

Fire Station – Municipal Campus Task Force

Thursday, July 15, 2021

Members Present: Bill Kennedy, Select Board; Valerie Jenkins, Capital Improvements Committee; Peter LaRoche, Zoning Board of Adjustment; Matt Lundsted, Conservation Commission; Alan Zeller, citizen-at-large; Roland Patten, citizen-at-large; Jon Hampson, Fire Department; Colin Murdough, Heritage Commission; Rob Fox, Recreation Committee; Beth Alpaugh-Cote, Master Plan Steering Committee; Sarah Steinberg Heller, Planning Board

Others Present: Nicole MacStay, Seth MacLean, Ed Walker, Danica Melone, HTK Architects Bill Hammer & Janet Slemenda

Welcome and CTO

Chief Walker called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM and introduced the Janet and Bill from HTK Architects.

Minutes

Mr. Zeller was disappointed that his discussion at the end of the meeting was not fully reflected in the minutes. A motion was made/seconded (Zeller/Patten) to approve the minutes as written, with all in favor.

Mission Statement

The group revisited the language of the mission statement and Chief Walker asked the group if there was anything further that should be added/considered in the statement.

Chief Walker read the final draft of the mission statement aloud and with not further comment, the mission statement was approved/seconded (Jenkins/Hampson) with all in favor with a unanimous vote to approve the mission statement as written.

Public Engagement

Janet Slemenda of HKT Architects discussed the public engagement process. She started with discussing that HKT was working with Town of Peterborough staff members to learn as much about the existing facilities as possible. Janet described an extensive programming session that would include questionnaires sent out to various user groups. She added that a key piece to the process was “selling” the project to the community and that its critical to have information readily available and maintain transparency in the process.

Janet discussed that she was looking to host 3 public engagement meetings with the community and explained that the first of those meetings would be to provide an overview of the work to be done and the other two would be charrette-type events which would allow for community visioning. She added that the visioning work would utilize interactive maps, drawings, and other creative platforms to help the community best visualize the proposal.

Janet discussed with the group that the biggest hurdle would be for the group to educate the public on the importance of this project so that they can get through town meeting without issue.

Janet further discussed the outreach design, adding that the final meeting would be finalizing the design and vision for the campus. She discussed how the community would learn about this process: newspaper postings, emails, social media, and recommended the Town dedicate a space on the website

Mr. Zeller asked if the charrettes would offer an opportunity to see an architectural plan of the facility. Janet responded that during the charrette process, they would give participants a cut-out of the building size without architectural details and the participant can decide where they feel that building would be best situated on the property. The concept is to give participants cardboard cutouts of site features so that participants can arrange the site as they see fit.

Mr. MacLean noted that the Town is currently out to bid for a full wetlands delineation of the property.

Janet discussed the outreach process further and added that often the naysayers also participate in the process and its important to have them involved and feel they are involved in the process because it typically results in them being in favor of the final product.

Mr. Kennedy asked how the group would get information out to the public regarding the current state of the Fire Station and its history. Janet recommended utilizing concepts such as tours or publicizing information on the town website so that we can help educate the public about the current conditions.

Bill Hammer added that it will be the burden of the group to help sell this plan to the community but that HKT can package up an outreach plan which includes graphics to share with the community. Janet and Bill discussed that the 3-minute elevator speech approach for the design, recommending that the group members equip themselves to share information with interested persons.

Mr. Zeller asked if it was fair to say that by the time they are done with the 3 outreach activities, there will be a very solid design plan that is essentially fully-cooked up. Janet responded that they should have a solid plan at that point.

Ms. Steinberg Heller asked if the group would be building the fire station campus design, as in the whole thing soup to nuts; Chief confirmed this was the case and reiterated that the focus is primarily on DPW and Fire but this process is to ensure that what they do does not impede what is done for other facilities in the future.

Mr. MacLean asked what the timeline was to get the group the visual materials. Janet said it would take a little bit because they need to keep going on the program get back to them for review and wouldn't happen until after the first charrette.

Janet added they have a professional cost estimator on the project to give realistic cost estimates and have also engaged a construction manager to be involved in the process. Mr. Kennedy asked if sustainability had come up at all and Janet had said it had not. Mr. Kennedy discussed how sustainability and renewable energy is important to the design of this building. The group discussed that the primary focus of the group was the functional use of the buildings but the next steps would be to look at feasibility of features such as renewable energy and sustainable design.

Mr. Fox discussed how there are people in community don't read the paper or check social media and that he felt it was key to get those people to come into the conversation. Mr. Fox suggested meeting people where they are at such as going to the night market or other downtown events with a popup tent to discuss the proposal. As many ways as you can possibly meet people where they are at.

Mr. Hampson added that he felt that the committee members should be given more of an outreach role to fulfill and suggested that the group reach out to the businesses and organizations to share information and help disseminate the plan. Janet suggested mailers be sent out to help get people involved in the process.

Ms. Jenkins shared that when she lived in a different community, a similar project had been brought up and what was powerful for selling the project was when Fire and EMT personnel came to a public event and showed the community a literal camp cot that they had to sleep on. The group further discussed outreach tactics and Ms. Steinberg Heller recommending a video of the project could be really helpful.

Chief Walker asked the group about the timeline for the upcoming outreach. Ms. Steinberg Heller recommended something be set up in conjunction with the Night Market which could have one or two Fire/EMT personnel present. The group decided that they would start the outreach process by having a booth at the Night Market scheduled for Friday, August 20th.

Mr. Kennedy suggested hosting something at the recycling center on a Saturday the 21st and then hosting a information session later in the afternoon that same day.

Chief Walker discussed having a Fire Station open house the following day so people could come in and see the facility for themselves. The group agreed the open house idea was necessary and decided it would be held the following day on Saturday the 21st.

Adjourned at 7:34 PM.