

Permanent Building Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 7, 2018
Volunteer Room, Town Hall
13 Ayer Road, Harvard, MA
Approved: November 28, 2018

PBC Members present: Rick Maiore; Carl Sciple; Cindy Russo, Chair; Pablo Carbonell.

Attending: Alison Flynn, Clerk; Marie Sobalvarro, Assistant Town Administrator; Beth Williams, Council on Aging (“COA”) liaison/non-voting, temporary member; Joan Eliyesil, The Harvard Press; Liz Altman, TEC; Chris Ryan, Director of Community & Economic Development; Rick Sicard, Fire Chief, liaison/non-voting, temporary member.

Ms. Russo called meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES

Review of minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

UPDATE ON TOWN PROJECTS: OLD LIBRARY ROOF & FIRE STATION TRAFFIC STUDY

Old Library Roof- this discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

Fire Station Traffic Study- Ms. Altman was present to discuss the preliminary findings from the traffic study and provided the members with a draft report. She reviewed that the Town tasked TEC with looking at the potential effects on traffic of relocating the Still River Fire Station to the Central Fire Station, including its potential effect on the traffic circulation of the whole municipal complex, and the potential effect on the traffic circulation if the proposed 90-seat dining hall and townhomes are added at Hildreth House. She explained that TEC began the study by conducting a site walk and traffic counts to assess the current flow, and then generated new traffic estimates for “peak” flow times for the dining room and townhomes using national standards. Ms. Altman explained that the relocation of the Still River Fire Station equipment will not generate additional circulation during “peak” hours, as all traffic will be stopped for the fire station in the event of an emergency. The conclusion of the study was that the site can handle the predicted increased flow of traffic with the relocation of the Still River Fire Station, and proposed dining hall and townhomes. Ms. Altman presented the recommendations for a proposed traffic plan which helps redefine traffic patterns, allows for pedestrian passage, and increases parking slightly.

She confirmed that the additional traffic from the proposed dining room and townhomes can be accommodated at the existing intersections, but that finding a location to accommodate the parking for the dining room attendees was not part of the primary charge in this study and would likely require significant grading. Ms. Altman indicated that a calculation for determining how many parking spaces would be required to accommodate 90 filled seats would likely assess about 40 cars.

Ms. Russo expressed concern over the area on the proposed traffic plan where the flow changes from one-way to two-way. Ms. Altman reassured the group that with plenty of signage and better lighting, this traffic pattern change could be made clear. Ms. Sobalvarro stated that when the one-way pattern was initially implemented there were some complaints about the change, but there have not been any recently.

The Fire Chief also expressed concern that his largest truck would not be able to make the corner up to Hildreth; Ms. Altman indicated she would re-visit the calculations for that corner and make adjustments to the preliminary plan, as needed.

Additionally, the Fire Chief noted that the proposed traffic plan does not address the lack of additional parking for his volunteer firefighters which can arrive in 25 vehicles when all present. The members discussed at length other possible parking locations the volunteer firefighters, and acknowledged that there are occasional larger Town Hall meetings for which the existing parking is inadequate. Mr. Carbonell suggested it might be less expensive to recreate the stable parking that was in close proximity to the Fire Station by implementing underground drainage than to blast ledge in another location. Ms. Sobalvarro indicated that she has the site survey for the parcel where the drainage is currently.

Ms. Williams reminded the group that during the Council-on-Aging (“COA”) events, the COA van will be making multiple trips, so the parking spaces needed might not total 40. She further explained that the once-per-month COA dinner events are held before peak hours, often back-to-back with other group meetings on-site, and the one-per-month lectures that they hope to hold will be after peak hours. The members discussed that this infrequent use of the dining hall, with gradual traffic flow in and out, reinforces the traffic study findings.

Ms. Altman indicated that the proposed traffic plan can be tweaked while maintaining the one-way circulation system, ensuring access for the fire vehicles, trying to maximize the parking provided, while separating the pedestrians from the through traffic, but that the final will look much like the draft.

Ms. Russo questioned whether increasing the use of the site is sensible. Ms. Altman indicated that purely from a traffic aspect, the site can handle the fire station, dining room, and age-restricted development, with proper redefinition of the traffic pattern. Cindy asks that the report address the safety in front of Town Hall.

The members discussed whether they will be ready to report to the Select Board at the meeting on November 20th regarding the traffic study results. Ms. Altman indicated the report will be complete next week and will not contain any substantial changes. The

members agreed it was their intent to present to the Select Board on the 20th that the traffic study indicated the site can handle the traffic for both projects, and the RFQs for Phase 2 and the architectural assessment of the Fire Station should be go out.

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT PERMANENT BUILDING COMMITTEE'S "POLICIES AND PROCEDURES"

This discussion was tabled until a future meeting.

CONSIDER ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Proposed items for the next agenda were discussed. It was agreed that the PBC will next meet at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, 11/28/19.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Russo made a motion to adjourn at 9:18 a.m.; Mr. Maoire seconded. A unanimous vote was received.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Flynn, Clerk

Documents Referenced:

- Agenda
- Draft minutes of 10/3/18
- Permanent Building Committee charge
- Draft