

**BUILDING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES AUGUST 3, 2012  
APPROVED**

**Present:** Jeremy Januskiewicz, Chairman; Mike Bouchard, Clerk; Val Prest; Halsey Platt; Steve Webber, Susan Daly; Don Black

**Also Present:** Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Patrice Garvin, Executive Assistant

Chairman Januskiewicz called the meeting to order at 8:03am. Mr. Bouchard took the minutes until Ms. Garvin arrived at 8:45am.

Height of building ridge

- Groton Zoning bylaw limits height of a building to 35'
  - Current design is 47'
- There seem to be three options to pursue
  - Apply for ZBA variance
  - Rezone the property to Municipal Use. Municipal Use removes height restriction. Requires 2/3 vote of Town Meeting
  - Lower the building height to 35"
- A ZBA variance
  - Requires 4 of 5 members to approve
  - Has to be based on "hardship" with the land or construction. Very hard to justify with new construction in general. This land does not appear to have hardship characteristics.
  - A ZBA decision is subject to appeal by aggrieved parties. Even an appeal with no merit could delay the project for "years".
- Rezone the property to "Municipal Use"
  - The Committee plan is to ask Town Meeting to rezone the property to Municipal Use. However, that rezoning plan was not for the purpose of raising the height limit. The Committee did not feel that this was the proper issue to raise with town meeting. It was also suggested that town meeting might not approve re-zoning because the height request.
  - NOTE: Municipal buildings are allowed in an "R-A" district, but does require a Special Permit form the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Committee voted unanimously to support lowering the height of the building to 35" at the ridgeline.
  - Lower roofline conforms to zoning
  - This does not compromise the fire program.
  - This will involve relocating the air handling unit.
  - Roof structure is affected – design issue
  - Several sketches of "lowered roof redesign" were available. Committee will discuss various "looks" with the HDC. Prevalent feeling was that Design E was favored.
  - NOTE: Aside form roof height issues,

- Roof height was the biggest issue raised at the site walk held on July 24
- Committee reviewed draft sketches provided by Dore and Whittier. The impact of a lower roof line appears to be reduction of ½ story in the training staircase. The training mezzanine is intact. The air handling unit will be moved over the apparatus bay. Roof support over the bay will be redesigned. The remainder of the program space appears to be intact.
- The HDC , the Committee was told by Mark Haddad, would still like to see a “height study” of the various barns in the area.
- A lower roofline design also address an HDC objection with the double roof line at the entrance to the building.
- Dore and Whittier is working on cost estimates incorporating the roof redesign. No additional architectural fees are due because of the roof height issue.
- Lawrence Homestead Trust update
  - The LHT was approached to consider a temporary grading easement, a location adjustment of the drainage swale at the rear of the property, and a change on the tree planting plan along the property line.
  - LHT
    - Is resistant to reducing tree plantings along the north property line
    - Is considering the temporary grading easement. An ability to grade into the adjoin lot will allow for a more natural slope and eliminate the need for a retaining wall.
    - Is resistant to relocation of the drainage swale
    - Discussions are continuing.
- Review of the presentation for the August 8 Public Hearing:

*Ms. Garvin enters 8:45am.*

Mr. Haddad reviewed the slides for the upcoming Public Hearing. Mr. Haddad listed all the meetings that the Building Committee had met with recently and the issues and concerns that were mentioned. Mr. Prest asked about the water table and if there were results in yet. Mr. Haddad stated that he was still waiting for the final report. Mr. Haddad showed a slide that reviewed the site work that had been done on the site. Ms. Collette suggested asking GELD about underground utilities for the site. Mr. Webber noted the issue of the curb cut on the property. The next slide was the information on the OPM. Mr. Webber asked if \$300k was the original budget proposed for the OPM. Mr. Haddad explained that the Clerk of the Works, an additional \$150k was not included. The Project schedule and Design Development will be a topic for discussion at the hearing. Mr. Webber asked about the zoning changes and when they will be addressed. Mr. Haddad stated that the rezoning will take place at the Fall Town Meeting.

The lot footprint slide was presented. Mr. Platt suggested cleaning up the slide to make it clearer. The last slide was the budget and the impact of Lost Lake. Mr. Platt suggested that the budget and the impact of Lost Lake should be moved up in the presentation. Mr. Haddad agreed that an explanation of the budget at the beginning of the presentation would be better. The group agreed to a reordering of the slides. The group also decided that Mr. Haddad should give the presentation at the hearing.

Mr. Black asked about possibly saving some square footage on the long hallways that appear in the floor plan. Mr. Black also had some questions that he felt he had been unable to answer when people ask.

1. Mr. Black asked that since there was a training room at the Lost Lake Station then why does the new station need one, saving money. Mr. Haddad explained that the whole program was built around training and that it made sense to have it in the Center Station. Mr. Webber stated that the amount of training that a fire fighter needed to acquire needed to be explained. Ms. Daly also noted that the Fire Department lost their training room at the Public Safety. Mr. Januskiewicz stated that costs to send fire fighters to training are a factor. Mr. Webber suggested writing up the training requirements for fire fighters.
2. Mr. Black stated that Ayer seemed to be the benchmark for fire stations. Ms. Daly explained that the Ayer station was a working example of a fire station and how the program worked.
3. Mr. Black asked why an outdoor patio was needed. Ms. Daly and Mr. Januskiewicz explained that there is different training that can be utilized on an outdoor patio. Ms. Daly went on to explain why the outdoor patio was useful for training.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30am

Respectfully submitted,

Patrice Garvin,

Executive Assistant

Approved- 8/20/12