

**Town of New Boston  
Fire Station Advisory Committee**

**February 21, 2024**

Fire Station Advisory Committee members present at this meeting were: Chairperson Bruce McKim, NBFD Operations Chief Frank Fraitzl, NBFD Administrator and Assistant Chief Brian Dubreuil, New Boston Resident Tony Stowers and Select Person Bill McFadden. New Boston Resident Mary Constance joined the meeting by speakerphone. New Boston Fire Ward and NBFD Lieutenant Derek Danis, NBFD Lieutenant Rick Riendeau and New Boston Fire Ward Steve Sears were unable to attend the meeting.

Also in attendance at this meeting was NBFD Administrative Assistant Laurel Flax.

Bruce McKim started the meeting at 5:31 pm.

Bruce McKim indicated that Laurel Flax will be taking notes for this meeting.

Frank Fraitzl provided an update on the Fire Station project.

- Frank Fraitzl indicated that he had updated documents to share with the committee.
- The Clerk-of-the-Works, Marc Jobin of Jobin Construction Consultants, has been on-boarded.
  - Today was the first meeting of the Design Team.
  - Frank Fraitzl stated that Marc Jobin is on top of things, and already has topics he would like to cover. He is well into the 96-page design document, and has identified some ideas from past projects that we should consider, but have not gotten to yet.
  - The Select Board signed Marc Jobin's contract a week ago.
- Frank Fraitzl received the design documents last Friday. These documents will be used by Turnstone to get pricing before going out to bid. Bids should go out in June for the individual sub-contractors.
  - Turnstone will get pre-bid pricing from vendors they have worked with in the past, who would be expected to bid the project.
  - Once we have this pricing, we will know if we need to tweak or modify the design prior to going out to bid in June.
  - We had a price a year ago for the 2023 Ballot, and it was updated last August.
  - There were changes in 6-months and we will see more changes.
  - Bill McFadden asked what happens if the prices come in above the grant amount.
    - Frank Fraitzl stated that we would need to "Value Engineer" to meet the grant. The grant is the bottom line, and we would make changes to bring the cost down to what we have in the grant.
  - Frank Fraitzl indicated that there have been 3-changes to the original plan:
    - Bump the Decon/area out from the bays
    - Add a future Fitness Room
    - Add an area in from for display of the Constitution and the Pinball
      - The first 2-changes were suggested by the Committee and the 3<sup>rd</sup> was suggested by the Architect.
    - There are some contingency funds in the grant, and Frank Fraitzl has asked SMP to let us know when any changes are going to bring us close to using up the grant funds.
    - So far, we have been informed that we are still within the scope of the project.
      - Savings from the retention pond will be used to offset the roadway realignment.

- Cost of raising the site will be mostly offset by the reduced need for retaining walls - \$150,000 to raise the site will save \$125,00 in retaining walls. This makes the real cost of raising the site \$25,000, which we can absorb in the project.
- Frank Fraitzl added that our biggest challenge right now is Heating/Cooling. BABA (Build America, Buy America) is an issue for purchasing VRF equipment (heat pumps). There are no VRF units built in America.
  - There was a past contractor, 10-years ago, who got a DOE waiver to BABA in a similar situation.
  - DOD has informed us that they are not doing any waivers, but we are hoping for consideration of this federal waiver that was previously approved.
  - Bill McFadden asked what we do if we are stuck with BABA.
    - Frank Fraitzl indicated that we would need to use conventional boilers with oil or propane fuel.
    - The cost to purchase VRF units is higher than conventional boilers, but the operating cost over time is less, and, since they operate on electricity rather than fossil fuel, there is potential to use solar power in the future to further offset operating costs.
    - VRF Units have been specified in the project since day 1.
  - Frank Fraitzl added that there are more VRF options if there is 3-phase power.
    - 3-Phase would need to be brought to the site from the square – 2025’.
    - Ticket was opened with Eversource to get the cost to provide 3-phase power to the site.
    - The original quote was \$160,000 and the latest quote is \$288,000.
    - The early indication is that the cost savings from bringing 3-phase will not offset the cost enough to make it worthwhile.
    - Brian Dubreuil added that we would have to absorb the cost; it would not be covered by the grant.
    - Bill McFadden added that the Energy Committee looked at running 3-phase to the Transfer Station and the cost was prohibitive.
    - Frank Fraitzl stated that the only way that 3-phase would be feasible would be to expand the solar field at the library and back feed the grid. This is not in our purview.
- Frank Fraitzl indicated that we should have the pre-bid pricing by the middle to end of April and we will know if changes need to be made.
- Frank Fraitzl made 2-Presentations yesterday concerned the realignment of the Roadway to the Library, Post Office and Pizza Place.
  - The first meeting was discussion and feedback with Highway Safety.
  - The second meeting was with the Library Trustees.
    - Northpoint Engineering recommended making the intersection of the road from Route 13 to the library, the road to the Post Office and Pizza Place, and the road to the new Fire Station more of a 4-way intersection. This would make the intersection more efficient, and give it safer angles with better visibility.
    - The Post Office property owners did not like the first design, and are fully on board with the 2<sup>nd</sup> one.

- The Library Trustees and staff do not have a problem with the design as long as there is no cost to them, and no impact on library users.
    - We will try to do work on Tuesdays when the library is closed.
    - In and out of the library will be a straight shot to Mt. Vernon Street (Rt. 13).
  - There is no real effect on the Post Office Entrance.
- Frank Fraitzl provided existing and proposed drawings of the site showing the roadway.
  - Frank Fraitzl indicated that the open retention pond will be in the low area between the library and this parcel.
  - Mary Constance asked if other approvals or notifications are required for the site changes.
    - Frank Fraitzl indicated that he will be meeting with the Conservation Commission about the trail. Work around the trailhead is part of the overall project.
    - Most of the work that we are doing is on the lot that we are using.
    - Frank Fraitzl added that we have gone to DOT and have a verbal driveway permit for the North entrance off Rt. 13.
      - This entrance will be 1-way in for Emergency Vehicles only.
      - The entrance will be signed “Emergency Vehicles Only”.
      - The entrance is subject to DOT Guidelines and Restrictions.
      - The purpose of this entrance is to allow emergency personnel to get to the building without crossing apparatus leaving the front of the building.
    - At the middle to end of next month, Kevin Leonard will submit State Permit Applications for:
      - Alteration of terrain
      - Septic (septic will be slightly overbuilt)
      - Driveway
    - We do not expect any issues with these permits.
      - Bill McFadden expressed concern over time to get a septic permit
      - Frank Fraitzl indicated that Alteration of Terrain permits were taking up to 90-days and are now down to 33-days.
- Frank Fraitzl started a discussion of signage.
  - There is no talk of signage for the Fire Station on Rt. 13 – the building has signage on the front and back.
  - DOT requires signage to say “Fire Station Ahead” and “Fire Trucks Entering (X# of feet) Ahead” on the roadway.
  - Bill McFadden stated that he had spoken to a Library Trustee, who would like a sign closer to Rt. 13 for the library, or a multi-tenant sign.
    - Frank Fraitzl stated that it would make sense to do any site work for a sign at the same time the project site work is going on. He added that the Post Office did not seem interested in a multi-tenant sign.
  - No Blinking Light is required and the consensus was that a blinking light tends to be ignored once it has been in place for a period of time.
  - We could look into a traffic light controlled by the station.
- Frank Fraitzl indicated that he has talked to the library about parking.

- There will be 4-spaces in front of the station for business/permits. 2 of these will be handicapped spaces.
  - There will be overflow parking on the other side of the roadway which will not be labelled “Fire Only”, and could be used as overflow for the library.
- Frank Fraitzl indicated that there was talk about a street light going towards the library.
  - There is no official lighting plan yet for the site, but some lighting was specified in the DOD plan.
  - The Mechanical/Electrical contractor put some lighting in the plan for pricing.
    - There will be some lighting around the building.
    - There will be a light at Rt. 13.
    - There will be a light at the 4-way intersection which will be on from sunset to midnight and will cover people using the overflow parking for the library or for training at the fire station.
  - All lighting will be “Dark Sky Lighting” which points down and avoids light pollution.
- Frank Fraitzl reported that Northpoint has submitted a \$12,000 addendum to the original contract for site work design.
  - This addendum is for the additional design work for the roadway realignment. It does not cover raising the terrain.
  - This design work is part of the soft costs. The construction is part of the grant.
  - We will be underspent for the Clerk-of-the-Works in the soft costs, which will offset this design work.
  - We are still within budget for the soft costs, which are not covered by the grant.
  - Brian Dubreuil added that the road realignment helps everyone and is really part of being a good neighbor.
  - Tony Stowers added that improved site lines is important, this was a good catch, and he is glad we addressed it now.
- Frank Fraitzl stated that this is the time to look for trade-offs, where we can make improvements without increasing costs.
  - Frank Fraitzl added that putting in a curb cut from the trail to the parking lot will keep access open for emergency purposes. The current area where people pull in and park will become the drainage area.
- Frank Fraitzl reported that we have confirmed that we cannot cut any trees at this time.
  - Kevin Leonard is doing his best and the retention pond is not really impacting any trees.
  - The goal is to leave as much foliage as possible
    - To keep a buffer
    - No trees can be cut from April 1 to October 31 per NEPA – there may be a nesting site for the Long-Eared Bat on the site.
  - Once we give Kevin Leonard the OK to go ahead with this design, he will be able to formally place the retention pond on the site plan.
    - We may have to cut a couple of trees a few feet in.
- Brian Dubreuil pointed out the Radio Tower, which is a new addition to the plan.
  - Frank Fraitzl indicated that the original plan was to put an antenna on the 35’ high bay, but that is not adequate for communications.
  - The plan is for a 100’ freestanding tower to be put on the sliver of land where the retention pond was going on the original plan. The tower will be just beyond the gate on the left.

- The retention pond was moved to the lowest spot on the site, at the edge of the wetland.
- Another possible site for the tower was the back of the building, but no one liked that option due to the view from Rt. 13.
- Frank Fraitzl walked the proposed area for the tower and determined that it is mostly dead trees.
- The tower site was pushed down to use the current existing trees as a buffer. You will not see the 1<sup>st</sup> 30-40' of the tower and if you were sitting in a car on Rt. 13, you would see the roof of the car, and not the top of the trees or the tower (unless you were looking for it).
- The tower will be freestanding with a fence around it for safety/security.
- Bill McFadden asked if we could lease out the tower for cellular communications, and Frank Fraitzl responded that the tower is not tall enough and was not designed for that.
- Frank Fraitzl indicated that we are looking at other options, but the site is in a valley and we need to get out to Dodge Farm or Ridgeview sites.
  - Also, the station will be the Town's EOC (Emergency Operations Center) and needs to stand alone for communications, and not rely on other sites.
  - The radio vendor has done propagation studies at the site and has printouts showing that 200' does not get more coverage than 100' and anything less than 100' results in significant degradation.
- Frank Fraitzl presented a revised schedule printout.
  - Brian Dubreuil stated that the goal is to have "Shovels in the Ground" by August 1, 2024.
    - Our original proposal was for August 1 start date.
    - The grant was not awarded until September 25, but they are making us stick to the original proposed date.
  - Everything is dependent on the NEPA study.
  - NEPA study must be complete and approved before there is any disturbance to the property.
  - Many things are involved in NEPA:
    - Bats
    - Monarch Butterflies
    - Turtles
    - 5-Indian Tribes
    - Natural and cultural resources
  - Kimberly at Hoyle Tanner, our NEPA Engineer, has reported that she has not heard from any tribes, and that it is not uncommon for them to not respond. We still have to reach out to them.

Frank Fraitzl left the meeting at 6:10 pm.

- Brian Dubreuil presented input from Derek Danis who was unable to attend the meeting, but has been briefed as a Fire Ward, and sent an email with his concerns.
  - The website for the station is still listed as "Under Construction".
    - Need to get plans onto the website.
    - Need someone to take charge of the website.
    - Lauren Fox will update the website, but we need to provide the information.

- Brian Dubreuil will work with someone on the website.
  - Derek Danis is an accountant, and is too busy during tax season to work on the website.
  - Bill McFadden agreed that the basic plans should go on the website, but maybe not the timeline since it is updated often.
  - Tony Stowers added that putting the date to break ground on the website is a good idea.
- Brian Dubreuil will send out the designated design set to the committee, but it is a large document and cannot be emailed.
- Brian Dubreuil presented some suggestions and ideas from Rick Riendeau, who was also unable to attend this meeting.
  - Rick Riendeau gave Brian Dubreuil a printed off plan with design ideas & questions on post-it notes.
    - For the Fire Department Breakfasts, we need 220 outlets for the grills in the apparatus bay.
    - Is there storage space above the decon area?
      - Brian Dubreuil responded that there is a truss system above the decon area with access for sprinklers, but no room for storage,
      - There is potential storage space in a mezzanine area in the bays.
        - There could be 1-large or 2-smaller areas, and stairs would be needed for access.
        - EMS storage area will be locked.
    - Suggestion for pitched floors in sprinkler room (Rick Riendeau worked for Milford DOT and has experience with this type of facility).
    - Hose bibs and pressure washer.
  - Brian Dubreuil stated that Rick Riendeau had thought about all the minutia and presented some great ideas to look at and plan for.
    - Tony Stowers commented that the more you plan now, the better. Change orders are expensive!!
    - Tony Stowers added that these are all good ideas.
- Brian Dubreuil reported that he has heard nothing from Peter Hogan, and Steve Sears is still recuperating from surgery.
- Mary Constance asked Brian Dubreuil to speak with her about an article on the Per Diem Program for the paper.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 pm.

The next meeting is planned for March 20, 2024 at 5:30 pm.

Minutes submitted by Laurel Flax.