

Interim Report

Fire Station Building Committee

December 13, 2016

Executive Summary

The FSBC began meeting in May of 2016 and has continued to meet monthly, sometimes multiple times each month. The mission of the FSBC was to find a site suitable for an up to date fire station and to determine potential mechanisms for funding that project. Multiple sites were studied, and thirteen were ultimately vetted using a scoring matrix. The matrix was designed to produce the best possible location based on multiple factors. Under all of the alternatives considered, the Town must acquire property it does not currently own, or repurpose land to replace restricted property. Both purchasing additional property or re-purposing existing property would need an affirmative Town Meeting vote. Re-purposing existing town property would also call for State Legislative approvals. The one exception is the town-owned property on Rockland Avenue. The detailed response location and response route review performed indicate Rockland Avenue is the least desirable location for a fire station.

Proceeding to prepare and present to the Board design and project cost information will not be possible until a specific site is available; site acquisition is the first step. Site location will, in part, drive cost determination because of the site topography, and location. Site topography will help determine details such as one or two story building, the amount of site preparation needed, and most importantly what construction alternatives can be considered. Site location will help determine utility/infrastructure cost, and demolition costs. After careful evaluation of multiple sites, the recommendation of the Fire Station Building Committee is that the Town aggressively pursue a parcel of land on Sudbury Street currently owned by Mill & Main. Town Administration has had several meetings with the Principals, and while some willingness has been indicated, the various management changes have limited obtaining a clear decision. Town

Administration has published two separate RFP documents without receiving proposals this committee can recommend to the Board. Town Administration prepared a third RFP in hopes that Mill & Main will respond positively to our request for transfer of property. It is our opinion that land acquisition presents no risk to the Town as a fire station location is required to provide for the eventual construction; no commitment beyond land acquisition is presumed by our recommendation, and sufficient funds exist within the current Capital Stabilization funds on hand.

Interim Report of the Fire Station Building Committee

Introduction

The Fire Station Building Committee (FSBC) was formed this past spring (2016) at the urging of the Maynard Board of Selectman (BOS), after receiving the feasibility report from Dore & Whittier. The initial committee consisted of two members of the BOS, two members of the Finance Committee (FIN), Town Administrator (TA), Assistant Town Administrator (ATA), and Fire Chief. At the initial, unofficial meeting it was determined that the committee should be expanded to include the Facilities Manager, another fire department member, and members of the public at large. After soliciting for members, the committee was expanded to its current make-up of thirteen members. Members of the FSBC include Chris Disilva BOS, David Gavin BOS, Nathan Ulrich FIN, Dan Costello FIN, Kevin Sweet TA, Andrew Scribner-MacLean ATA, Anthony Stowers Fire Chief, Sean Kiley Fire Captain, Aaron Miklosko FAC, Ron Calabria, Joshua Morse, Philip McCully, and Timothy Lawton. All members of the committee have been sworn in by the Town Clerk's Office as official members of the FSBC. At the initial meeting, Ron Calabria was named Committee Chair and Andrew Scribner-MacLean recording secretary. At the direction of the BOS, the committee was charged with finding a location for the fire station and identifying funding mechanisms for that fire station.

The committee began meeting in earnest in May and has met regularly since that time, gathering most months at least twice. The first order of business was to have Dore & Whittier make their presentation to the FSBC to help to define the overarching problem. Initially hired to explore the feasibility of renovating and adding on to the current fire station, Dore & Whittier's findings demonstrated many obstacles and financial constraints making it an undesirable, but possible option for the town to pursue.

Background and Significance

The issue of building a fire station is not a new problem. Originally constructed in 1954 as a Fire and Police Station, historical documents indicate the need for a new facility was first proposed in the 1990's. In 2007 an opportunity presented itself with the vacating of the former Maynard Public Library. The Maynard Public Library became available when the former Roosevelt School on Nason Street, was renovated and re-opened as the Maynard Public Library. In March of 2007, the Public Safety Building Committee (PSBC), having been duly appointed by the BOS, met for the first time to discuss the relocation of the Maynard Police Department to the former library site. Crowley Engineering was hired to conduct a facilities appraisal on the then Fire and Police Station. The Crowley Group visited the facility for the first time on March 28, 2007. Their report found eleven major deficiencies in the fire/police station and identified them all as a high priority (note, only one of these items has been fully addressed to this point). The acceptance of this report by the PSBC, according to their records, expanded their charge to addressing the needs of the fire department in addition to the police department sooner rather than later.

The Carell Group, an architectural firm based out of Hopkinton, Massachusetts, was already involved in the design phase of the relocation of the Maynard Police Department. In October of 2007, money (\$10,000) was appropriated to expand their scope to include possible relocation or renovation of the fire department. The PSBC expanded their scope and began vetting potential sites for a new fire station. The committee looked at eleven sites, ironically many of the same locations examined by the current FSBC. The research of the PSBC determined that relocating the fire station to Rockland Avenue, to a parcel of land owned by the Town of Maynard, would be the best option. In 2009 newly elected President Barack Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). ARRA was a stimulus package designed to get Americans working again and part of it revolved around funding critical infrastructure projects. Money from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG) was re-appropriated to a program whereby the federal government would partially fund fifty fire station building grants. The program called for one grant for each state with certain conditions attached. The two major conditions attached to each grant were the municipality receiving the grant would be able to match their portion, and also that the project would be shovel-ready. The Rockland Ave location provided a shovel-ready site and conceptual plans developed by the Carell Group met the design requirements. In May of 2009, at the annual town meeting (ATM), a debt exclusion of one-million dollars was approved by the voters in the event Maynard was awarded the grant for a new fire station. The grant for Massachusetts was awarded to the Town of Ware and the funds approved by the debt exclusion were not expended. It does not appear the work of the PSBC progressed beyond that point.

Current Process

The 2016 FSBC began its task by developing a request for proposal (RFP), from potential land owners who may have been interested in selling their property to the town. The committee felt this was an important step in ensuring all potential sites were evaluated. The RFP had specific requirements the committee felt were minimums for a fire station. We received no RFP in the allotted time allowed. The committee next identified thirteen potential sites for a fire station. Some of those sites were also looked at by the 2007 PSBC and are marked with an asterisk (*) while new sites are blank:

- 1 Summer Street* (current fire station location)
- 212 Great Road * (Boys and Girls Club)
- 63 Great Road (former bus depot)
- 63-65 Summer Street* (ArtSpace)
- 170 Main Street (Jimmy's Gas)
- Crowe Park*
- 115 Main Street (Gruber's Furniture)
- 1 Rockland Ave* (town-owned parcel)
- Sudbury Street Lot* (part of Mill Yard)
- 34 Powder Mill Road (Maynard Elks)
- 11 Main Street (former Walgreen's location)
- 195 Main Street (Town Hall option 1)
- 195 Main Street (Town Hall option 2)

Each site was carefully vetted using a weighted matrix. The matrix utilized nine different categories aimed at finding the best possible site for a new fire station. The committee went through several drafts when designing the matrix and rating sites and finally settled on the top five sites. The categories in the matrix were:

1. Whether or not the property was in the overlay district or adjacent to it
2. Travel routes including, intersections, response times
3. Adjacent to high traffic or school zone
4. Two-way street access
5. Whether any major intersection upgrades may be required
6. Whether or not the parcel fully met the needs of the project
7. Whether the parcel was town-owned
8. Whether or not the property was available
9. The potential opportunity cost of an alternate use for the property

In selecting fire station sites, most categories used in the rating matrix were straightforward, however, rating the response routes was more involved. For this exercise, six sites were selected as response destinations. These sites were selected based on meeting one of three factors. The first factor was frequent responses to that location currently. The second category was future frequent responses based on predicted growth and development. The third factor was potential fire loss and economic impact on the community. The sites chosen were, Summer Hill Glen, Concord Street Circle, Powder Mill Circle, 129 Parker Street, Mill & Main (Mill yard), and the Main Street Block of buildings. Each potential fire station location was evaluated using a response route to each test site chosen. Factors such as ease of response,

potential bottlenecks, intersections, and response time were used (a more detailed description can be found in Appendix B). As expected, each potential location had strengths and weaknesses based on the response site. Each potential site was scored on scales of one to five based on its travel route to each of the six test sites, and an average score was plugged into the matrix.

The committee settled on the top five most favorable locations for a new fire station, then further broke it down to two potential locations, Crowe Park, and the current fire station location (Appendix A). There were many factors that led to this decision including obstacles involved in procuring other sites, the impact of using other sites and the overall timetable other sites would present. Crowe Park was the overwhelming pick as the top location for a new facility, but as the committee began to investigate, obstacles began to emerge. The major obstacle at Crowe Park involved it having been dedicated as a Park in 1915. Massachusetts General Law would require intervention from the legislature to essentially “undedicate” Crowe Park. Also, the town would need to replace the land used for a new facility with conservation land all with the approval of the voters at the ATM.

With the additional requirements needed for Crowe Park, the FSBC decided it may be a good opportunity to send a second RFP out in hopes of securing a site through the sale of property. Also, the group began the process of developing a request for qualifications (RFQ) for a potential owner's project manager (OPM). An OPM is an advocate for the project owner, and it was felt that getting an OPM involved early on in this process would be beneficial based on the advice of committee member Josh Morse, Superintendent of Buildings in Newton, MA. The second RFP was sent out, and three proposals were submitted. The committee rejected all three proposals for not meeting minimum requirements needed for the construction of a fire station.

There were two properties on Main Street, the first being 115 Main Street (formerly Gruber's furniture), and the second site being multiple parcels on Main Street between numbers 54 and 76 known as the Quinn Block. The third parcel, on Great Road, is part of the property known as Maynard Motors. The Gruber's Furniture location is smaller than what the committee projected as a minimum and would cause significant traffic and parking issues. The Quinn Block included properties facing both Main Street and River Street. The Main Street parcels were not contiguous as 60-62 Main Street were not included in the proposal. Another consideration for the Quinn Block is that both Main Street and River Streets are one-way and would not allow for adequate responses times and routes for fire apparatus. The third parcel was carved out of 145 Great Road (Maynard Motors), and although the total size of the carved out pieces met the minimum requirements, it was not usable because it was essentially two smaller sections connected by a thin section. Another factor involved was the asking price for all three properties was well above the assessed value for each respective parcel.

A parcel on Sudbury Street was considered one of the better locations suitable for a fire station, however, it was thought to be unavailable. Initial discussions with the representatives of the owner, Mill & Main Place, indicated they were not willing to sell any of their property. Since the initial discussion regarding the possibility of selling land to the town for building a fire station, the property representatives have changed. Dialogue with the ownership group rather than a property representative has left open the possibility of a parcel of land being sold to the town for building a fire station. The committee recommends pursuing this property as a course of action in hopes of coming to an agreement with the current ownership group.

A chart provided in Appendix C notes each potential site for a fire station, and any reasons it was rejected as a location. It should be noted that some sites were discussed by the committee early on but were dismissed for a variety of reasons before being placed on the list for consideration. Those are listed on the chart in Appendix 3 even though they were never seriously vetted as potential fire station locations.

Financial Considerations

Part of the FSBC responsibility was to look at potential funding mechanisms for the construction of a new fire station. It is difficult to put together concrete funding mechanisms without having a project cost, which in turn is difficult to define without a location. There are multiple variables to the cost of the project moving forward, construction type, land acquisition costs, demolition and site preparation, infrastructure upgrades, etc. In exploring funding mechanisms, certain assumptions were made. The first assumption is that the size of the building would be at or around seventeen-thousand-five-hundred (17,500) square feet, which is significantly less than recommendations made by Dore & Whittier last spring. The fire chief feels they can make that space work to fit the needs of the community to keep costs as low as possible. The second assumption was that the construction price would be around six-hundred dollars (\$600.00) per square foot. Predicted construction costs are based on estimates provided by Dore & Whittier and project costs in the area. Although the committee felt this may be a high number, it felt it was practical to use this as a benchmark. As we moved along in the process, research on other area projects indicated that the project costs might be lower than anticipated.

Again, it is difficult to determine the cost of the debt for a fire station until project costs are more solid, which involves a site, construction type, acquisition costs, etc. With this in mind, the FSBC feels it would be premature to make actual financial recommendations regarding funding at this time.

As of this report, the only financial decision we recommend the BOS make is whether or not to use Capital Stabilization funds for the purpose of purchasing the recommended parcel of property. Once preliminary building design and cost information is available, a more detailed financial proposal can be presented to the Board of Selectmen.

Summary/Recommendations

At this time, the FSBC recommends trying to acquire land on Sudbury Street. All the sites evaluated by the committee had some challenge associated with as a potential site for the Maynard Fire Station. Obstacles may have included response routes, acquisition or remodeling costs, legislative approval, major infrastructure upgrades, and availability. The committee feels the best location and direction is to secure a site on Sudbury Street across from St. Bridget's Church. The main drivers for this site are that it represents a good location for a fire station. It is desirable because it is central to the downtown area, it may not need significant infrastructure or intersection upgrades, it doesn't involve any demolition of property, and the owners of the property have indicated there may be some interest in selling the property to the town. The FSBC committee hopes to be in communication with ownership at Mill & Main shortly. There is always the possibility of keeping the fire station on or near its present location, but that presents other obstacles including the acquisition of multiple properties, and a phased project which may add to the overall cost.

We have sent out an RFQ for potential OPM on this project with responses due by late January. The FSBC feels that there may be benefit from guidance this firm or individual can offer to prevent mistakes as the project becomes more defined. We are expecting there will be multiple responses to the RFQ, and we will have sub-committee review submissions and make further recommendations at that point.

Respectfully submitted,

Maynard Fire Station Building Committee

Chris DiSilva Chairman of the Board of Selectmen:

David Gavin Selectman:

Nathan Ulrich, Finance Committee Member:

Dan Costello, Finance Committee Member:

Kevin Sweet, Town Administrator:

Andrew Scribner-MacLean, ATA:

Anthony Stowers, Fire Chief:

Sean Kiley, Fire Captain:

Aaron Miklosko, DPW/Facilities:

Ron Calabria, Committee Chairperson:

Josh Morse, Maynard Resident:

Tim Lawton, Maynard Resident:

Phil McCully, Maynard Resident:

Appendix A

Rating scale, 0 is lowest	1 to 10	1 to 5	1 to 2	1 to 4	1 to 3	1 to 5	1 to 2	1 to 3	2 to 5	None	
	Quality District or adjacent	Town House Lot	1 way Street Access	Adjacent to high traffic / school zone	Innovation (single building or residential)	Public street parking / transit	Town House	Available for use as L.O.	Operable Use of existing space		
Benchmark	10	5	2	4	3	5	2	3	5	39	
170 Main (Jimmy's Gas)	9	3.6	2	4	2	5	1	1	2	29.6	
Croze Park	8	3.3	2	1	3	5	2	3	5	32.3	
Current Fire Station	8	3.2	2	2	3	2	1	3	2	26.2	
Sudbury Street Lot	8	3.5	2	3	3	5	1	1	2	28.5	
Town Hall (TH Moves)	8	3.3	2	3	2	5	1	3	3	30.3	
Town Hall (TH Stays)	8	3.3	2	3	2	5	1	3	3	30.3	

Appendix B

Travel Route Matrix	CST	PMC	SHG	129 P	Mill & Main	Main St Block	Average
170 Main (Jimmy's Gas)	3	2	4	3	5	5	3.6666667
63 Great Road (Great Rd/Main)	2	1	4	3	4	4	3
63-65 Summer Street (Artspace)	5	2	5	1	4	4	3.5
Boys & Girls Club	2	3	1	5	3	3	2.8333333
Crowe Park	3	2	3	4	4	4	3.3333333
Current Fire Station	3	3	3	2	4	4	3.1666667
Gruber's	2	2	3	2	5	5	3.1666667
Maynard Elks	2	5	2	3	3	3	3
Rockland Ave	4	1	2	1	1	1	1.6666667
Sudbury Street Lot	3	2	4	3	5	4	3.5
Town Hall (TH Moves)	3	2	4	3	4	4	3.3333333
Town Hall (TH Stays)	3	2	4	3	4	4	3.3333333
Walgreens	3	3	3	2	3	3	2.8333333
	2.9231	2.3077	3.2308	2.6923	3.7692308	3.69230769	3.1025641

Appendix C

Location	Disqualifier 1	Disqualifier 2	Disqualifier 3
Taylor Road	Response Issues		
Rockland Avenue	Response Issues		
Walgreens	Overall Cost	Response Issues	Complexity of Project Development
Gruber's Furniture	Response Issues	Lot Size	
Maynard Elks	Response Issues	Cost	Complexity of Project Development
Town Hall (2 options)	Complexity of Project Development	Cost	
63-65 Summer Street	Complexity of Project Development		
Paker Street	Response Issues	Complexity of Project Development	
212 Great Road Boys and Girls Club	Response Issues	Complexity of Project Development	Lot Size
63 Great Road (former Buse Depot)	Availability	Cost	
Quinn Block	Cost	Response Issues	Complexity of Project Development
Maynard Motors	Cost	Lot Size/Configuration	
Crowe Park	Complexity of Project Development		
1 Summer Street	Cost	Availability	
170 Main Street (Jimmy's Gas)	Availability		
Sudbury Street Lot	Availability *		

The complexity of development may include increased site modification, moving another town department or departments, complex and costly renovations to an existing structure, significant infrastructure upgrades needed at that location (full set of traffic lights), or issues related to legislative or administrative actions.

Cost is an amount well above the assessed value of the property.