

TOWN OF NEWINGTON  
TOWN HALL RENOVATIONS PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

September 21, 2016

Town Hall Lower Level, Conference Room L101

- I. Call to Order – Mr. Miner called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
- II. Roll Call – Members present: Chris Miner, Chairperson; Dave Nagel, Jim Marocchini, Joe Harpie, Whit Przech, and Ed Murtha (arrived at 7:02 pm). Others present: Members of the public; Roy Zartarian, Mayor; Tanya Lane, Town Manager; Dave Langdon, Director of Facilities Management; and Jeff Baron, Director of Administrative Services.
- III. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes - Mr. Harpie made a motion that the minutes of the September 7, 2016 meeting be approved as presented. A second to the motion was made by Mr. Przech. The motion passed by a vote of 5 YES to 0 NO.
- IV. Public Participation – Pat Tanger, 8 Gilbert Road and president of the Newington Art League – on finding space within the proposed Town Hall for the Art League and other culture related organizations. Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive – on improving the visual aids in Room L101. John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill Avenue – on whether the Committee should feel it is under pressure and on timing the Town Hall project in conjunction with the library project. Dana Higgins, 113 Stoddard Avenue – on whether the Committee should do an RFP for a hybrid project. Mr. Marocchini read an e-mail from John Slusarski, 40 Grandview Drive, on the excessive size of the current Town Hall. Mr. Nagel read an e-mail from Florence Dickey, address unknown, and Treasurer of the Newington Art League, on the benefits of having a Community Culture and Arts Room in the proposed Town Hall.
- V. Public Information Session – Mayor Zartarian, speaking as an ex-officio member of the Committee, responded to a comment by Mr. Bachand. There was direction provided to the Committee by the Town Council, namely to work with the Library Project Building Committee and to keep in mind the needs of the taxpayers by keeping the cost of the project under \$25 million. There are many other projects on the horizon. Money from the State may not be readily available for future work. There was direction provided. Mr. Przech asked how the \$25 million figure was arrived at. It was from the DTC cost estimate. Mr. Miner stated that the Committee has been looking at what it knows from the DTC study. It has also been trying to quantify the number of building occupants, with the thought of taking the existing

footprint and shrinking it in order to gain net usable space and be more cost effective. The Committee has been discussing using this approach in moving forward.

VI. Scope of Work for Draft Request for Proposals – Mr. Miner stated that the Committee is looking at two alternatives for the draft of a Request for Proposals (RFP). Mr. Marocchinin stated that the Committee knows the cost to fix the building (\$25 million), the cost to renovate as new (\$44 million), and the cost of an all new facility (\$35 million). One option is for a 28-29-30,000 square foot Community Center in addition to a Town Hall. He asked what the other option was. Mr. Miner responded that it would be “rightsizing” the building to roughly 70,000 square feet, with a net usable space of roughly 46,000 square feet for the Town Hall. This would result in a smaller footprint. He asked the Committee which direction it wanted to go in. Mr. Marocchini stated he wanted a clear definition of what the Committee was looking for. Mr. Harpie responded that this would mean no shrinkage for the Community Center, shrinkage for the Town Hall portion only, and within the dollar amount that is the Town Council’s authorization. The savings will be derived from the creativity on how this would be achieved. This should harden up numbers within the \$25 million. He would like to reduce the size of this facility and have a state of the art Community Center within the \$25 million budget. Mr. Marocchini felt that bidding will be very competitive. He requested a draft RFP for the next meeting. Mr. Miner felt that the Committee had narrowed the scope this evening. This would be to 1.) quantify the numbers for renovate-as-is and 2.) also develop a net usable space building design for the same or slightly more employees that would have a smaller footprint. This would include 95 employees in the building with work stations, 100 employees total, a Town Hall of 42,000 square feet, and a double gym/multi-purpose room Community Center of 28,000 square feet, for a total of 70,000 square feet. The Committee’s charge is to renovate the existing building. Mr. Miner felt the decision on the auditorium would be a tough one. The Committee would like a more modern office space for the current and future number of employees. Mr. Marocchini and Mr. Miner both felt that a project within the \$25,000,000 amount was feasible. The Chairperson felt that the percentage of Board Education and Town general government space needs each would need to be worked out. The RFP should anticipate new mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems. It should call for a solar system on the roof and energy efficiency as dollars permit. It should also include site work and parking modifications.

Mr. Nagel noted that the Library Building Committee was not expecting to include a large auditorium. That Committee is still waiting on the feasibility study from their consultant. Mr. Miner felt that the current auditorium was used a lot and needs to be a consideration. Mr. Marocchini felt that the multi-purpose room/gym would accommodate that need. Mr. Nagel noted the current auditorium was not up to code, and cost-wise it was probably not realistic that it would be retained. If it was feasible, the Library might want a large room. Mr. Miner stated that this Committee would need to work with the Library Committee on items such as parking and re-

opening access directly from Cedar Street. The budget will be the deciding factor. The RFP should not assume that any department is moving out of the building. Mr. Marocchini felt that the RFP should call for the Architect to consider the Town's current campus style, and that the building should be in the same location. Mr. Miner stated that he had verified that the police department building had been constructed as a separate, free-standing building with a seismic partition form the Town Hall. The Committee's only issue would be the police dispatch area. The rest is a separate building. Mr. Przech asked about the size of the auditorium. Mr. Langdon replied that it is less than 6,000 square feet. Mr. Harpie felt that the RFP and the Scope of Work discussed this evening gave the Building Committee traction. The Committee will need to do the project within the budget. Mr. Marocchini stated that he had spoken with Mr. Claffey, who was unable to attend this evening, and Mr. Claffey had expressed agreement also with what the Committee had agreed on during this discussion. Mr. Harpie felt that technical feasibility should be included in the RFP, specifically that shrinking the size of the building is technically feasible.

- VII. Any Other Business Pertinent to the Committee – The Committee's next meeting will be on October 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM. The Committee directed staff to prepare the draft of an RFP. The Committee agreed by consensus to vote on an RFP at the next meeting. Staff will present any questions it has regarding the RFP to the Chairperson, Mr. Miner.
- VIII. Public Participation – John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill Avenue - to follow up on his earlier comments during the first public participation and to offer his opinion on various comments he heard during the Committee's discussion.
- IX. Response to Public Participation – Mr. Miner responded that it is the Committee's realization that the right-sizing concept would be new construction. The Committee looked outside the box. If the Committee can get down the amount of net usable space it can be within sight of what it was charged by the Town Council to do. He intends to be here for the next thirty years, and wants a building that is sustainable.
- X. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jeff Baron*

Jeff Baron  
Director of Administrative Services