

Senior Center Expansion Committee
Site and Design Subcommittee

Minutes of 12/13/19 meeting
The Senior Center, 7 Main St. Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

Present: Mike McCusker, Joanne Soroka, Sylvia Smith, Pamela Kelleher, Jeremy Coleman, Donna Liebl, Doug Field, Cathy Buntin, Diane Poland, Marguerite Sheehan.
Absent: Norman Beebe, Matt Marchese
Guests: George Dole (JWA), Mark VanDale, Lynne Kelsey, Richard Feury

Meeting was called to order by Mike McCusker, chair, at 9:35 a.m.

Minutes of the Oct. 4, 2019 meeting were approved as corrected (motion Doug Field, seconded by Diane Poland); minutes of Oct. 25, 2019 and Nov. 22, 2019 meetings were not available and will be on the next agenda.

Mike welcomed guests and noted there will be designated opportunity for public comment and would not be general conversation with the audience.

George Dole of Jones Whitsett Architects (JWA) presented highlights of the “Senior Center Expansion Committee: Public Site Forums- Scorecard Results” report. See attached. Among the highlights were some pros and cons comments on each of the six sites; the Scoring Matrix rankings from 62 submitted and completed responses in order (Masonic Building-261; Buckland Police Department-246; Shelburne Lot near Arms-195; Cowell/Highland-166; Mole Hollow-153; King/Bishop/BSE-143); and the Scorecard Results from 145 scoring cards received and filled out (combined ranking of 1st and 2nd choice for Masonic Building-88%; Buckland Police Station-44%; Shelburne Lot near Arms-20%; Mole Hollow-15%; King/Bishop/BSE-10%; Cowell Gym/Highland-4%).

Positive discussion about the report prepared and presented by JWA revealed a clear preference among the public for the Masonic Building. Marguerite Sheehan made the following motion, seconded by Jeremy Coleman: “To recommend acceptance of the Pubic Site Forums – Scorecard Results report by JWA and recommend the preferences be pursued to the Expansion Committee and with appreciation to JWA.” Approved unanimously.

Discussion of next steps included various opinions expressed regarding the top 2 sites and how much emphasis to place on each one, including expenses for further research as well as the role of the 4 sites that did not have significant community support. The result of the discussion is the motion by Joanne Soroka, seconded by Doug Field: “To keep the Masonic Building and Buckland Police Station as sites to be actively pursued with concentration on the Masonic Building and with a secondary interest in the Buckland Police Station and to deactivate the other four sites.” Approved unanimously.

A further motion was made by Donna Liebl and seconded by Cathy Buntin “to recommend the previous recommendation to the Expansion Committee.” Approved unanimously.

Public comments included a suggestion to keep the pressure on the Town of Buckland regarding oil status at the Police Station (doesn't cost money) from Mark VanDale; reminder of cost of buildings by Lynne Kelsey; and suggestion to approach the town about designated senior center parking in the parking lot by Dick Feury. Mike noted that a parking management study would be part of future planning.

Among the next steps discussion were developing a list of costs of what comes next, developing a timeline, needing an ownership decision. It was agreed that we should engage P3 in this as this is part of the essential functions of their contract. It was noted that the property lines have already been determined and that they will be forwarded by JWA to Cathy and Sylvia.

The size of the expansion project was raised at the municipal boards meeting hosted by the Shelburne Selectboard. Mike noted that some don't think we need an 8,000 square foot building. General sense of the group was the project should not be scaled back at this time. Phasing the project was discussed and Mike asked JWA if the 2 main floors could be done and later the basement renovated. George responded that it is technically possible but not advisable as doing the whole project is the most favorable cost wise. The bid could include add-ons and deducts broken down.

There was a reminder to be constantly aware of costs and options to consider in further planning. A question on state funds was raised by Pamela and George replied that there are possible funds for elevators, accessibility improvements, historic funds and preservation. Donna reported at the Shelburne Selectboard meeting this week Linda Overing was discussing Small Cities Grants and noted that if the three member towns submitted a joint application there could possibly be up to \$1.35 million for our project. We should be thinking about applying in March 2021 and work with P3 on this.

Mike also raised interest in knowing more about LEED Certification. George said they have staff that is LEED certified. Generally, there is not a lot of incentive for municipal projects to go through the certification process, but following many of the principles without the certification is a good thing. We noted the savings in operating costs of incorporating the principals without the expense of the actual certification.

Mike noted that he and Sylvia and Doug would be getting together with a couple of Masons. It was suggested to coordinate next steps with P3.

Jeremy formally requested that P3 be invited to the next committee meeting.

Final public comment included:

Mark VanDale asking who has the authority to negotiate with the Masons, and noted that at a forum it was asked where the Buckland Police Department would go and that a new building for them would be cost prohibitive and the response from a municipal official was to just give the word and the police would be relocated.

Lynne Kelsey noted going to 2 Ashfield forums on programs for seniors and heard that they want more programs in Ashfield; she noted this may impact the number of seniors participating in Shelburne Falls.

Under business with less than 48-hour notice, Sylvia announced that the Senior Center Board at their meeting yesterday voted an alternate posting site for posting meetings of the Board of Directors and committees, the Expansion Committee and its subcommittees. The website address is www.the-senior-center.org and it will be effective January 20, 2020. A paper posting would also on the main door of the Senior Center for 24-hour access. Postings will also still be sent to the town clerks for posting as they currently post. There was another vote to have the relevant committees and subcommittees ratify the vote.

It was agreed to ratify that vote at this meeting rather than putting it on the agenda of the next meeting. The following motion was made by Cathy Buntin and seconded by Donna Liebl "That the Senior Center Expansion Site and Design subcommittee ratify the vote of the Senior Center Consortium Board of Directors at its December 12, 2019 meeting to post notice of all future meetings to be held after January 20, 2020 at The Senior Center website: www.the-senior-center.org" Approved unanimously.

Next meeting: Friday, January 10, 2020 at 10:30 a.m. at the Senior Center.

Motion to adjourn by Doug Field, seconded by Joanne Soroka. Approved unanimously. Adjourned at 11:07.

Respectfully submitted,

Sylvia Smith, Acting Secretary