

MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN / BOARD OF FINANCE
LIBRARY PLANNING & BUILDING COMMITTEE
JOINT MEETING
SEPTEMBER 18, 2012 7:00 P.M.

The joint meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance being recited.

Chairman George Mitchell of the Library Planning & Building Committee called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The other committee members present were Barry Schiff, Leslie Alexander, Jim Westgate, Bob Farnum, Jim Nicolari, Dawn Zdru, Dawn Higginson and Faith Williams.

Chairman Lila Ferrillo called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and indicated that the other Board of Finance members present were Tom Kelly, Jack Kiley, Robert DeBisschop, Richard Burke and Nancy Schmitt.

First Selectman Temple called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and indicated that Selectman Jeffrey Haney was also present and that Selectman Dave McKane was absent. Joanne Pelton was also present. He indicated that the purpose of the joint meeting is for the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to meet with the Library Planning & Building Committee to discuss a proposed new library. He asked George Mitchell to proceed with his presentation.

George Mitchell introduced the members of his committee. He provided information packets for all individuals present and proceeded to present the information regarding the proposed library. He noted that their charter was created in 2009 and that the committee was tasked with developing a bid package that could be presented to the Town. A separate committee was formed to find suitable sites where the library could be built. He noted that the committee needs \$59,000 at this time to continue to the next phase of the project. This would pay for design concepts, specifications, a model, development of referendum materials which will secure approval of the project at town meeting and referendum.

The current library is 3,000 sq. ft. and the proposal is to build a 20,000 sq. ft. library. George indicated that the project will cost approximately \$4 Million to \$6 Million. He noted that a gift from the Estate of M. Strong in the approximate amount of \$900,000 will be used for the project.

George Mitchell spoke about three locations that were considered for the site of the proposed library. These include: property on Rt. 67 across from Oxford Paint and Hardware (site 1), Oxford House Restaurant on Rt. 67 (site 2) and property on Great Oak Road (site 3). George explained site 1 and noted that this is an interior property which is not preferred and litigation which is taking a lot of time has made the property less desirable. He noted that site 2 was researched for approximately 6 months and was ultimately ruled out due to inland wetland concerns (and other issues). Site 3 is the preferred choice. Lila asked if bore tests have been done at Site 3 to determine if there is ledge on the property. George indicated that the committee does not have money to do a study like this and that it has not been done. Lila commented that if ledge is present, blasting will be necessary to remove it. She reminded George that there should be no blasting done in the area due to the oil remediation at Quaker

Farms School (also on Great Oak Road). First Selectmen Temple asked if the committee considered refitting the Oxford House property to suit the needs of the proposed library. George indicated that a concept was planned for the property. It was stated that the second floor of the building would not bear the weight of bookshelves and books. The problem with inland/wetlands approval ended the consideration for this property as a viable site for the proposed library.

George reviewed the timeline of events for the project which began in 2009. He reviewed the breakdown of how the space (3,075 sq. ft.) at the current library is allocated. He reviewed the long range study report which recommends a library for Oxford based on current demographics. He noted that the committee is comfortable with a library which has 15,000 sq. ft. He reviewed the fiscal impact assessment study which estimates costs for two different sized buildings and includes estimates for incremental operating costs, increase in mill rate and taxpayer impact.

Dick Burke noted that costs from the senior center were used as a basis for library costs and that the two facilities are not close in size and should not be compared. Also, costs for electricity, insurance and computers are not included in operating costs, and should be. George noted that the committee will consider it part of their task to estimate all of the operating costs.

Concepts for the project were reviewed (prepared by Peter Gisolfi Associates). Sketches of libraries in Bedford, NY and Kew Gardens, NY were shown which give an idea of what the proposed library would look like. Information and drawings of the Dobbs Ferry, NY library were included in the information packet for Board members. This 17,000 sq. ft. library cost \$5.3 Million, which is a similar project to the proposed Oxford library. Allocation of space of the Dobbs Ferry library was reviewed.

Jack Kiley asked for information on the current usage of the library. Dawn Higginson reviewed this information and noted that it is a very active library for its size.

Dick Burke noted that there is no question that an updated library is needed. He would have liked to see a requirements analysis (to determine the necessary size for the proposed library). He noted that allocation of space for the Dobbs Ferry library is very different from the proposed Oxford library. George noted that they are different and that the two towns have different needs. It was noted that there was a separate committee that proposed the breakdown of space allocation for the proposed library and that they considered the State recommendation when preparing the information.

First Selectman Temple noted that he is interested in proposing a library that is a size and cost that will pass at referendum. He commented that he has trouble with spending \$4 Million and he feels that this will not pass at referendum. He respects the work that has been done by the committee and wants the project to be successful.

First Selectman Temple spoke about a meeting with Dawn to discuss requirements for the proposed library and a rough sketch for a 10,040 sq. ft. library was done. Selectman Haney also spoke to Dawn to review that the needs for the library include. He went over these items and indicated that the estimated cost for this project would be \$2 Million to \$3 Million. He made it clear that he is not interested in forcing this plan on the Building Committee but brought it for information. He voiced his concern that the Town will most likely not pass a \$4 Million project at referendum. George noted that he would have liked this information prior to the joint meeting.

Jack Kiley asked why this proposal was not provided to the Building Committee prior to this meeting. Lila Ferrillo commented that she asked for information prior to the meeting and understood that it would be only an informational meeting, which is not the case. She noted that she was told that this would not be the start in the process toward referendum and it actually is a presented project and funding is being requested. First Selectman Temple informed the building committee that between the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance that there is a figure that they will support for the project.

Dick Burke spoke about his research to find the budget for the Dobbs Ferry library. He was not able to find the budget and did email the budget committee chairman requesting budget information before and after the new library was built. Dick received an email which told that close to the entire building project was paid for through gifts, the costs were not realistically shown on the fiscal impact summary (actual figures were higher). The email suggested that we do a business case analysis for the project. There is a concern that the committee research and understand the needs of a library for the twenty-first century. Committee members noted that research has been done and that they would be more prepared if they were allowed to use the \$50,000 that was allocated to the project. Lila commented on the reasons why the funds were not released and said that due to problems with prior proposed building projects, there is reluctance to release funds before a viable site is decided on for such a project. The committee noted that they need funds to do an engineering survey. Lila commented that she agrees that the town needs an improved library but that consideration for long term goals of the town is necessary also. Dick spoke about the need for updates to schools and how those concerns may affect this building project.

First Selectman Temple noted that he will support funding for this project for \$2.1 Million. It is understood that donated funds would be added to this funding. Selectman Haney noted that he supports this. First Selectman Temple asked that the Board of Finance report to him after their next regular meeting regarding whether or not they will support this.

First Selectman Temple noted that he would support a \$20,000 transfer for an engineering survey for the proposed library building project. The matter will be reviewed by the Board of Selectmen at their regular meeting on 9/19/12 and by the Board of Finance at their regular meeting on 9/24/12.

Dick spoke of an alternative to consider for the library even though it would delay the project. He spoke about the need for updates in some of the town's schools. He noted that the long range planning committee had the idea to go to a three school system for the town, which he endorses. Two schools would be expanded, Center School would be vacant and could be used for a multi-purpose facility and could include the library. Discussion continued about how high costs are to renovate existing facilities. Dawn noted that Center School was considered for the proposed library and it was found that it would be excessively costly to modify for the library.

Lila Ferrillo commended the building committee for the work they have done and that the presentation was done very well. She noted that she would like to see alternatives for the project. She noted that until an assessment of long term money that is coming in for the fiscal year should be reviewed also.

First Selectman thanked the building committee and the Board of Finance for their efforts and time.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Selectman Haney at 8:33 p.m. Second by First Selectman Temple.
Motion passes unanimously.

Motion to adjourn made by Tom Kelly at 8:33 p.m. Second by Jack Kiley. Motion passes
unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, subject to approval

Marni Soss

Marni Soss, Clerk

12 SEP 24 PM 1:56
TOWN OF WINDY HILL, CT
Clerk
Marni Soss
TOWN CLERK