

Town Land Use Committee

February 27, 2023

Minutes

Tim Fiske called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

Present: Tim Fiske, Christine Robidoux, Paul Quinn, George Willard, Allan Pickman, Scott Hecker, Kathy Boot, Lilliane LeBel, Gail Cromwell

Guests: Connie Kieley, Nate Sartell

The Minutes for February 13 were discussed and amended before approval.

The group felt that about 50 people attended the Forum and another 29 via Zoom.

A question raised by a number of attendees at the forum dealt with the current Garage site. What exactly is wrong with it? Could money be spent to make it suitable for the Highway Facilities?

Guest Nate Sartell had attended the Forum and said that at present he did not know enough to support the move to a new site. He was there tonight to get more information.

Tim explained once again that the site is just too small. One acre is just not enough space for what is needed. The current buildings are right against the edges of the lot. At best one bay could be added. It was decided that he and Allan Pickman would take the tax map for the lot and show what would happen if the current buildings were extended in some manner in order to address questions that came up at the forum. What would happen to the possible sand pile, to all the other storage on the site. There has to be room for the large trucks to bring in sand and gravel and be able to turn around. This could be very helpful to those who asked if the present Facility could be repaired and expanded. Annual maintenance on the site is not significant but there are repairs that will be needed going forward. The roof, garage doors, the heating system. The additional depreciation of the equipment stored outside is significant, Tim estimating at \$10-12,000 per year. Presenting this information at town meeting would be important. Tim and Allan will meet at the garage site to take measurements for their study.

The environmental risks are not insignificant. Because of the small brook and topology of the site any diesel/gasoline/oil spill at the current site will flow down the hill to the town well. The town well serves the office building, the store, the church, town hall, library and garage. Spills could also affect the private wells of the houses along that same line.

Various speakers at the forum wished for an engineering study. What would that provide?

Tim had a copy of the study done for the town of Brookline for their new \$2.5 million highway facility. Their plan is much bigger than what we need. It would not be useful to get such a study right now but it has been useful to give us a comparison.

Tim said he had talked with various employees who worked for the town for a while –he felt that the town has excellent health insurance which does not appeal to young healthy workers. For older workers it is great. The most important thing the town could add would probably be retirement benefits. That would be a select board decision.

Regarding the question of outsourcing or working with other towns, Tim said this has been discussed in the past and no one wishes to do it. The ownership of equipment is just too important. Police and ambulance services are service-oriented, not equipment-oriented so we have combined successfully with other towns on those but that is probably the limit.

Allan volunteered to take the possible new site map to Staples to make large display boards to help people understand how the new site might look.

It was decided to have a meeting on Monday, March 13, to review what Tim and Allan will have prepared. 5:30 pm in the Annex.

Respectfully,
Gail Cromwell