

Capital Building Meeting Minutes; 8/6/2024

AUG28 24 9:01AM

Members Present: Mr. Marc Lapointe, Chairman
Mr. Ryan Pacheco, Vice Chairman
Mr. Chris Hajder, Member
Mr. William Anderson, Director of Engineering and Highway Services
Mr. John Hansen, Community Development Director
Mr. James Carvalho, representing the School Committee
Mr. John Salzillo, representing the Advisory and Finance Committee
Ms. Sarah Carlson, representing the Advisory and Finance Committee
Mr. Paul Burke, Member

Also Present: Ms. Mallory Aronstein, Town Administrator
Joe Sullivan, CHA Consulting representative
Analisa Motti, CHA Consulting representative
Erin D'Alesandro, Turowski2 (T2) Architecture representative
Peter Turowski, Turowski2 Architecture representative
Geraldine Mullaly, Resident of Swansea
Luiz Porto, Resident of Swansea
Mark Shane, Resident of Swansea

Members Not Present: Mr. Robbie Alford.

A Capital Building Meeting was held on Tuesday, August 6, 2024 at the School Administration Building, 1 Gardners Neck Rd., Swansea, Massachusetts.

Mr. Lapointe called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM

Mr. Lapointe stated the meeting is being recorded for the purpose of meeting minutes.

Item 1: Vote to approve minutes of July 30, 2024

Mr. Anderson **MOVED** to approve meeting minutes of July 30, 2024. Seconded by Mr. Carvalho and so voted. **PASSES BY MAJORITY with ONE ABSTENTION from Ms. Carlson.**

Item 2: Update from CHA Consulting

Mr. Sullivan stated that based on the comments and concerns discussed at the last meeting, the architects developed a fourth design option that merges together elements of Options 1 and 2 and takes the feedback into consideration. Ms. D'Alesandro of T2 Architects presented the Option 4 of reusing the existing site (old Annex building) for review.

Item 3: Discussion and Action on Town Hall/Annex Construction Alternatives, T2 Architects

Mr. Lapointe stated he liked the design of option four with the exception of the placement of the single stall unisex bathroom on the second floor protruding into the hallway. Ms. Aronstein asked if that bathroom was actually buildable in that location or if it could be moved to where the breakroom is tucked inside the room. Ms. D'Allesandro said the plumbing for the bathrooms on the first floor is directly below that location so it can be moved.

Mr. Ryan Pacheco entered the meeting room.

Ms. Carlson asked for an explanation on all the empty space located on the second floor. Ms. D'Allesandro said this could be additional office space should the Town need it in the future. Mr. Peter Turowski added that this could also be used as overflow for the larger meeting that may take place in Town.

Ms. Carlson asked if the net square footage has changed. Ms. D'Allesandro said it is tighter but still within the 15,000 to 16,000 gross square feet that is needed.

Mr. Anderson added that office space will be needed for a sewer department and option 4 seems to be the better design.

Discussion continued regarding the entrance that was presented in option 4. Ms. D'Allesandro explained that the overall design can be changed to whatever the Committee deems appropriate. She said there is a main entrance, a side (central) entrance, and a back entrance; the back entrance doesn't connect to the parking lot and the central entrance is facing the parking lot, which is where the elevator will be located.

Ms. Carlson added that she is happy the architects preserved the style of the building throughout the design and the original building is not lost with the addition. She said if we were to build new, this building is still an issue for the Town.

There was discussion on an option to renovate the existing building without an addition to get rid of the trailers. Ms. Aronstein noted that the Committee voted on specific departments to address in this project. She said only fixing the issues for the offices in the trailers does not solve the issues with the Town Hall or the Veterans Agent offices.

Mr. Luiz Porto, 200 Wood Street, asked why the Town doesn't hire a company to scan all the documents to save space and why the Town isn't doing more online. Mr. Lapointe said some business cannot be done online and some people cannot or don't like to do business online. Ms. Aronstein added that most departments are moving towards scanning old documents to be digital and moving towards an online approach to do business, however, there are some documents that need to be in paper form.

Ms. Geraldine Mullaly, 990 Hortonville Road, asked if option 3 relative to new construction is off the table. Mr. Lapointe said the Committee has not voted yet. She asked if that option was the only option that is using the basement. Mr. Sullivan said that Option 2 had bathrooms in the basement but that was not well received by the Committee. Mrs. Mullaly asked about construction cost and estimated the \$800

per square foot estimate by 15,000 to be \$12 million. Mr. Lapointe said the Committee is not at the point to discuss costs. Mrs. Mullaly asked if the Committee received an answer from legal counsel regarding the Town Meeting article language and use of it for this project as it relates to new construction. Ms. Aronstein said the Town did speak with legal counsel, it is allowed however, the Committee's direction has not been a new building due to the clear message at Town Meeting: no new building and fix and renovate what the Town owns.

Mr. Sullivan said that it would be short sighted of the Committee to not look at all options and that this Committee has always headed in the direction of renovation with an addition and renovating without the addition does not meet the needs of the Town. He said until the Committee picks an option, CHA cannot move forward with estimating pricing.

Mr. Mark Shane, 16 Gardners Neck Road, said he was concerned with pricing of renovating versus new construction and asked why the Town is picking one versus the other when we don't know the cost. Mr. Lapointe answered that the Committee is primarily looking at renovation, however, they will get an idea of cost for both renovation and a new build once an option is decided on to compare. Mr. Shane asked about the elevations on the site and the water table. Mr. Lapointe said that the project is not just a renovation but an addition as well, a hybrid and that the Town will still need to put money into the existing building if the option to build new is chosen. The Committee will not toss out any option without looking at cost. Mr. Sullivan said that there will be site surveys to review elevations and the water table scheduled.

Mr. Porto, asked if the Committee has a budget. Ms. Aronstein said there is a number that we think we can work with and a tipping point at which it would be too much for the Town. She said an option must be selected in order to put forth a proposal on how to pay and what funds to use. Mr. Sullivan added that a program must be picked in order to get costs. He said if the costs are too high, the Committee, with CHA will brainstorm how to get this within an appropriate range. Ms. Carlson said there is still a renovation cost for the existing building should we choose to build new and if new is the choice of the Committee, the cost to build new and to renovated existing will be presented.

Discussion continued regarding the use of the basement as storage and the existing foundations. Mr. Sullivan said that foundation will need to be repaired and the Town will use the basement for utility space. Mr. Turowski said potentially it will be used for storage space, but the basement is not intended for public use.

Mrs. Mullaly said one of the additional activities listed is to demolish the existing Town Annex and that therefore consideration is not to refurbish but to demolish. Ms. Aronstein said just because that item is listed to identify the cost of demolition does not mean that is the direction of the Committee. She said it does mean that the Committee needs to make a decision on what to do with the building whether it be renovate with an addition, renovate, or demolish. Ms. Mullaly asked why discuss demolition. Mr. Lapointe said all options need to be considered to make the best decision. He said this question will come up and the Committee will be prepared to answer such questions since they have looked at every angle possible.

Mr. Hajder **MOVED** to pursue Option 4 as an addition and renovation. Seconded by Mr. Carvalho.

Mr. Burke said he is concerned with the square footage being too small for what is actually needed and he is also not in favor of the Town Hall being located on the Somerset line. Mrs. Aronstein said that the Annex property was rated #2 for a location for the Town Hall when this analysis of all properties within the Town was initially done.

Discussion continued regarding the existing square footage versus the requested square footage and additional of the meeting space.

Ms. Kathleen Leblanc, 50 Morin Street said Swansea is Swansea right up to the Town line and it doesn't matter where the Town Hall is located within Town. She said she was in favor of using the existing building and advised the Committee to take care of what we have.

Roll Call Vote:

Lapointe – Aye, Hansen – Aye, Anderson – Aye, Hajder – Aye, Carvalho – Aye, Salzillo – Aye, Carlson – Aye, Pacheco – Aye, Burke – No, Alford, absent.

MOTION PASSES BY MAJORITY

Item 4: Discussion of Public Informational Meetings

Mr. Carvalho **MOVED** to table discussion of public informational meetings. Seconded by Mr. Hajder, and so voted. **PASSES UNANAMOUSLY**

Mr. Burke asked where the Committee was regarding pursuing a Highway Garage. Mr. Lapointe said was tabled for the moment due to pricing.

The Committee reviewed the next meeting date, scheduled for August 27, 2024.

Mr. Carvalho **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting 7:00 PM. Seconded by Ms. Carlson, and so voted. **PASSES UNANAMOUSLY**

Meeting Documents:

July 30, 2024 Minutes Final Draft

Floor Plan Option 4

CHA Update



8/23/2024

Respectfully submitted by, Amie Griffin, Minutes Clerk

Date