Town of Medway
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**Facility Studies Committee Meeting**

In-Person Meeting: Sanford Hall, Medway Town Hall - 155 Village St, Medway, MA 02053

*Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the*

*Open Meeting Law, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020, Order imposing strict limitations on*

*the number of people that may gather in one place, limited attendance of members of the public*

*will be permitted at this meeting.*

*Committee Members Present: Brian Cowan, Lenny Mitchell, Mark Robinson, Cathy Sullivan, and Glenn Trindade*

Mr. Trindade called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

All committee members introduced themselves and described their role and background.

Mr. Trindade stated that the town of Medway has outgrown many current buildings and is in need of new structures, such as a town hall and a fire station. He proposed the idea of visiting the fire station in-person to view their building and equipment. He expressed concerns regarding the storage of specific fire-related materials, as well as repair issues. He underscored the purpose of the committee and addressed how each committee member’s experience lends itself to these goals.

Mr. Mitchell expressed that each building in question could have a committee member as a designated liaison.

Mr. Cowan expressed that having the committee’s 5 members go into the buildings and hear explanations would help with overall perspective.

Mr. Robinson expressed that some building stakeholders might say that many aspects of their buildings are weak and that committee members need to synthesize that information.

Mr. Trindade agreed and expressed the need to ask the right questions in order to get direct information from departments, as opposed to wish lists.

Mr. Robinson replied and asked whether the presentations should occur before or after the tours.

Ms. Sullivan suggested the presentation occur after the tour in order to have the location as a reference point prior to the presentation.

Mr. Trindade stated that there is also an issue of internal systems. He expressed the need to maintain what the town already has, but also potentially expand conference room space in Town Hall and make better use of the current space. He stressed how many departments and committees meet in the same building and need a better environment.

Ms. Sullivan mentioned that the committee must make sure that all new building ideas are environmentally friendly.

Mr. Trindade expressed that in timing the plans to tour existing facilities, the committee must coordinate and not interfere with the school day or activities.

Mr. Robinson said schools would likely require a liaison to be there and assist with the tour. He also mentioned that the committee could get authentic feedback about how the schools’ spaces currently function as part of the tour.

Mr. Trindade mentioned he was at the Memorial School recently and that the heat levels were quite high and required open windows. He mentioned that room temperatures were quite inconsistent and require fixing. He then expressed concern about VFW land that is currently unused, but quite valuable property, due in part to its liquor license.

Ms. Sullivan asked how much overlap there might be between the idea of the committee repurposing VFW land and the Master Plan Committee. There are already ideas underway for this land, which might defeat the purpose of the committee focusing on it.

Mr. Trindade said that in the meantime, the committee must decide whether or not to put money into it, due to its current structural issues.

Ms. Sullivan suggested that the VFW area become a swimming pool and ice rink for the town.

Mr. Cowan brought up traffic issues that could occur as a result.

Mr. Trindade mentioned a church in Wellesley that parishioners kept open for many years. The town of Wellesley entered a long-term lease with a private developer, who then built 2 hockey rinks, multiple pools, and an indoor turf area. Wellesley still pays for the ice time, but Wellesley community members get premium ice time. This strategy supports their teams and their community. This could be an item to add to the committee’s tasks and schedule, as it could serve as a model for Medway.

Mr. Cowan expanded on Mr. Trindade’s point about the importance of seeing how these changes have been done elsewhere, but also stressed the need to get direct feedback from those community members about what worked and what did not.

Mr. Trindade said that the committee’s ultimate goal is to provide an outside look at the town’s infrastructure. He shared that an independent assessment of the current state of all of the town’s buildings would be beneficial, especially since it has not been done before. He expressed concern about costs, as well as location(s), and cited another town that set up a public building on a corner of 2 major streets. Based on his prior knowledge of existing leases on Route 109, he proposed the idea that this committee explore the idea of entering into a long-term lease to build a brand new fire station and combine that with office space for a town hall. He suggested that it could be a combined safety building and that the committee would be an anchored tenant. Although he stressed that a new fire station is the top priority, he also mentioned that the police building would benefit from a canopy in the back in order to keep their vehicles out of the elements.

Mr. Robinson proposed a garage at the police building. He agreed that the police building does not require immediate reworking, but that it ultimately needs more than just a canopy.

Mr. Cowan raised the reality of recognizing where Medway is positioned geographically and that the town is headed in a similar direction as Natick in terms of increasing property value and rising population, so the committee must bear in mind what the town will look like 15-20 years from now. All facilities-related matters should be rooted in longevity.

Mr. Trindade brought up how Malden’s city hall had maintenance issues due to its cement structure. As a result, the city now faces issues of financing a rebuild. They entered into a deal with the developer and bought an office building, which now contains their city hall. Part of what subsidized it was being an anchor tenant for MassDevelopment. He wondered if the committee could follow that strategy with existing real estate stakeholders or perhaps look into the state assisting with this goal.

Mr. Robinson expressed that it makes more sense to pay for building them as opposed to buying them. He disagreed with the idea of being a tenant.

Mr. Cowan agreed with Mr. Robinson and brought up Middlesex Superior Court as an example. It is on an Interstate without any signage. Mr. Cowan expressed that town community members should be able to see public buildings and therefore take pride in them.

Mr. Trindade brought up the problem of where to put town buildings. He expressed that ideal locations and master plans are often strictly conceptual. He identified potential issues with identifying locations, such as successful businesses not wanting to negotiate the ownership of their property, as well as the committee not wishing to interfere with current businesses.

Mr. Robinson said that the committee should look at a map of town-owned land and suggested the committee refer to that as the committee makes decisions.

Mr. Mitchell brought up the fire department’s location and the need for it to be central, as opposed to on one side of the town.

Ms. Sullivan brought up the idea of expanding the current Town Hall property or possibly adding a level.

Mr. Robinson stated that expanding the current building would be quite difficult. He suggested there should be one all-encompassing building on the existing lot. He referred back to the VFW property and how it could be a multipurpose property.

Mr. Trindade tied back to the idea that these conversations will be ongoing all year. He reiterated that the committee’s first goal is to plan for August 14 to begin the process of touring the buildings. From there, he aimed to set the second round of tours for an evening after the first round. He asked Allison to check with the policy chief, the library director, a DPW representative, and a VFW representative. He asked her to begin a tentative schedule of tours. He underscored the need to begin presentations and discussions with current stakeholders in town buildings in order to prepare for the committee’s overall findings and recommendations.

Mr. Trindade expressed the need to build overall consensus and have everyone on board and in agreement with the plans.

Ms. Sullivan mentioned that touring the school in the summer will be quite different than normal usage due to summer cleaning.

Mr. Trindade stated that the schools already have a strong handle on their space needs. He cited the art room at the Memorial School. He asked what else the town can be doing to best utilize academic space and perhaps incorporate more advanced technology.

Ms. Sullivan stated that there is no need to knock any school buildings down, but perhaps it could be flexible space or simply repurposed.

Mr. Robinson proposed the idea of town offices potentially being relocated to the Burke School. He suggested the committee not get pigeonholed into buildings serving only one purpose. He asked if it should remain an educational facility due to its value or due to sentimental reasons.

Ms. Sullivan expressed that it will ultimately be the superintendent’s decision. She also mentioned population growth as a reason to not remove a school building. She stated that it would be useful to potentially link Memorial with the Burke in order to expand the existing building(s).

Mr. Trindade recapped the meeting: there is an existing plan to begin scheduling tours. From here, committee members should delve into the provided reading material, as well as identify a time in September to bring a consultant in. Lastly, the committee will set up 2-part meetings: the first meeting for input will occur in October and the subsequent meeting will occur in March or April to begin to present the committee’s ideas.

Mr. Mitchell asked how often the committee will meet.

Mr. Trindade replied that twice a month would be realistic. He suggested the second and fourth Monday of every month.

All committee members agreed to this schedule.

**Mr. Trindade offered a motion to adjourn at 7:00PM and all committee members agreed.**