

**FACILITY MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE**  
**December 15, 2016**  
**MINUTES**

**Committee Attending:** Chairman George Hooper, Jeffrey Hull, Diane Allan, Valerie Gingrich, Theresa Manganelli, Paul Melaragni, and Joann Benton

**Liaisons Attending:** None

**Others Attending:** Chair of the Board of Selectmen Judy O'Connell, Paul Ruggiero, Terry McDermott, Jay Tighe

**Consultants Attending:** Steve Cecil

George Hooper called the meeting to order.

**1. Review Minutes**

***Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes as written. Approved by unanimous vote.***

**2. Project Development**

- Continued Discussion of the Alternatives for Municipal Facilities

Steve Cecil explained that the group will discuss the pros and cons of the scenarios, but first a quick update on the school alternatives was in order. He explained that an additional alternative was added to the mix, with two pre-K to grade 2 schools and two grade 3-5 schools. Joanne Benton explained the alternative as a way to eliminate one transition and have two elementary schools on each side of town. She stated that the School Committee like the proposed additional scenario. Diane Allen asked about the previous idea that a school was looking for space and willing to lease one of the schools. Joanne explained that the charter school needs space now, not necessarily when we will be able to provide space. Steve asked the group whether the right schools are reflected as closed/open in the new scenario. Joanne suggested that the Wildwood and Boutwell be closed. Theresa Manganelli asked about the Boutwell School being closed and how that space would be used. Joanne suggested that the Boutwell could be rented out. Steve suggested that the group figure out the best scenario for the facilities and then consider what would be done with the closed buildings/space.

Steve stated that he would walk through the three major moving pieces included in each scenario: the Library, Senior Center, and Town Hall.

Steve started with the Senior Center. He explained that an expansion will be necessary with Wilmington's senior population expected to grow significantly. He reviewed all scenarios for the senior center. Steve asked the group for pros and cons of each. Jeff Hull suggested that keeping the Buzzell building could help keep some of the historic character of the area intact. George suggested that necessary significant renovations may lose some character and it may not look the same. Diane commented that the layout doesn't really work for the upcoming senior population. She explained that the location is good, but the

building is not worth investing in. Theresa commented that she does not support adding on to the existing senior center when a new, larger senior center is necessary. Terry McDermott commented that the Buzzell building is a contributing structure to a historic district. She added that demolishing the building could put grant money in jeopardy if there is grant funding for senior centers. The group discussed that they don't know of any state funding for senior centers. Diane suggested that the group may not be in favor of an addition on the existing building. Steve stated that he is certainly hearing many cons related to that option.

Theresa commented that she likes the idea of a senior center on the Swain site, but still prefers the Town Hall on that site. She added that a combination of both would create more activity around that area in a positive way. Diane agreed and suggested that more than one facility could be put on that site. Diane agreed and stated that she does not support using the existing structure. Jeff commented that space may get tight with more uses on that site.

Judy O'Connell asked if the group is looking at combination of uses together. Steve commented that when they looked at combinations, they found that the Senior Center may be better as a stand along building. Jeff commented that when they looked at a combined recreation and senior center, there wasn't interested in it. The group discussed spaces for general activities. Joanne expressed that the high school should be used for more community activities than currently.

Steve introduced the scenarios for the Library.

Diane commented that moving the library to a different location was voted down previously. Steve asked why that was the case. Diane suggested that residents thought the building was fine and didn't think replacing it was necessary. Steve stated that the town's Library is small compared to other similar towns. The group discussed the space needs in the library.

Theresa commented that she favors keeping the Library where it is. It's attractive, people like location, it's close to the high school. Moving the building doesn't have value and moving it displaces another building. Group discussed that there may be better uses for the Swain site than a library. Jeff commented that a challenge with the Library site is parking when the funeral home is active. The group discussed parking at the Library site.

Steve introduced the Town Hall/School Admin building options. He commented that the current building is undersized.

Joanne commented that a pro of the Town Hall/School Admin on the Swain site is proximity to the High School, which is essential. The group discussed the options for placement of a new building on the Swain lot. Diane commented that when pushed back, it's not as easy to see and visibility is important.

The group discussed the Swain lot and whether a senior center and a Town Admin building could both fit on the site. The group discussed parking in the area and agreed that not all spaces are used in the High School parking lot. It was confirmed that student parking is not restricted to seniors as it was in the past.

Diane asked about the site design in relation to the carnival use and whether that was a driving force with the building placement. The group discussed the building being closer to the street to provide more parking in the rear.

The group discussed the idea of Town Hall at the St. Dorothy's site. The group discussed the distance from the other uses on the Common being a con. Another con was traffic along Main Street. Diane asked about the residential structure on the church site. Jeff explained that the house was not discussed as part of the previous sale.

The group discussed the pros of housing at St. Dorothy's site. Proximity to shopping was a pro. Public transportation was another pro. Steve commented that it is a good site for housing.

The group asked Steve to look at the possibility of the Town Hall/School Admin building and the Senior Center on the Swain site.

### **3. Schedule and Next Steps**

Steve talked about updating the document and spreadsheets. The group discussed how the plan will be used as a guiding document and may change over time.

The group discussed how to convey all of the information to the public. Valerie commented that they could do several things to convey the information including interactive displays, small forums and meetings and possibly a survey. The group agreed that the school and municipal options will need to come together.

### **4. Public Comment**

A member of the audience asked about the Fourth of July building and whether renovations could be done by the Town. George explained that staff is currently busy with maintaining buildings and it would be difficult to do renovations. Steve commented that this plan envisions larger scale projects.

Jay Tighe commented that ultimately the Board of Selectmen will make a decision about what buildings are built. The group discussed the process for the plan and process for individual buildings.

### **5. Next Meeting –** The next meeting will be January 19<sup>th</sup> at 6PM at Town Hall.

Meeting adjourned 8:44PM.