included the need for exterior space for training evolutions (exercises). The type of road needed, quantity and placement of parking for the stations and rail trail and impact to permitting of buffer incursion were discussed. A concern was expressed with the safety of rail trail traffic, especially children, to operational emergency vehicles. Enhancement of rail trail parking will presumably increase traffic.

Mr. Platt stated the plan showed an \$8.2m building plus the cost of the land. Mr. Lindemer of the Light Commission, in the audience, was asked if there was any discussion of GELD selling the land to the Town. Mr. Lindemer said that any such discussion would need to consider the value of the property and

provide an incentive to the ratepayers to move the GELD facility. He thought a price would be “north of \$800k” but that a land sale was not really an option.

Mr. Lindemer asked the committee if Dore and Whittier was considering the pre-disturbed land in their layout concepts. He did acknowledge that If a fire station doesn’t work with an uncompromised plan, it probably would not fit on the site. He believes a 9700 square foot footprint would work. The committee has evaluated that a 13,000 square foot footprint is needed.

Mr. Bouchard asked why the committee would believe that a fire station located in pre-disturbed wetlands buffers would have the same Conservation Commission permitting issues that the GELD project is experiencing for similar issues. This would potentially involve considerable time and expense to the fire station project.

Ms. Daly stated that the premise to use this site was cost savings. Cost savings are not evident, and in fact appears that the town would pay a premium to use the site, along with GELD and the fire station compromising their respective programs. Mr. Tyler, a firefighter in the audience, stated that the types of trucks, especially the commercial style used by GELD, would have a tough time with turning radius in a co-located scenario.

It was concluded that the available land on Station Ave would not allow for an adequate fire station program to be considered. Mr. Lindemer, in response to a question, stated that GELD will pursue to maximize the surplus land.

The committee members individually ranked the sites:

Mr. Platt	Lawrence Homestead Trust , Station Ave, Prescott School
Mr. Bouchard	Lawrence Homestead Trust , Prescott School, Station Ave
Mr. Januskiewicz	Lawrence Homestead Trust , Prescott School tie with Station Ave
Ms. Daly	Lawrence Homestead Trust , Prescott School, Station Ave
Mr. Prest	Lawrence Homestead Trust , Prescott School, Station Ave
Mr. Petropoulos	Lawrence Homestead Trust , Prescott School, Station Ave

Further discussion:

- Even if the fire station program fit, why spend as much as a \$1m premium?
- If the committee recommended the Lawrence Homestead Trust site, would the Lawrence Homestead Trust use that as leverage to raise the price. Mr. Dillon, a Selectman in the audience and involved in the negotiations, stated that the Trust was sincere in their effort to assist the town and optimize the use of the land. He thought this was a low risk.

Motion: Mr. Platt – I move that the committee vote to recommend the Lawrence Homestead Trust to the Selectmen as the site for the new fire station.

Vote: 6 in favor 0 against.

All members then signed the letter of recommendation, and agreed to produce a more detailed draft report for the meeting on April 20 at 10:00 am.

Further discussion:

- Mr. Petropoulos – He has received feedback of a perception that not enough community outreach has been done, and that an article at town meeting may be premature. The committee discussed various method of supplementing what was thought to be fairly extensive outreach by asking local business to distribute flyers, asking GELD to distribute a handout (offered by Mr. Lindemer), direct mailing, neighborhood meetings, another public hearing. There was a comment from the audience that despite the Committee's best efforts, turnout to educational events so far has been low and that if "sufficient outreach" was defined by attendance, this bar may never be achieved.
- Discussion about asking Dore and Whittier to produce "mock up" drawings for town meeting. Some concern was expressed that this may be counterproductive in that these drawings would be conceptual and not necessarily realistic to the end product. However, it was also felt that the drawings could be illustrative and help people understand the scope and nature of the building.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm

Approved 5-18-12