

Permanent Building Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 20, 2023
Zoom Meeting
Approved: January 10, 2024

PBC Members present: Pablo Carbonell; Steve Moeser; Guy Hermann; Jeff Hayes, Building Commissioner (via telephone).

Attending, including but not limited to: Marie Sobalvarro, Assistant Town Administrator; Chief Rick Sicard, Fire Department; Deb Thompson, Council-on-Aging Director; Tim Kilhart, Department of Public Works Director; Julie Darling.

Mr. Carbonell called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m. and provided remote meeting instructions.

Approve Minutes of 11/17/23

The PBC considered the draft Minutes of 11/17/23. Mr. Moeser made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented; Mr. Hermann seconded. All were in favor.

Update on the DPW project

Mr. Carbonell reported on his attendance at the meeting with Weston & Sampson Engineering (herein "W&S") who prepared a few layouts in advance. He indicated that they discussed the budget and what items could potentially be included as alternates to the bid. Mr. Carbonell reported that they will meet again later in the day and invited all interested parties to attend. Mr. Moeser and Mr. Carbonell discussed that a W&S memo suggested that they are considering six alternates. Ms. Sobalvarro advised that W&S is looking at a base bid limited to the connector building and vehicle maintenance building, as well as restricting work in the 6-bay building to what is required by Code. She explained W&S is proposing this approach because multiple cost estimates have reinforced the idea that the project could cost \$10m. She indicated that W&S wants to confirm that the PBC is okay with this approach. Mr. Carbonell added that W&S is not looking to remove the other project components but to make them deducts, if the bids come in too high, or as bid alt-adds so that the DPW can move forward with a base bid that will be accepted by the Town. Ms. Sobalvarro confirmed that the base bid will include some enabling site work. She also advised that CPIC supported the project by a vote of 4-1. Mr. Kilhart confirmed that the recent notice regarding Tighe & Bond's testing of the old landfill is not related to this project. Ms. Sobalvarro advised that the testing is being funded by ARPA monies. Ms. Sobalvarro reminded the Members that as this project will most likely be debt funded, a relatively firm number will be needed by the mid-February deadline for ballot questions. Mr. Carbonell and Mr. Moeser reported that W&S confirmed at their last meeting that they are able to meet that schedule.

Update on COA solar project

Ms. Sobalvarro advised that because the project is over 25-kilowatt, National Grid deemed the application "complex". She indicated that National Grid has suggested that we could be exempted from the two-year study if we downgrade to 40-kilowatt. She would like to discuss with Select whether they can meet those requirements with their design, whether they can

update the contract, and whether we can get the contract signed. Ms. Sobalvarro stated that the financial incentives are tied to construction start date and suggested that a start date in 2023 is more beneficial. Mr. Hermann also reported that they have discussed installing the additional panels now, but not connecting until permission is received, and installing batteries for grid and other backup. Ms. Sobalvarro confirmed that the roof capacity is 62.4-kilowatts. The group noted that panels have a loss of productivity over time. Ms. Sobalvarro indicated the subcommittee will ask Select at their meeting later in the day whether they are interested in redesigning a 40-kilowatt system, and if so, whether the pricing changes. The Members agreed that proceeding with a 40-kilowatt system appears more beneficial. Ms. Sobalvarro stated she will ask Select for a Purchase and Sale Agreement for a 40-kilowatt system. Ms. Sobalvarro reminded the Members that the draft agreement for the 62.4-kilowatt system listed an installation and go-live date of November of 2024.

Update on Fire Station project

Mr. Carbonell reported that CPIC was in favor of moving forward with design funding and determining a location for the project. Mr. Carbonell stated that he is in favor of acquiring the parcel opposite the Public Safety (herein “the Hazel property”) as it is more likely cost effective than the blasting which would be required at the existing site. Mr. Carbonell stated that there was a question of whether the Transfer Station parcel would be adequate for a Fire Station if the Transfer Station was shut down. Mr. Carbonell stated he does not believe that site is large enough and would add additional travel time for fire trucks to get to Ayer Road. Chief Sicard advised that all funding for the project has been exhausted to date. Mr. Moeser suggested funding must be made available to determine the cost of making the Hazel property viable. Chief Sicard stated that he believes the evaluation of the existing site was thorough; he will ask the architect if any further assessment would be needed. Mr. Moeser noted that the ~\$1.4m cost estimate for site prep provided in 2019 would likely be higher today. Ms. Sobalvarro indicated that she would need to check the Kaestle Boos contract to see whether additional work would need to go out to public bid. Mr. Carbonell stated that CPIC suggested that the project would be in cue for construction in 2026 or 2027. Mr. Carbonell recommended that the PBC agree to present the Select Board (herein “SB”) with a request to move forward with the Hazel property by entering discussions with the owners to pull the property off the market and seek funding for site exploration. Mr. Moeser made a motion to request the Select Board authorization to move ahead to further explore the Hazel property. Mr. Carbonell suggested that the PBC wants from the SB: 1) confirmation that this is the direction the SB would like to move in; 2) ability to discuss and commit the Hazel property to the Town for site evaluation; 3) funding to assess whether it is feasible to site the Fire Station on the property.

Mr. Carbonell made a motion to seek the SB’s approval to move forward with researching the Hazel property, to confirm that they are on board with the PBC using a legal mechanism to have the property held for the Town to research, and confirm that they approve the PBC seeks funding for researching the property to ensure it is feasible to construct a Fire house upon it; Mr. Moeser seconded the motion. All were in favor. Mr. Carbonell and Mr. Moeser agreed to attend the virtual SB meeting of January 9th.

Mr. Moeser made a motion that a small warrant article be submitted by January 5th for funds to pursue site evaluation as discussed above; Mr. Carbonell seconded. All were in favor. The group agreed that \$50,000 would be a reasonable estimate of the cost for site evaluation.

Recruiting Members

Mr. Carbonell welcomed Ms. Darling who was in attendance in consideration of joining the PBC. Ms. Darling indicated that she moved to Harvard in 2020 and has been looking for ways to become involved in the community, something that is very important to her. She stated that she is a licensed architect and LEED professional, primarily focused on design of K-12 school buildings, with some work in transportation and residential design. Ms. Sobalvarro advised that, if interested, she would ask the SB to consider Ms. Darling's application at their January 9th meeting. The PBC described the level of commitment required, including meeting frequency and the option to participate in subcommittees. Mr. Hermann and Mr. Hayes indicated that they like meeting on Wednesday mornings; Ms. Darling agreed that she is also available at this time. Mr. Carbonell stated that subcommittee meeting schedules are agreed upon by subcommittee members.

Items for Next Agenda

Mr. Carbonell suggested the PBC next meet on the 10th following the SB meeting on the 9th.

Adjournment

Mr. Moeser made a motion to adjourn at approximately 10am; Mr. Carbonell seconded. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Flynn

Referenced Documents:

- Posted Agenda
- Draft Minutes of 11/17/23