

Advisory Committee
February 12, 2020

Those in attendance:

John Lanza, Ralph Tortorella, Mary Scanlon, Mary Gard, Julie Bryan, Bill Maynard, Todd Cook, Betsy Roberti, Paul Merry, Deed McCollum, Neal Goins, Rusty Kellogg, Patti Quigley.

Todd Cook called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Citizen Speak: No one came forward.

PBC (with FMD and BOS) – Town Hall Annex

Marjorie Freiman from BOS: Discussion of history of the project and reasons they decided they needed a new, stand alone building.

Joe McDonough: Goes into more detail on the background and history of the project, including the TH feasibility study, which led to the Annex project, and what ultimately brought them to this point, seeking design funds for the Annex.

Did a study on how the building was being used in 2013, and then a few years later there was a feasibility study on the exterior of the building, which was more urgent based on what they found, so that went ahead before considering the Annex.

Cost of the project triggered the full MAAB requirements. There were 3 buckets: permanent variances; temporary variances (things they could do as part of the exterior project to make it more accessible); time variances (the bathrooms, ramps downstairs; things that are far more extensive and costly). All those need to get addressed.

Advisory Question: What is the timeline on those time variances?

- 3 years from the completion of the exterior envelope project, which is three years from now. There may be a chance to push it if we show the MAAB we are working diligently, but as of now, it's 3 years.

2018 study found insufficient meeting space, ADA issues; inadequate parking.

Recommendations were to renovate Town Hall and do an addition, which ended up not being feasible, so an annex was chosen at a separate location.

BOS voted to request design funds from the Town at 2020 ATM.

The Annex is really the first phase of the TH renovation. For the main TH renovation, there was discussion about the Vision for the TH. They are doing a supplemental study in summer 2020.

It's been 35 years since the last major renovation.

There are certain building constraints they have to work with to do the renovation. Most mechanical systems are beyond service life. There are other restraints based on the age of the building and current layout.

The size and location of the lot also constrains any renovation or building of additional parking areas or an annex.

There were 3 conceptual design options considered:

One: 6500 SF to address ADA deficiencies

Two: 9300 SF with a building addition

Three: 13,500 SF with a larger building addition to house FMD

Instead, decided to build the annex and renovate the current TH building.

Advisory Question: Did you say the Annex would fit architecturally with this building?

- No, it will not fit with this building. But there hasn't been a design yet.

Review of concept plan on the building site.

Building size would be 13,500, and would house:

Land Use Depts (BLD; NRC; PLD; ZBA)

FMD

HR and Retirement

SEC and Satellite IT

Would use the new building as swing space while renovations done to TH.

2 options: Land Use on floor 1 and other option to put land use departments on floor 2.

Advisory Question: Has there been any discussion about the accessibility issues with citizens with limited mobility getting to the second floor?

- Building will have an elevator and be ADA compliant, and fewer people have to come to TH because of online permitting.

The goal is to have it be the first Net Zero municipal building in Wellesley, and may be the first Net Zero municipal building in the whole area.

Cost? There are cost premiums to get to the net zero capability. Increased cost is about \$781,641 from standard building material to materials needed to get a net zero building.

Advisory Question: Does net zero mean it will pull no power from the grid?

- We need to look at it, but the power that the building generates would go to the grid, and over the course of a year, it should net out to zero.

A net zero building will also reduce the carbon footprint pretty significantly.

Use of Mass timber and cross laminated timber actually stores CO2 and has a negative carbon impact. Also, the wood is lighter, there is prefabrication so it's less time to construct.

Does cross laminate mean there are different layers of wood glued together?

- Yes, they take different sizes of lumber and glue them together.

Do you know what adhesive they use to do this? If it is an epoxy-base, it's a petroleum product and I'd be concerned about that.

- I don't know.

Discussion of budget.

Overall budget is \$11,923,774.

Construction costs could change, since it is based solely on the feasibility study.

Advisory Question: Will the employees be able to come over from Woodlawn?

- Right now they aren't allowed to, so I imagine that restriction will stay in place.

Discussion of project schedule for both the Annex and Town Hall renovation.

Advisory Question: When does the FMD Lease expire?

- Still negotiating new lease; expectation is same lease and terms as previous 5-year lease. Lease term would end at the end of May, so timeline builds in a few extra months on the current planned construction schedule, which has FMD moving into the Annex in January 2025.

Advisory Question: What is the planned use for the MLP building on Route 9?

- They want to have it available for their fiber program. Discussed allowing access for deliveries, but we haven't really gone beyond that.

Advisory Question: But if that building belonged to the Selectmen, would it have been part of the Town Hall solution?

- No. Looked at it for FMD space, and it is an awkward space and would be expensive and difficult to fit that up. There is a large bearing wall down the middle of the downstairs.

Advisory Question: Any concern about traffic impact?

- Not really. There won't be a significant number of visitors going to the departments that are housed in the Annex.

Project Schedule is important because of the swing space need for the TH renovation and because of the MAAB requirements, plus avoids another FMD lease extension.

Advisory Question: I'm concerned about managing the government when the two buildings are so far apart.

- Keep in mind this is how we operate now. We have offices at 888 Worcester Road, the Warren Building, Police Department, MLP, etc. If anything, we are actually getting more departments in one location, with the Annex on the same property with MLP and WFD.
- The Planning Department is currently in Town Hall, but engineering, BOH, Police, Fire, are all in other locations, so we have to coordinate by email or travel for meetings right now anyway. As we move to more electronic platforms for more services, it will reduce the need for in-person coordination.
- Also trying to digitize records for the public and for interdepartmental use, which will minimize the need to go to different locations.

Will there have to be people have to move back and forth causing additional traffic?

- It happens now. We have meetings across town now. People have to travel from TH to other locations now.

Advisory Question: Is the Annex at capacity with 46 employees?

- It's not at 100%; probably at 94-95% as planned.

Advisory Question: Can we add more car charging spots?

- We can look at it, and the cheapest place is at the MLP. There are new charging stations, and we will look to expand that using the revenue generated from the successful ones.

Advisory Comment: Sidewalks for the employees walking to that building need to be thoughtfully placed.

- Building the Annex at that location is an opportunity to define traffic patterns, sidewalks, curbs, and the whole Municipal Way campus.

Advisory Question: Was there a change in the project budget?

- There was about a 4% increase in the architect fees and the contingencies in the design phase, but also a 27% reduction in the fees in the construction phase, so it's an overall net benefit, even though today's numbers went up.

Advisory Question: Is the \$1,309,544 the number to be presented to ATM?

- If not, it will be close. PBC has not seen and voted on this number yet.

Advisory Question: Is this part of the total project cost?

- Yes

Advisory Question: Exterior TH Project total cost?

- It was approximately \$4million. Interior renovation has been estimated at \$21 million, but one of the reasons we want to do the supplemental study is to see if we can reduce that number. So overall, with the Annex, Exterior envelope and interior renovation

Advisory Question: Is this inside the levy?

- This is proposed inside the levy.

Advisory Question: Can we do the OPM services in house?

- We are hoping to do it in house, but we keep a budget placeholder in there in case we can't do it for some reason.

Capital project requests summary:

STM 2020

Library interior; Library roof; Middle School Interior

ATM 2021

MSBA and Hunnewell debt exclusion and Annex construction.

Advisory Question: You mentioned that TH would have more meeting spaces. Who will be meeting at Town Hall after the renovations?

- This would be the primary meeting space for all evening meetings and Boards.

Planning Board Presentation

Overview of Agenda – Update, FY21 Budget, Zoning Articles

General update on what is happening at Planning Dept.

Budget Overview for FY21.

Asking for budget approval of \$343,232, which is 3.38%

Advisory Question: You aren't adding any FTEs, correct?

No. We had unfilled positions.

Advisory Question: That number has the 50 and 60 series pulled out, correct?

- Yes.

When the numbers are adjusted with the 50 and 60 series are added back in, the number goes over guidelines.

Advisory Question: If there is an unfilled position, what happens to the budget?

- It gets turned back, but doesn't affect the budget, because they can still include it in the next year's budget, anticipating filling the position.

Zoning Articles on the warrant for ATM

Articles 29-37

Article 29: Single Building Historic District – 323 Washington Street – Historical Society

Co-sponsored with Historical Commission and Historic Building Commission

This would be 5th single building historic district.

Presentation on the basis for seeking the historic district zoning.

Advisory Question: What does the historical commission receive for having this designated?

- Nothing other than fulfilling their mission.

Advisory Question: Are there restrictions on the building if it is designated?

- Yes, limits to what they can do to the exterior.

Advisory Question: What happens if the building is not zoned an historic district?

- Not sure, but they would like to use it to store archives. If it is not, it is possible they would not get zoning relief for the 2nd and 3rd floors to keep from having to make it ADA compliant. Only public spaces would have to be ADA compliant, which would only be the 1st floor.

Advisory Question: If the historical society were to sell it, and it were not an historical district, then a buyer can do whatever they want?

- Yes. They can always do whatever they want in the inside, but not on the outside. This would protect it.

Advisory Comment: Would be best to be transparent about why this request is being made. Seems like there was a zoning issue, and this came up as a way to fix the problem, and then found a justification to make it a single building historic district.

- Generally, that is the way it happened, but the more they researched, the more amazing things they found about the site. At ATM, will present differently to make sure TMMs understand how and why the request came about.

Article 30

Include a large scale solar array in the district list in zoning bylaws. Housekeeping article.

Article 31

General Residence District Amendment

Will amend the bylaw to require LHR for any building over 3600sf TLAG. Current bylaw is vague and doesn't require LHR in GRD.

Advisory Question: Currently, if you are building a 2-family, you do not have to comply with the setbacks, correct?

- Yes. Anything in the GRD does not have to comply with the setbacks in the SRDs.
- [later, this was corrected to reference the lack of requirements for size, not setbacks. There are setback requirements in GRD]

If Article 31 fails, a citizen's petition will be presented (Article 41) to ask for a maximum size dwelling according to lot size. Planning has been working with the citizen's petition to try and come up with an article that would make it unnecessary to bring the citizen's petition.

Discussion about the trend for larger houses and multi family buildings driving the change to provide some oversight for building larger buildings in the GRD that is the same as the SFD.

Advisory Question: Is the decision after going through a LHR binding on the owner?

- It's fundamentally a site plan review, so it's not a zoning issue. It's a cooperative process with the HO, neighbors, the Town, etc.
- The LHR is recorded at the registry of deeds, and deemed to be the site plan; if the blueprints don't match the site plan, may not get the permit.

Further discussion of LHR triggers and interplay with current zoning.

Advisory Comment: The idea of explaining the citizen's petition as changing the GRD from the least restrictive district to the most restrictive is a clear way of explaining it to ATM.

Advisory Comment: Be crystal clear that you are applying the same LHR process to the GRD and the SFD.

Advisory Question: Doesn't requiring a large house review triggered at 3600sf have unintended consequences? Puts an additional hurdle for someone to jump through to build a reasonably sized duplex on a lot that would otherwise support it?

- It's not a huge hurdle (estimated to add about \$7000 in costs), but it is still a hurdle.

Planning believes it had a mandate from the Town to close a loophole.

Advisory Comment: No recollection of a mandate during ATM last year. A failed citizen's petition that was trying to do an end run around the existing bylaws.

This article will have to be discussed further, and proponents of the citizen's petition are coming in to Advisory, hopefully on February 26.

Article 32

Tree bylaw amendments – only applies to demolition and major construction projects. Does not prevent property owners from removing trees, but requires mitigation by planting new trees.

Only applies to protected trees.

Increases size of replacement trees; increase protection of trees during construction.

Advisory Question: Are trees on Town property protected trees?

- They are protected, but not by this bylaw. They are protected through the public shade tree law.

Continued presentation on proposed bylaw.

Advisory Question: If you replace a tree, where can you put it?

- On the property where you removed a tree or an adjacent property. You can also make a contribution to the tree bank.

Advisory Question: What is iTree?

- It was created by the US Forest Service. We are not sure we are going to use it. It helps towns evaluate land for where to plant trees and to calculate the net benefit of the trees.

Advisory Question: Originally it was 1-1.5 inches, and now it's 3 inches. Does it increase the risk if the trees have to be larger?

- The tree has to live for two years or has to be replaced. Benefits the property owners because they get a larger credit for larger trees. The difference between a 2 and 3 inch tree in terms of viability is very similar.

Advisory Question: What is the percentage of HOs that choose to donate rather than plant a tree?

- In the last 6 months, the tree bank has gotten about \$60K and the Town has spent about \$40K.
- Not sure how that relates to the number of trees removed.

Advisory Question: What is the contribution you have to make to the tree bank?

- It's on a sliding fee schedule. You look at the net number of inches that are being removed from the lot. Starts at \$120 per inch and goes up from there. At 75 inches, it's \$400 per inch.

Article 33

Natural Resources Protection

Changing tables to adjust setback requirements and to revise the description of common driveways. Will allow for clustered housing.

Advisory Question: Are builders willing to work with the driveway dimensions?

- We are not prescribing dimensions. The intent is to create creativity in subdivision design.

Article 34

Delete moratorium on marijuana establishments (housekeeping; meant to be temporary)

Article 35

Updating reference to marijuana dispensaries

Article 36 – Board of Public Works

Drainage Review – change will conform to the amended EPA permit

Article 37

Replace Board of Selectmen with Select Board

Administrative Matters:

Minutes: Julie Bryan moved and Neal Goins seconded a motion to approve the Revised Draft of the January 29, 2020 minutes.

Approved, 11-0-1

Liaison reports:

Todd reports on Lina's report, sent by email due to her absence. Discussion between SC and BOS; BOS is going to look for other ways to cut the budget overall, so Schools do not have to

make any further cuts beyond the \$84,000 cut they approved before coming to Advisory for their budget presentation.

Cindy submitted something for the budget book for the School budget.

There is a link to a revised budget book now, which is much more comprehensive. It will continue to evolve. DPW hasn't gotten their materials in yet, but it's about 90% there.

If a Dept is within guideline, we aren't going to do anything in the Advisory Book under Article 8 other than say they are within guidelines. We will only provide discussion/explanation for those that are outside the guidelines.

Citizens' Petitions: Article 41 will come in on Feb 26, hopefully.

Patti Quigley made and Mary Scanlon seconded a motion to adjourn; 12-0 in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 11pm.