

Summary Report on Highway Department Relocation

The relocation of the Highway Department has been discussed for a number of years, beginning seriously in 2003. Two developments have spurred the current discussion.

The center of town has seen a substantial increase in activity, from the Library and Inn, the Town Hall, Congregational Church, Post Office and Store. This has been good for our town but has created issues of parking availability and safety for pedestrians. At the same time, the Highway Department is coping with a building inadequate for its needs and without room to expand.

Beginning with its formation in 2020, the Temple Land Use Committee has resolved several important issues. An exchange of two small lots was made with the State Highway Department, for the benefit of both parties. Three lots on Route 45 north of town were sold, returning these lots to the town tax base, and using the proceeds to establish a trust fund for the future highway facilities. All town owned properties have been studied for best use.

The remaining problem is twofold: recognition that the present Highway Department site is inadequate and obsolete, and the growth of programs in the center of town has exacerbated safety issues and parking challenges.

Here are some facts regarding Highway Facility issues in Temple.

- The Highway Department has outgrown its space. The current garage space is approximately 2200 sq ft, whereas the Department needs roughly 5000 sq ft to put all the equipment inside. There is no room for expansion. We have 7 pieces of equipment, soon to be 8, but right now only 4 can be put inside at one time. This is in addition to truck attachments.
- The equipment should be kept inside in winter to keep from freezing, otherwise it doesn't operate as it should if covered in ice and snow. Most of the town equipment is now computerized creating another potential problem in winter.
- Equipment will last an estimated 30% longer or more if protected from the elements; Temple currently has well over one million dollars in equipment. This means we are risking losing \$10-12,000 a year by leaving equipment outside.
- The current site of the Highway Department is crowded. Trailer trucks delivering materials have a difficult time maneuvering in the area. Due to space limitations, stockpiles of sand, gravel and topsoil are stored at multiple locations around town.

- The old section of the garage is uninsulated, dark with poor lighting, dingy, and crowded. The building is in disrepair and will need an upgrade soon.
 - One of the garage doors needs to be expanded now for the new truck.
 - All the garage doors should be replaced within the next 5 to 6 years.
 - The roofing will need to be replaced within the next 5 years.
 - The heating system is a wood stove built 37 years ago and a 30-year-old gas furnace. This would not pass state inspection.
 - The oldest section of the garage, built in 1960, is concrete block construction with large cracks, and no insulation.
 - The salt shed was built in 1994.
- There are currently environmental and health issues for employees. There is no breakroom, and no sanitary area for lunch. The Road Agent's office is in the attic of the municipal building. Current Highway Department personnel will be retiring in the near future. Offering a clean and healthy work environment will help attract prospective employees, who will hopefully stay in Temple for years to come.
- The State is requiring significant changes to highway garages in other towns in the region, such as Wilton and Peterborough. <https://www.ledgertranscript.com/Wilton-seeks-to-expand-highway-facility-47372841>
- Presently, the Highway Facilities are highly visible to anyone visiting the center of Town. Five homes and the Inn are within 500 feet of the garage.

Here are some facts regarding Safety Issues in Temple.

- Increased usage of the Town Hall, Library, and Birchwood Inn have led to some "creative" but unsafe parking in and around the village center, with poor visibility when pulling out onto Route 45.
- The Library has expanded its programs by 100%, are bringing in more people including lots of children. There have been several close calls with children nearly getting hit when families walk from the Library back to their vehicles.
- Many people regularly park their cars in front of the Library entrance to use the Library WiFi, blocking the narrow driveway that serves the Library, Town Hall and Highway Dept.
- Overflow parking is in the Highway facilities area and often conflicts with the Highway Department's abilities to get in and out when they need to, particularly in winter with snow and ice.
- The back parking area behind Town Hall, often used for overflow parking, has no lighting, making it challenging to navigate around the materials and equipment at night when walking to one's vehicle.

- People often park on both sides of the narrow road in front of the Town Hall and Church, restricting access for emergency vehicles, sometimes in the middle of what is legally 'Main Street.'
- Visitors to the village center also park on the road at the entrance to/from the parking area to Route 45, making it impossible to see oncoming traffic when exiting; there have been accidents at this intersection.
- Resident parking in the Highway Department vehicle parking area and materials storage area behind the Town Hall interferes with their ability to move trucks and park equipment.
- These trucks and other large equipment weigh anywhere from 6 to 40 tons!
- Children have been found playing on the large sand pile near the garage.

Resolving the issues of an inadequate highway facilities and parking and safety in our village.

Town meeting in 2021 passed a warrant article as follows:

Article 09 Highway Dept Study Expendable Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Town vote to establish a Highway Department Study Expendable Capital Reserve Fund, under the provisions of RSA 35:1, for the purpose of studying the relocation of the Highway Department to the Town owned property, formerly known as the Holt and Skladany properties (Temple Tax Maps 7A-36-1, as well as, 7A-36), and to raise and appropriate the sum of forty- five thousand dollars (\$45,000) for related engineering, survey, architectural and other preliminary work that will assist in this study? Furthermore, to authorize the Select Board would to serve as agents for this Fund. When completed this study would result in a report to voters including estimated costs and financing, timing and aesthetics. (Select Board Recommends) (CIP Committee Recommends)

The Land Use Committee Report to the Town

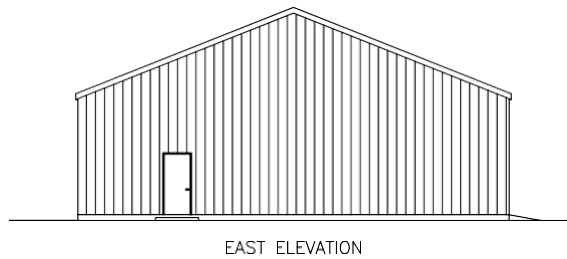
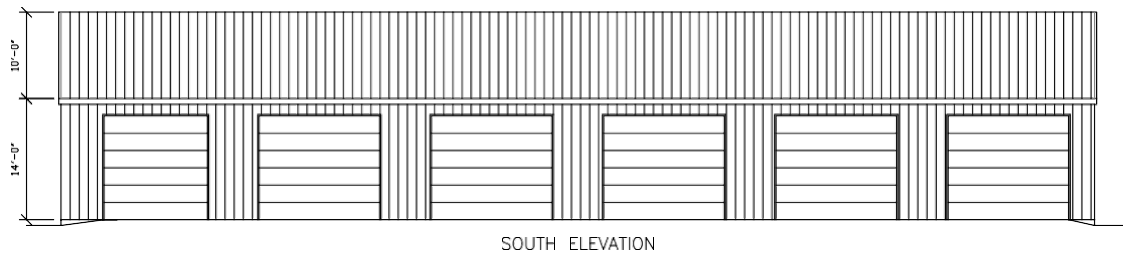
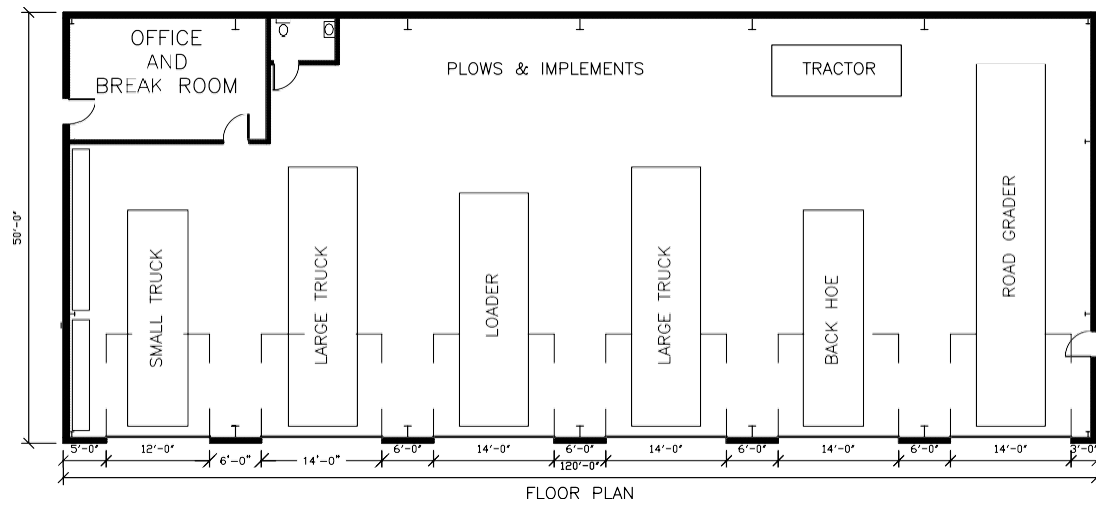
Three sites have been given serious consideration. Each site had to be surveyed. The Committee has spent a total of \$10,444 of the \$45,000 voted in 2021 on surveys and a hydrology study. The three sites were as follows:

1. The lot on Route 45 known as the former Holt property was the first choice of the committee. The proximity to the highway was considered favorable and the lot itself could be prepared the most inexpensively. This site was presented to Town Meeting in 2022 but was not accepted. Two neighbors raised questions and it appeared that the town preferred that the highway garage be hidden from the view of Route 45 highway itself.
2. A site on the Skladany land with an entrance from General Miller Highway. This site could be developed but it is in a more congested area of town. It would affect a large number of residents with 7 houses within 300 yards. The entrance would also present safety issues as General Miller Highway is a busy road with poor visibility in the area across the Colburn Road intersection. The Committee does not approve this location.
3. A site on the Skladany land adjacent to site 1 (aka Holt property) but further back from Route 45. This site would minimize any possible negative effect on the two neighbors of site 1 and would provide a building location invisible from Route 45 thus meeting objections given at last year's town meeting. A disadvantage is that it would be more expensive to develop than site 1. The projected costs will be outlined below. Entry from Route 45 would be an advantage in safety and neighborhood effect over the General Miller entrance site.

[illegible]

The existing driveway would be improved, placing the highway buildings further into the property. This is just a rough draft as final plans will depend on leveling the site but it shows that the needed buildings will fit appropriately.

A sketch of what the new highway garage would look like is shown here.



PRELIMINARY BUILDING
DESIGN
120' X 50' HIGHWAY GARAGE
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
TOWN OF TEMPLE, NH.

**Storing all equipment inside will save the town money
by extending its useful life.**

Town Meeting 2022 passed an additional Warrant Article as follows:

Article 08: Highway Department Move (2)

Shall the Town vote to establish a Highway Department Building and Construction Expendable Capital Reserve Fund, under the provisions of RSA 35:1, for the purpose of covering the costs of relocating the Highway Department, to raise and appropriate \$249,800 to be placed in the fund with \$130,800 coming from Unassigned Fund Balance, (being the sales proceeds from the sale of lots 2B 75-3 and 2B 75-4), and \$119,000 from taxation. Furthermore, to authorize the Select Board to serve as Agents for this Fund. (Select Board Recommends 2 yes 1 no)

It should be noted that only \$12,000 was ultimately raised by taxation as the sale of three lots on Route 45 covered the remainder.

The Committee believes that this funding plus the remainder of Article 9 will be sufficient to do the necessary site work. The available total is \$277,473. Preparation of the site to the stage of "shovel ready" is the necessary step to apply for grants and other financing.

What costs are likely for site preparation? The road into the new site will need to be rebuilt. A bridge or large culvert will be needed to cross a small stream. The site will require some blasting to level out the space. Filling and smoothing of the site will be the final step. Contractors cannot bid until the site is approved but we are confident that the needed work can be done with the current budget.

Proposed Warrant Article for 2023 Town Meeting asks approval of site location.

To see if the town will vote to approve a 5 acre portion of the 65 acre town-owned lot 7A - 36 known as the Skladany land) that is behind but abuts lot 7A-36-1 (known as the Holt property) as the new location for the Highway Department. Access to the new location will be from Route 45 through lot 7A-36-1.

The designation of 5 acres will leave the rest of the 65 acres free for possible preservation for town hiking and riding trails or any other use that the town might choose

Proposed Timeline:

2023: Following approval of location, using the two reserve funds already voted, site work will begin to make the project shovel ready. A shovel ready project will make cost estimates more reliable and make it possible to have serious discussions with grant sources.

2024 - 25: Apply for Grants and investigate other possible financing. Report to Town Meeting on findings. Town meeting will have to approve financing.

Estimated Costs of Final Project

These are very tentative estimates of the cost of the highway buildings. A steel building as sketched above is estimated to cost \$480,000 finished. An upgrade to a wood building would cost approximately \$700,000 finished.

Total steel building: \$480,000 + 10% contingency = \$528,000 OR:
Total Wood building: \$700,000 + 10% contingency = \$770,000

One thing is certain: waiting to do the project later will raise all costs.

Potential Financing

The Study Committee has already had grant funding discussions with Congresswoman Kuster's office and the US Department of Agriculture which oversees municipal grant programs in rural areas. These discussions confirmed that grant funds are available for projects like Temple's. While further research and discussions need to take place, it is difficult to proceed because we are not "shovel ready" i.e. we are not ready to proceed with actual construction.

The goal is to use grant funding for the lion's share of the cost similar to how the Town Hall restoration/addition and the grader were financed. Note that the TLUC is prepared to continue researching and applying for grants.

Amount borrowed: \$800,000 (approximate;

Interest rate: 3.38% rounded up to 4%

Term: 20 years

Principal payment per year: \$40,000.....\$800,000 divided by 20 years

Interest payment year one: \$32,000.....\$800,000 times 4%

Total payment year one: \$72,000.....payments in subsequent years are less

Assumed tax base: \$165,000,000

Resulting tax rate increase year one: \$.44

Impact on \$300,000 house per year: \$132.

Borrowing some of the funds from say the NH Municipal Bond Bank would be the backup. Based on current rates and a "worst case" scenario where there was need to borrow \$800,000 (rounded up from \$770,000) there would be a \$00.44 increase in the Town's tax rate. This equates to a \$132 increase in the annual tax bill for a \$300,000 home.

For more information contact a Town Land Use Committee member:

Tim Fiske, Chairman

Kathy Boot

Gail Cromwell

Honey Hastings (Deceased)

Scott Hecker

Lilliane LeBel

Allan Pickman

Paul Quinn

Christine Robidoux

George Willard