

Minutes of the Capital Building Committee meeting of Thursday, October 13, 2022. Present were Mr. Derek Heim, Mr. Marc Lapointe, Mr. James Carvalho, Mr. John Salzillo, Mr. Chris Hajder, Mr. Tom Blakey, Mr. James Devol, Mr. John Hansen, Mr. William Anderson, and Ms. Mallory Aronstein, Town Administrator. Mr. Robert Alford II entered at 6:30 p.m. The meeting convened at 6:00 p.m. in the School Administration Building, One Gardners Neck Road.

Chairman Heim called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Carvalho **MOVED** to approve the minutes of September 14. Seconded by Mr. Hansen and so voted. Heim, yes; Lapointe, abstain; Carvalho, yes; Salzillo, yes; Hajder, abstain; Blakey, abstain; Devol, abstain; Hansen, yes; Anderson, yes.

The Committee discussed what has transpired to date. Mr. Heim referenced the minutes and stated that the Committee agreed to combine the Annex, Town Hall and Council on Aging and to build a new highway facility all on the Del Mac Orchard site with the understanding that there is enough land for the school department's plans.

Mr. Lapointe said that when the School Department presented they said they were looking for an elementary school twenty years from now and seeking to locate it there. He said the Committee should be looking at that timeline and not deferring the decision making.

Mr. Heim said that it was his understanding that without the purchase of the Sousa property there wasn't enough room for the elementary school and fields, but that with the property it could work.

Mr. Carvalho said it would be nice to place the school buildings in one area. He said the School Department would be keeping the Hoyle School regardless and that the building there could have an addition placed on it so that was also an option for expansion.

Mrs. Aronstein gave an update on the Sousa Property. She said that the Board of Selectmen agreed to get an appraisal of the property and to explore purchasing it, either for open space or for school expansion. She said she has contracted with an appraiser and the work is ongoing.

There was discussion regarding the Town only being able to pay fair market value and whether the owners would accept that price. Mr. Devol discussed tax credits and other private interests that can actually save money for land sellers, including tax write offs.

Mr. Lapointe discussed concerns over use of the Del Mac Orchard for Highway functions as there are children walking along Wood Street. He said there are no sidewalks there and it may be an unsafe set up. He said the roads are narrow and added truck traffic is concerning.

Discussion continued regarding installing sidewalks around the area. Mr. Hansen said that this was not a project on the Town's Prioritization Plan, but there is a proposal for a bike lane north of Hortonville and turning left onto Wood Street. He indicated that locating a municipal complex at this property could increase the rating on the Prioritization Plan. Mrs. Aronstein said a project could be created for this purpose and the Prioritization Plan can be updated.

Discussion continued regarding the School Department's plans for new schools and fields.

Mr. Blakey asked which departments would be located in the Town Hall/Town Hall Annex and Council on Aging facility. Mrs. Aronstein said it would include the Town Clerk, Town Accountant, Board of Selectmen's Office, Tax Collector/Treasurer, Board of Assessors' Office, Building Department, Planning Department, Board of Health Office, Conservation Commission office, Veteran's Agent, and Council on Aging.

There was discussion regarding moving the Town Hall to the rear of the lot of where it currently is and use of where the Library expansion is proposed. Mr. Devol said that the Library would never be able to expand if that were to occur. Mrs. Aronstein discussed the difficult parking situation that currently exists and that there would be no additional parking created if the building located on the parking lot.

Mr. Carvalho **MOVED** to reconsider the vote of the recommended alternative. Seconded by Mr. Heim. Heim, yes; Hansen, no; Salzillo, abstain; Carvalho, yes; Anderson, yes. Remaining members were unable to vote as they had not voted in the prevailing way.

Mr. Hajder said he had a couple of questions. He asked what is lost if the Committee did not make a decision about the Town Hall and Highway facilities. Mr. Heim said the Town loses operational costs and time.

There was discussion regarding the previous meeting when the vote to recommend the Del Mac Orchard for the site of the Town Hall/COA and Highway facilities occurred. Mr. Heim said there was no malicious intent and that the Committee was just conducting its business.

Mr. Blakey said his concern was about Sears Road no longer being an option. He said he did not understand why Sears Road was no longer being considered. Mr. Blakey said the Town desperately needs a Town Hall and a Highway facility but Sears Road should be considered. He said the property should be used for something as nothing else can go there.

Mr. Heim said that comments that were submitted by two members who were unable to attend were submitted to the Committee at the meeting and discussed.

At 6:30 p.m., Mr. Alford entered the room.

Mr. Lapointe said he agrees the Town obviously needs a Town Hall and that is a great place to put it. He said if the Highway Department was elsewhere, the Town may not need the Sousa property. He said there are 56 acres at the Sears Road property.

Mr. Anderson said there are issues with the Sears Road property. He said he was looking for a facility that would house the equipment, that would provide a mechanic's bay for adequate upkeep of the vehicles. He said he sees a use for the Sears Road property for an operational yard. He said he would take the current storage infrastructure on Del Mac Orchard and move that to Sears Road, fence it and potentially site a transfer station there as residents have requested a transfer station. He said a compost facility could go there and the Town could give compost back

to the people. Mr. Anderson said there are two hurricanes' worth of yard waste buried at the site and it abuts an uncapped landfill that is privately owned. He said there are two marijuana facilities that are supposedly locating at the property and the Town is unaware of the traffic impact that will have. He said the Police Department firing range may be sited there and the Fire Chief is seeking a training facility to go there. He said the day to day operation and storage of highway equipment should stay at the Del Mac Orchard site with the new barn facility and that it will look nice, neat and orderly without the yard visible. He said the town will have one-stop shopping with the exception of the Fire Department for permits.

Mr. Anderson said this was discussed at the last meeting and plans were reviewed. He said he received information on wetlands right before the meeting held by the Committee and used Seekonk's DPW barn for size comparisons to see if all the buildings could fit with the Middle School proposal.

There was discussion of the previous meeting.

Mr. Anderson said a lot of the decision makers at Town Meeting focus on money and that placing two facilities next to each other and constructing them at the same time will save money versus coordinating construction for two different sites.

Mr. Devol said that he missed the previous meeting and that he hadn't heard all of the arguments. He asked if splitting the Highway Department's operational building and materials yard were to two locations, would that leave space at the current location for the barn style building. Mr. Anderson said a barn style garage does not fit on the current site due to the wetlands and that he must maintain operations during construction and doing so while building the barn style on the current site is not possible.

There was discussion regarding the Fire Department's needs and the failure of a previous Highway Department project.

Mr. Devol then asked about secondary means of egress and access for emergency vehicles like the Fire Department's apparatus. Mr. Anderson said there are currently there access points to the property.

Mr. Devol stated that the purchase of the Sousa property is a great asset to the Town. He said he understood it was detached from purchasing for the facilities to locate at this parcel. Mr. Heim said if the school needed that parcel for school expansion, it would be on the School Committee to advocate for the purchase.

Mr. Devol said he would recommend that the Town should purchase the property for a future use and undefined purpose.

Mr. Hajder asked about the Town Hall Annex and discussed the best use of the property. He said moving the Animal Shelter will provide the best use of the property because more lots can be created.

Mr. Hansen said the Committee can simply recommend the property be sold for two to three house lots.

Mr. Heim said there is a Somerset component to this property and the building cannot be moved to the other side of the Town.

Discussion continued regarding only being able to move part of the building.

Mr. Carvalho **MOVED** to site at the Del Mac Orchard property the Town Hall, Town Hall Annex, and Council on Aging in a combined facility and a Highway Facility. Seconded by Mr. Alford and so voted unanimously.

The Committee discussed the use of surplus properties.

Mr. Carvalho said the Committee should hold off on discussing the Animal Shelter.

Mr. Lapointe said the minutes of the last meeting referenced establishing a dog park and that he recommended against that.

Mr. Alford **MOVED** to demolish the Annex and vacate the property. Seconded by Mr. Salzillo.

There was discussion regarding demolishing the Annex. Mr. Lapointe and Mr. Hajder said that the right developer could repurpose the building.

Mr. Alford withdrew his motion and Mr. Salzillo withdrew his second.

Mr. Alford **MOVED** to subdivide the Annex property and sell a portion of the property. Seconded by Mr. Devol and so voted unanimously.

Mr. Lapointe **MOVED** to vacate and sell the Council on Aging and surrounding parcels. Seconded by Mr. Alford.

There was discussion regarding the building issues of the Council on Aging. Mr. Anderson said the roof was sloped in the wrong direction with no drain and ultimately caused flooding and damage to the Gold Room. Mr. Carvalho said the HVAC system was not in good shape when the building was first purchased. Mr. Alford said the Town never put the money in to renovate it properly.

Discussion continued regarding the rectory owned by the Church.

Mr. Heim called for the vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Alford **MOVED** to renovate Town Hall for a meeting and training space.

There was brief discussion regarding funding available and grants to be used for renovation.

Mr. Hajder seconded the motion on the floor and it was voted unanimously.

The Committee discussed the Highway Facility property. Mr. Anderson said the Fuel Depot will remain there. Mr. Lapointe asked if the tanks could be moved in the future. Mr. Anderson said they would be able to once they were replaced and rebuilt as is slated to occur.

Mr. Alford **MOVED** to recommend that the Town await the results of the Fire Department Feasibility Study before recommending a course of action for the current Highway Facility property.

Mr. Devol **MOVED** to recommend that the proceeds of the sale of town-owned property be directed towards capital improvements to the community. Seconded by Mr. Alford and so voted unanimously.

The Committee reviewed the draft report to be issued to the Board of Selectmen and a list of draft recommendations. Mrs. Aronstein said the report would be significantly updated based upon the votes taken at this meeting. She discussed the financial plan recommended by the Committee.

The Committee discussed the future of the Committee and that the members believed it should be tasked with moving forward with the Owners Project Manager.

Mr. Heim said the Board of Selectmen would have to broaden the scope of the Capital Building Committee's charge and that can be discussed after the presentation to the Board of Selectmen.

There was discussion regarding the Owners Project Manager article for the Special Town Meeting and the vote of the Advisory and Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Alford said it was approved by a vote of 11 to 1. Mr. Salzillo said he was the one opposed because he believed the Advisory and Finance Committee should have waited to vote until the Board of Selectmen reviewed the recommendation.

Mr. Heim asked if the consensus of the group was that they recommended that the Board broaden the scope of this committee to continue this work. All committee members agreed.

Mr. Devol discussed his experiences with other communities. He said that some communities have a permanent building committee and then add a few seats to be focused on the project at hand.

Discussion continued regarding the scope of the Capital Building Committee.

There was discussion regarding the Library Project. Mr. Heim said he told the Advisory and Finance Committee at their meeting of October 12 that he did not believe the Library was a part of the scope of the Capital Building Committee.

Discussion continued regarding the importance of stating the reason that the Library was not addressed by this Committee.

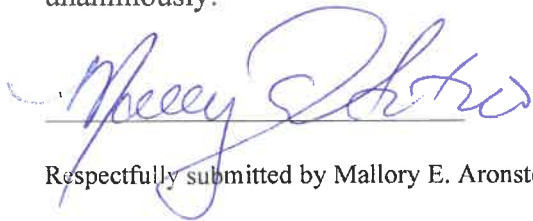
Mr. Heim said the Capital Building Committee from its inception understood its charge was not to review and/or evaluate the current library project underway and felt that the Library Building Committee would continue moving in their direction.

There was discussion regarding the upcoming joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen.

There were no Committee member reports.

The Committee discussed setting an upcoming date. Mr. Heim said that at this point, the Committee needs to hear what the Selectmen say about broadening the scope of the Committee.

At 7:38 p.m., Mr. Alford **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Devol and so voted unanimously.



Respectfully submitted by Mallory E. Aronstein, Town Administrator

Documents:

Minutes of September 14, 2022

Draft Recommendations of the Capital Building Committee

Draft final recommendations report for the Board of Selectmen