

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
JOINT MEETING WITH POLICE STUDY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: March 16, 2023
Date of Transcription: June 22, 2023
Transcribed by: David Heard and Judith Whiteside

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER BY CHAIR

Town Hall Auditorium, 54 Marion Road, Wareham

2. ROLL CALL: The Select Board was called to order by Chair Whiteside at 5:00PM

Select Board Members Present: Judith Whiteside, Chair
Patricia A. Wurts, Clerk
Alan H. Slavin
Jared S. Chadwick
Absent: Ronald S. Besse

Also Present: Derek Sullivan, Town Administrator

ROLL CALL: The Police Building Study Committee was called to order by Chair Smith at 5:00PM

Committee Members Present: Claire Smith, Chair
Judith Whiteside, Chair
David Heard, Clerk
Patricia A. Wurts, Clerk
Walter Correia, Chief of Police
Alan H. Slavin
David Evans, Director EMS
Paul Girard, member
John Girard, Wareham Police
Charles Klueber, member
David McLure, member
Patrick Tropeano, member

Also present: Jeff McElvay, Tecton
Rebecca Hopkins, Tecton
John Kelley, Chief, Wareham Fire District

Rebecca Hopkins and Jeff McElvay of Tecton Architects conducted a PowerPoint presentation of the Public Safety Facility Feasibility Study. They noted that the need for a new Police Station was identified many years ago and resulted in studies and recommendations in 1995 and 2007.

The consultants described the process used to reach the conclusions presented. Those included:

Study of Existing Conditions

In depth study of the limitations of the existing facility.
Spatial needs analysis and adjacency studies were conducted to determine optimum layouts; and it was determined that the ideal Police Station would include 29,000 sq feet. And a combined Police, EMS and Natural resources (180 sq ft for animal rescue) structure would include 42,467 sq ft.

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Programming- included project goals and a vision for the Wareham community. Included a regional dispatch center that would serve neighboring communities, Space for an Emergency Operations Center, as well as a meeting room that could also serve the Wareham Community. From these programming and project studies basic building and site area needs were developed

Wareham fire headquarters was also considered (but not designed) , because the 2019 bill No 2115 ("An act relative to the construction and rehabilitation of public safety facilities") stated "No grant shall be approved for any amount greater than 75% of the total construction costs for a police or fire station facility; provided however that in the cast of a joint public safety facility, a grant may be awarded up to 90% of the total construction cost."(paragraphs 43-45)

Lay out and identify site area needs-4.9 Acres for Police, EMS and Fire, with 2.9 acres for the Police Station alone.

Identify building area needs for optimum functionality and future growth. Approximately 42,212 sq ft for the combined Police (29,000 sq ft), EMS (11,557sq ft) and Natural Resources (180 sq ft).

Recognize the building code requirements for "essential structures" like a police station- they include structural reinforcements and bullet proof areas not needed in ordinary construction.

Site Selection-

Reviewed Town Owned properties and selected appropriate private properties

In addition to available acreage, the team considered, impact on open space, wetlands, neighbors, location in Town, special site conditions, need for demolition and future expansion among others

Site "test fits" were developed showing how the new buildings, and support functions such as driveways and parking might fit on each of the selected locations.

10 Test Fits on 8 sites were developed and evaluated across 16 criteria, The sites were:

- 1) Decas School (4 test fits including options for keeping the existing buildings or the ball fields)
- 2) Minot Ave
- 3) Route 28 next to the Gas facility
- 4) Main Street across from the Methodist Church
- 5) The Southcoast property at the intersection of I95 and Cranberry Highway
- 6) Town Hall

At the suggestion of the Selectboard, Tecton performed extensive studies which showed how the Town Hall could be converted into a Police Station, although even adding a sally port (secure access for prisoners) and a covered garage, the available space was less than optimum.

Potential Project costs.

Potential costs were developed for converting Town Hall, with Tecton using a consultant for estimated construction costs then adding development and contingency costs. Project development costs include final design documents, bidding, future design changes during construction, plus insurance, permitting, tests, furnishings, relocation costs etc.). Contingency costs are mostly driven by rising interest rates and timing of the actual construction. The estimated cost to convert the Town Hall to a Police Station was \$44.36M. Estimated costs for a new construction were \$37.63M - both with a projected start date of 2024.

After reviewing the estimated costs a week or so ago, the Town Administrator requested a Police Station design that did not exceed \$20M. As directed, Tecton value engineered a smaller Police station design for the Main street location across from the Methodist church. This 18,000 sq ft is considerably smaller than the ideal 29,000 sq ft design, and would remove some desired features, such as the

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regional dispatch center, and other needs. However, the structure could be designed for future expansion as staffing and needs change. A Test-fit of the new design was shown at the presentation.

Following the PowerPoint presentation there was a period where members of the Select Board and the Police Building Committee as well as citizens were invited to comment or ask questions. There was a general agreement that Wareham must plan for the future. Questions about the possibility of archeological remains at the Minot site were raised (a possible study was evaluated). It was recommended that those making the final decision should visit the new Dartmouth or Westport Police Stations. Derek Sullivan explained the impact of inflation and higher interest rates on the Town's ability to finance a new station. Alan Slavin noted the State is considering a legislation that would fund new Police facilities similar to the funding proposed in 2019. It would be similar to funding provided for new schools.

In conclusion, it was decided that the Police Study Committee had completed its mission and the final decisions would be made by the Select board.

MOTION: Member Slavin moved to adjourn the Select Board meeting. Mr. Chadwick seconded.

VOTE: 4-0-0 (Unanimous)

MOTION: Chair Smith moved to adjourn the Study Committee. Mr. Heard seconded.

VOTE: 9-0-0 (Unanimous)

The joint meeting was adjourned at 7:03

Respectfully Submitted

The foregoing minutes were submitted to the Select board on June 27, 2023

Attest:


Judith Whiteside, Chair

Documents used or reviewed in the meeting

1. PowerPoint presentation authored by Tecton