

FIRE/RESCUE SITE STEERING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes, May 17, 2021

Present: Jerry Ouimet, Jacob Leopold, Luce Hillman, Brian Precourt, Doug Merrill, Devin Major, John Goodrich, Lee Krohn

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 P.M.

By consensus agreement, Krohn will chair the committee, and the agenda was approved.

There was no public comment on items not on the agenda.

The primary goal of the meeting was to ensure common understanding of current circumstances, and to consider possible strategies and next steps. Upon successful outcome of the bond vote, the agreements between Healthy Living and the Town contemplated joint closings on each respective parcel of land, with construction of shared infrastructure to begin thereafter. HL had then exercised its option to extend those deadlines until at least July 1; since then, HL has stated it is "taking a pause", with no further information nor possible timeframe offered. This begs questions for the Town as to where we may go from here.

Krohn will research and report back on the prior legal documents/agreements to determine relevant timeframes or deadlines that may exist for action (or extensions) for either party. HL still holds the options on both subject parcels; these have not yet been reassigned to the Town nor a prospective developer for the new Healthy Living store.

Questions and ideas were raised, and discussion ensued, regarding other possible strategies if HL's delay becomes lengthy or permanent, including the possibility of pursuing purchase of 'our' parcel sooner than later, or possibly acquiring both parcels for a complete Police/Fire/Rescue facility if HL were to back out. This, of course, would increase costs significantly both for land purchase and eventual construction.

Discussion followed on eventual work needed on a 'program' for building design regarding the very specific needs and code requirements involved (NFPA, etc) for both present and future needs for this shared facility. Eventually, and RFP must be prepared and issued, seeking ideally very specific prior experience in design and construction of these facilities. In hand at this time is a basic footprint design from Dore & Whittier, based on the Williston station, to ensure that the desired building size could fit on the site and to get through DRB review.

Whether new American Rescue Plan funds might be usable for this project will remain to be seen, based on as yet uncertain amount of funding available to the Town and guidelines for use. Possibilities for sharing a facility with South Burlington would be complicated and challenging. The current mutual aid system works well "as is".

Eventual construction costs will always be a challenge. Is there an outside debt limit for the Town? Could costs be contained somewhat if certain aspects of the building needed in the future were framed out but not finished and fitted up until needed later? ADA issues and potential for waivers were discussed, which depend upon where any 'public' spaces may be located in final building design. Fire and Rescue Officers mentioned the need to create building committees among their members to work on design needs, wishes, matters to avoid...

The meeting was then adjourned at 6:42 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Lee Krohn