



**TOWN OF
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

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***Facilities Study Committee 2011-2012
Police Facility Evaluation
Wednesday, October 5, 2011***

Present: Peter Cook, Chris Adams, Bill Atkinson, Brendan Denehy, Jay Sartell, Ann Somers
Not present: Clarence Farwell, Francis Gavin, Dennis LaBombard
Also present: Dennis Mires of The Architects; John Deloia and John Riehl of Eckman Construction

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Town Hall meeting room. The minutes from September 21st were approved unanimously as written.

Brendan presented a memo (attached) regarding handicap/accessibility signage at the Daniels Academy building. While the subject is not within our charter, Brendan's observations and suggestions for improvement, primarily of signage, derived from his tour of the building on behalf of the committee. **Ann moved/Chris seconded, and we voted unanimously that Peter would forward the memo to the Board of Selectmen, with the addition of a question about access to the elevator for meetings when the back door is normally locked.**

Peter reported that Tad had heard back from the LGC that without a detailed combing of individual town archives, they would not be able to provide examples of liability settlements.

Ann stated that the committee's web site is now in operation, with just a little fine-tuning needed.

Eckman Construction Review/Decision

Chris reported that he had received good reference responses regarding Eckman Construction. **Ann** noted the reference and costing materials had been received and forwarded to committee members since the last meeting. **Chris moved/Ann seconded that the committee engage Eckman Construction as our construction manager to support the design/estimating process.** The vote was unanimously in favor. Their fee for this work will be postponed, and incorporated in their anticipated work with the town upon acceptance of this project at Town Meeting.

Layout Review

Dennis Mires said that the layout is unchanged from the last meeting, and they would like to move forward with specifications and clarifications to get a cost estimate. **Ann** asked about apparent differences in requirements between the 2008 plan and the present one regarding the generator/pump arrangement for the sprinkler system completion. Conversation between **Bill A** and the **Eckman** representatives made it clear

that the details can only be worked out when the layout is fixed, which enables calculation of the exact requirements. At our present stage, it is prudent to plan conservatively. Also, the current plan has a significantly smaller footprint than the 2008 plan. **Scott Knowles** of the Fire Department will be consulted on the design and will govern the requirements.

Ann also asked whether access to the second floor from within the secure portion of the PD, available only through locked doors, would be a significant inconvenience, and whether public use of the upper floor had been ruled out. **Jay** said that the setup is similar to the one in Hollis, which with key cards is not a problem at all. Others concurred about the ease and specificity of use of key cards. **Chris** said public use had not been ruled out. He and **Jay** support public use of the second floor for its “softening” effect on community perception of the town’s police department.

Ann proposed that we accept the design. **Chris** said that he wants to reduce it further by removing one office, the exercise room and the locker rooms (using the current Ambulance locker rooms for both services). He stated that the main drivers for building this facility have to do with control and access for prisoners, safety for the officers and making space at the town hall, and that there will be space on the second floor for additional offices if and when they are needed. **Bill A** concurred, noting that there will need to be funds available for some exterior security features that are not included in the building design. **Chris** stated that business is moving toward providing multi-use space in lieu of dedicated office and work spaces, and that we should think along these lines to maintain a reasonable cost. **Jay** said that the facility would already be very busy at times as it is currently laid out, and that it would be doing the PD a disservice to reduce the floor plan further. **Ann** said we must build a 20-year structure, not a 10-year one. **We asked the architect and construction management firm to return to our next meeting with a price estimate based on the current layout (with the Bill Q reductions), so that we will have a base figure to work from as we contemplate further changes. Peter will ask Bill Q and Wes to attend the next meeting.**

Geothermal?

Ann asked about geothermal heating. There was general discussion about “green” concepts. **John D of Eckman** noted that getting a LEED certification costs money, but a building can be designed with LEED guidelines in mind without going for the certification. Most buildings today are designed with energy and the environment in mind. Brendan suggested we develop a list of LEED-oriented items that we do incorporate to show how we compare to a list of the requirements for various levels of LEED certification.

There would be money needed up front just to determine if geothermal at the Safety Complex is even possible; and there may not be enough room for the necessary wells. It might not be cost-effective, especially with today’s tight construction which reduces the loss of energy: with less fuel used, the time needed to recoup the initial investment may be too long to be practicable. It was suggested that we could propose two articles: one for the project heated conventionally, and if that succeeds then a second one for additional funds to explore/provide geothermal heating if the town wishes to pay to do so.

Publicity

We asked **Dennis M** about his experience with publicity, and he responded that we need to “be sure the voters know about it before March.” Discussion ensued around possibilities, including newspaper articles, web site news updates, e-group messages, backpack notices to parents through the schools. **Bill A** mentioned high school marketing classes, web design and community service interests. **Jay** suggested

speaking to parent-teacher groups, which as a new resident he has found engaged and effective. **Peter will give periodic updates at Board of Selectmen meetings**, which are watched on cable. **Peter and others will attend the BOS meeting on November 7**, when the board is expected to address expansion at the Daniels Academy building and the possible addition of a position for Town Administrator.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. The next meeting, 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 19th, will be held at the Safety Complex meeting room. Additional meetings are scheduled for 11/2 (Town Hall), 11/16 (Safety), 12/7 (Town Hall) and 12/14 (Safety).

Minutes submitted by Ann Somers

Action Items:

Peter: Forward Brendan memo with elevator access question to BOS
Ask Bill Quigley and Wes Whittier to attend next meeting
Present periodic updates at BOS meetings

Dennis M/The Architects in conjunction with Eckman Construction; Bring to next meeting (October 19) a cost estimate for the Bill Quigley-reduced plan for the Brookline Police Station at the Safety Complex, to use as a foundation for discussion on possible further changes.

Peter and others: Attend BOS meeting on November 7th re: plans for Daniels Academy

Notes on Daniels Academy 'Universal Design' issues 9/20/2011
(These notes are based on walk through of Daniels Academy in July, 2011)

Universal Design is the concept that facilities should be accessible to all people. These ideas are often recognized as part of the 'Americans with Disabilities Act' (ADA), but are more broadly seen as making facilities usable by as many people as possible.

During interviews with Town employees made by Facilities Study Committee members Brendan Denehy, Peter Cook, and Dennis LaBombard, an observation was made that parents sometimes bring strollers with young children up the stone steps because they are not aware of the Elevator Entrance to the building. Following up on this comment, I toured the facility to assess issues related to Universal Design at the Daniels Academy facility.

What I discovered is that during the 1991 renovations of the Academy, a great number of positive improvements were made to make the facility accessible to all residents. This included not only the elevator and the push buttons for the exterior door, but lever door handles in most public spaces and appropriate rest room facilities.

The biggest issue is not accessibility, but rather it is letting people know that appropriate accommodations exist. For example, the only exterior sign for the elevator entrance that I could find was at the end of the Bond Street sidewalk, but this sign is small, faded, and not in a location where most people (who drive to the building) are going to see it. There is no signage at the Bond Street entrance which most people use.

Based on my walk through, I would like to make the following recommendations:

Signage:

1. Appropriate exterior signage (meeting ADA guidelines):
 - At the base of the Bond Street and Main Street entrances. This could be a simple sign at appropriate height attached to the columns.
 - Repaint sign at end of Bond Street sidewalk
2. Post Accessibility information on Town Website.
3. Clarify handicapped parking signage on south wall of Academy. It's not clear that it means that handicapped accessible parking is located at rear of facility. Some people I spoke to believe that the arrow means that all the spaces on the south side of the building are handicapped spaces.
4. Restroom signage in front hallway unclear. It appears to point to stairwell to second floor for restrooms; signage should clearly state that restrooms are located on ground floor.
5. Doors leading from front hallway into meeting room, town office spaces and stairwell should be clearly identified.
6. Door leading from policy lobby/handicapped entrance should be clearly marked, so that visitors can find elevator.

Interior issues:

1. Policy lobby/elevator entrance is narrow; care should be taken that chairs and other items in this area do not block appropriate access to building.

2. Currently door between entrance area and lower level area (where elevator is located) was blocked open with cinder block. This is a fire issue and would interfere with some wheelchairs. This door should be kept open with magnetic holder (tied into fire alarm system), or door provided with electronic openers.
3. Lower level area is poorly lit, and used for storage. This makes an unsafe and unwelcoming area for all visitors, but especially for those who have eyesight issues or are blind. If items need to be stored in this area, they should be in closable containers out of the primary pathways (exits/elevator/restrooms).
4. 2nd floor hallway. Area outside elevator being used for chair rack storage, blocking wheelchair accessibility. Chair rack needs to be located elsewhere.

Respectfully submitted:
Brendan Denehy