

**TOWN OF RYE
THE TOWN HALL SPACE NEEDS COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2012
RYE TOWN HALL
6:30 P.M.**

Members Present: Chairman Ned Paul, Vice-Chair Curtis Boivin, Selectmen's Rep Priscilla Jenness, Peter White, Paula Merritt, Paul Goldman, Peter Kasnet, Beth Yeaton, Phil Winslow, Lucy Neiman, Gregg Mikolaities, Mel Low, Kimberly Reed, Cynthia Gillespie and Michael Magnant.

Purpose: Create an economically sound proposal to resolve the space needs of the town as an integral part of preservation/renovation of our historic Town Hall building.

I. Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Paul called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Review and acceptance of Meeting Minutes from September 12, 2012:

Member Boivin noted the following correction:

- The meeting location should be listed as: **Rye Town Hall**

Selectmen's Rep Jenness noted the following correction:

- Page 4, 1st line reads: Vice-Chair Boivin continued the Treasure and Trust Funds could be combined into one office at a 200sf office. Should read: **Vice-Chair Boivin continued the Treasurer and Trust Funds could be combined into one office at a 200sf office.**

Motion by Paul Goldman to approve the minutes of September 12, 2012 as amended. Seconded by Priscilla Jenness. All in favor.

Note: The following was added to the posted agenda.

- **Town Administrator Michael Magnant** gave a slide show presentation addressing the current Rye Town Hall storage.

Title III: TOWNS, CITIES, VILLAGE DISTRICTS AND UNINCORPORATED PLACES

CHAPTER 33-A: DISPOSTION OF MUNICIPAL RECORDS

SECTION: 33-A:5: Microfilming

If municipal records are disposed of by microfilming, 2 films shall be produced. One film shall be retained by the municipality in a fireproof container and properly labeled. One shall be transferred to a suitable location for permanent storage.

SECTION: 33-A:5-a: Electronic Records

Electronic records as defined in RSA 5:29, VI and designated on the disposition schedule under RSA 33-A:3-a to be retained for more than 10 years shall be transferred to paper, microfilm, or both. Electronic records designated on the disposition schedule to be retained for less than 10 years may be retained solely electronically if so approved by the record committee of the municipality responsible for the records. The municipality is responsible for assuring the accessibility of the records for the mandated period.

III. Work Session

1. Further evaluation of the square footage calculation for circulation and walls:

- A.G. Architects had 30% (3,482sqft)
- Curtis Boivin, Architect: estimates 10% (952.5sqft)

Vice-Chair Boivin stated the biggest discrepancy there seems to be in the calculations is going from a net square footage, which is the total usable square footage, to a gross square footage of what a building consists of. He explained that he has tried to do some research and he has also talked with Art from A.G. Architects. Art felt the 30% number is a necessary number based on his experience. He will be releasing the files so they may be reviewed. Art feels the minimum number that could be used for circulation would be 20%. Member Boivin continued that he reviewed the Rye Concerned Citizens' numbers and they have eliminated the circulation. It was stated that the number was probably included. He feels that the net to gross number needs to be "nailed" down. In looking at other building analysis, the number could go as high as 45% and as low as 15%. There is a large variation in going from a net to a gross square footage. The best analysis would be to look at what is proposed in the A.G. Architects' calculation to get a good idea of that number.

Member Mikolaities asked if the goal of the Committee is to come up with an exact square footage of the building; or is the goal to come up with a range that the Committee can stand behind?

Vice-Chair Boivin explained where it is a large percentage of the building; they should get a better number. The Committee should provide a range; however, the numbers should be in line and closer together. In looking at the analysis of A.G. Architects', Rye Concerned Citizens' and his, he feels they are similar. The square footages are similar; however, there is some discrepancy on circulation and office sizes. The end goal is to promote an efficient space.

Member Mikolaities stated what the Committee is trying to accomplish is to acknowledge that the Town Hall is undersized right now.

Vice-Chair Boivin agreed.

Member Mikolaities explained the Committee acknowledges the Town Hall is small. The Committee acknowledges the Town Hall needs repairs; however, professionals will need to be hired to continue. He pointed out a report is due for November 1st. The Committee needs to go to the voters and say, “*we conclude this building is too small and needs an addition*”. A range of numbers can be given for that addition and then professionals need to step in.

Vice-Chair Boivin commented the numbers need to be accurate. He agrees that the Committee will end up with a range. It is not within the scope of the Committee to pinpoint the exact square footage. A professional has come in and done an assessment. The Committee is now reviewing the assessment to see if it can be more conservative and if the numbers are correct.

Member Mikolaities commented he thinks they all agree it can get more conservative.

Member Goldman stated that he agrees. However, what some people want to know is that some due diligence has been put on the process. The numbers should be based on credible due diligence, that can't be argued with.

Member Mikolaities asked if everyone agrees that the Town Hall is too small.

Member Goldman stated he does not think that is the issue. He thinks everyone agrees it is too small. That is why the Committee was formed. It falls on the accountability of the Committee to say, “*We have done all this work and gone through this process. Here is a box with the process inside and here is what came out of the other end*”.

Vice-Chair Boivin stated he thinks the Committee's goal is to provide a quantitative requirement to hand off to an architect for a design. He thinks they already have a square footage program. The Committee is checking that program, which has already been paid for. The quantitative requirements are going to be location, what is historically appropriate and size/scope. The Committee is not going to come up with a building design or a precise square footage number. He thinks the square footage number will be a range. He commented that Town Hall is going to be renovated only once, every 75 years or so. The numbers should reflect the need for function in the future. He will review the drawings of A.G. Architects to get more information on their calculations. He will get back to the Committee on his findings.

2. Cost review of options for Rye Town Hall:

Chairman Paul reviewed the options:

- **Purchase land for new Rye Town Hall**
 - Land costs - Based on a lot on Washington Road - priced at assessed value - \$819,262.
 - Square footage: 9,418 to 10,478
 - Construction – Based on \$200 per square foot cost - \$1,883,600 to \$2,095,600
 - Site Development Costs - \$300,000 to \$400,000
 - Septic Costs - \$35,000
 - Most expensive option
 - Town owned land is tied up in conservation or is not in the center of Town.
 - If Town land was used, or land donated, the cost would be almost the same as renovating the existing Town Hall.
 - The existing building would still need to be addressed.
 - This option pushes the time of the project out further.

- **Renovate current Rye Town Hall building and utilize additional space over the fire truck bays at the Safety Building**
Square footage – 12, 677 total
Town Hall less the 500sf (storage Safety Building) @ \$225 per square foot
Town Hall square footage – 6,418
Public Safety Building square footage – 6,259
New construction costs for Public Safety Building @\$200 per square foot
Septic work would also need to be taken into consideration
Parking/site work also needs to be added
Additional pumping for the water would need to be provided
Square footage – not as functional
- **Renovate current Rye Town Hall building with addition**
Square footage numbers used - 10,478 to 9,418
Square footage less the 500sf at Safety Building @\$225 per square foot – 1.4 million
Addition:
3000sf - \$675,000 to \$900,000
Total Cost – 2.1 to 2.3 million
Septic Costs need to be added - \$35,000
Site work/parking to be added
Least expensive option

Chairman Paul will be reviewing these numbers and presenting an updated analysis at the next meeting.

3. Review of Space Needs Committee assumptions

- **Recreation Dep't stays in Town Hall vs. other options**

Member Winslow asked if the numbers were figured with the Recreation Department included.

Chairman Paul confirmed.

Vice-Chair Winslow explained that he feels the analysis of the Concerned Citizens of Rye is based on supply side economics. They are trying to take out square footage because they want a smaller footprint so proportions can be correct between the addition and the current building. He thinks that is their biggest argument for taking the Recreation Department out.

Member Kasnet explained the problem with taking Recreation out is that the same amount of money will have to be spent somewhere else to provide space for them.

Town Clerk/Member Yeaton stated the Recreation Department is not ready to go anywhere else yet. The Rye Recreation Master Plan states they will be constructing their own building at some point in the future; however, they are not ready to do that. In the meantime, the 5 or 10 years they have to stay at Town Hall, the accommodations have to be made for them.

Member Boivin commented if Town Hall is going to be renovated once every 75 years, and Recreation will have a building 4 years from now, that square footage will be left in the building.

Member Goldman commented that is not a bad thing overall, from a systems operation standpoint. He pointed out there could be a small percentage of error based on expansion, infrastructure or storage.

Town Clerk/Member Yeaton commented there could be an error in the number of people needed to work in the building in the future.

Member Goldman stated there needs to be decisions made now and Recreation does not have a plan. If they end up moving out and that space is gained, so be it. It will be future expansion.

Member Mikolaities pointed out if Recreation is in Town Hall they are sharing bathrooms, meeting rooms and other resources. Taking the Recreation Department out of Town Hall will mean that they will need bathrooms and those other resources. All the other components will need to be considered in moving them. It is not just the square footage they use at Town Hall.

- **Rye Recreation or Conservation Land cannot be used to build a new Town Hall building**

Chairman Paul stated when doing the cost analysis he knew that Town owned land would come in to the factor. He asked the Members if they want to stand behind the statement, "*Rye Recreation or Conservation Land cannot be used to build a new Town Hall building*".

Member Kasnet pointed out that in building a new building, even on Town owned land, the site development costs would be very expensive.

- **Great Hall will be preserved and it will be usable for town meetings**

Chairman Paul stated that the Committee has discussed doing a separate option without the great hall. However, due to further discussions it seems that everyone agrees it should be preserved for meeting space, which will be dividable.

- **Old Police Dept – only considered for storage at this time**

The Members agreed.

- **There are benefits to keeping all town departments in one building**

Chairman Paul pointed out this statement seems to be the consensus.

Other options:

Member White stated the Committee needs to make an opinion about how the space over the fire trucks could be used for Town space.

Member Low pointed out at the time the space was built it was assumed that a group may come forward to use it, such as, a senior group. In order for that to be done an elevator would need to be put in.

Chairman Paul noted it should be stated, "*The Committee believes the Fire Department space should not be used for Town Hall purposes; however, it is open space that is available to be used for other Town functions*". It is not the best use of space for Town Hall.

Vice-Chair Boivin stated it does not have enough space for full function of Town Hall. A divided Town Hall does not function as well.

- **The space over the fire truck bays is not the best use of space for Town Hall but does remain available for other Town purposes.**

Vice-Chair Boivin asked if they should add that no other Town property is feasible.

Chairman Paul noted he will add it to the next meeting to review.

Member Low stated if a Town Hall is put anywhere else in Town they will still need to renovate the existing building.

Regarding other Town property, Planning Administrator/Member Reed stated the wording used for the space over the Safety Building would be appropriate to use.

Chairman Paul reviewed:

- **No other Town property will be considered by the Space Needs Committee at this time; however, those spaces remain open for future Town functions.**

Member Winslow stated in looking towards the Deliberative Session the Committee should anticipate some of the questions that may be asked in order to be prepared.

Chairman Paul agreed. The more prepared the Committee is the easier it will be to get people on board to support the initiative.

Regarding ADA compliance, Town Administrator Michael Magnant stated the Town of Wolfeboro is under a federal mandate to bring all the town facilities into compliance. A complaint was filed on the town hall and the federal government audited all town facilities.

Vice-Chair Boivin stated the Committee understands the Town Hall is ADA deficient. He also believes the building is deficient in regards to public safety.

Chairman Paul pointed out there should be a chapter regarding Town risk. It should cover wiring, fire, ADA and a number of safety issues.

Selectmen's Rep Jenness pointed out it is really the cost issue for why something should be done now.

The Members agreed.

Member Merritt stated a complaint was made about the town hall in Stoddard, N.H. The town has been ordered to start immediately in bringing the building into compliance and certain deadlines must be met. The town is working on the budget for next year and this came up "out of the blue".

Chairman Paul commented he will research that information for the Committee.

Member Low stated the Committee is very fortunate to have the Rye Concerned Citizens Group. If the Committee listens to their input and they support the project, it can be done.

Chairman Paul commented they have done a tremendous amount of work. He pointed out the Rye Concerned Citizens has sent a very nice presentation, which he has made copies for the Committee. The presentation goes through what the Committee has presented and suggests areas where there could be closer review. There is a lot of good information and analysis that has been done.

Chairman Paul opened to the public at 8:08 p.m.

Peter Crawford, representing the Rye Concerned Citizens, reviewed the Rye Town Hall Options, which was prepared by the Rye Concerned Citizens.

- **A complete copy of the report may be viewed at the Rye Town Hall, Town Clerk's Office.**

Martin Klenke, 931 Ocean Boulevard, stated he has one concern with option number 1. With that option, the Town is acquiring another asset for \$800,000. In order to do a comparison, the current building should be sold for some value or a statement be made that says, "*In addition to owning Town Hall the Town will also be owning another piece of property for \$800,000*". That does make it the cheapest solution. There is a value to land and it is an asset. When that is presented it should be considered if the current Town Hall could be sold or not. If it cannot be sold it needs to be reviewed what will be done with the building.

Chairman Paul agreed that option should be reviewed for his analysis.

Alex Herlihy, 55 Lang Road, Rye Historical Society, stated it is going to be critical in how this is presented to the public. He has no objection, aesthetically, with the building being a wood frame building and being "L" shaped. There will not be as much mass when looking up the road. He pointed out that the Selectmen acknowledged that back in March things could have been communicated more clearly in what was being presented. It is crucial to remember this point. The reason the voters voted against it is because they thought that original plan was what they were going to get for a building. He mentions this because he would like this project to succeed. The difference is where the square footage can be reconciled without destroying the building aesthetics.

Sam Winebaum, 52 Cable Road, stated he agrees with Mr. Herlihy. He thinks this is doable if it is reasonable. The space in the current Town Hall is horrible and the safety needs issue is a big concern. In making the building bigger, there should be an efficient, well designed, smallest space possible. The reasons are for the aesthetics and costs. Also, he thinks the Town of Rye is facing major infrastructure expenses in the next 20 years; in water, sewer and issues with the roads. These will be big expenses. As far as, the Recreation Department, he thinks they provide a fabulous service to the Town. The fact that they are "squeezed" into a little corner is not good at all. One thing that needs to be planned for is a recreation facility. This probably should be done sooner rather than later. All the evidence shows that Towns that have "amenities" attract higher property values and younger people with money. Rye is in a perfect position to do that. This kind of planning has to occur. He continued that in renovating the Town Hall all of the paperwork and records are going to have to be moved during the construction. He suggested renting a warehouse and dealing with it all at once. The records and paperwork could be sorted out and organized as to what needs to be kept at that time. He also suggested scanning and digitizing the records as they are needed. He does not feel it is cost effective to electronically store them all at once.

Town Clerk/Member Yeaton agreed that a lot of the records can be microfilmed. Even if they are microfilmed there needs to be a space for the historic records to be stored. She pointed out that this cannot be done off-site.

Victor Azzi, 1100 Old Ocean Boulevard, stated the Town needs a Facilities Master Plan. Whether a new building is built or the existing building enlarged it has to be thought of in a longer term. Also, it will affect budgeting, as well as, the valuable use. He continued that as they are trying to minimize the size of the addition to the building because of costs and the historic integrity of the building. The more space needs have to be addressed and satisfied the more the architect will be detracted from. He pointed out the space needs of the building is being driven by whether Recreation will be in the building or out. He asked if the Town should be adding to the building to accommodate Recreation when they are looking to have their own senior center. He reiterated that there needs to be a plan. In regards to record storage, he thinks the Town needs to look to the experts for their expertise in record retention. He also spoke in regards to the building costs. He expressed thoughts on a standalone building on the existing Town Hall lot.

Cecilia Azzi, 1100 Old Ocean Boulevard, spoke on the possibility of the existing Town Hall being used for the recreation facility.

Chairman Paul commented that he welcomes the expertise and input of the public. The Committee will review any information that is submitted to them. That information will be considered for the final report. He also pointed out that all the work by the Rye Concerned Citizens has not gone unnoticed.

- Next meetings will be held:
October 10th
October 24th
October 31st

Report due to Selectmen – no later than November 1st.

Adjournment

Motion by Ned Paul to adjourn at 9:09 p.m. Seconded by Phil Winslow. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dyana F. Ledger