

TOWN OF HEBRON
TOWN OFFICES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 28, 2014

PRESENT: Roger Larochelle, Trip Swartz, Patrick Moriarty, Paul Hazelton, Mark Coulson, Ellie Lonske

OTHERS PRESENT: Norman Larson, Architect (CPW Architects), Pete Carey (owner of Meadow Wind Red Barn where the meeting was held), and approximately sixty-five townspeople

Meeting convened at 7:00 P.M.

Chair Roger Larochelle called the meeting to order, and told the gathering that the architect had been delayed. Roger asked Pete Carey to give a history of Meadow Wind while we awaited the architect. Pete's impromptu talk was fascinating and well received. Thank you, Pete!

After architect Norman Larson arrived, Roger explained the importance of saving the historic Hebron Academy building, the vote at the 2104 Town Meeting to fund architectural designs, the charge to the Committee (based on that vote), and the process and progress to date in working with the architect. Roger then turned the meeting over to Norman Larson.

Norman showed exterior and interior preliminary designs for three different "rehabilitation and expansion" schemes. Each design was in full compliance with the Department of Interior National Register of Historic Places standards and with the A.D.A requirements for handicap access. The critical question was which design or designs would best meet the program and space needs of Town offices for the foreseeable future, and be in harmony with the Academy building itself and with the other buildings surrounding the Hebron Common.

Design A shows a two-story addition on the rear (south) side, replacing the exterior emergency staircase, and the existing additions that house a lavatory, storage room, and furnace room, and would have handicap access on the building's west side. The visual impact from the Common would be minimal, but the design does not provide enough space for the program and space needs that now take place in the Academy building and in the Memorial Chapel building (Town Clerk and Tax Collector offices), and provides no room for growth.

Design B shows a two-story addition to the west side of the building. A two-story addition has advantages in terms of construction costs (smaller foundation), heating costs, and footprint size, but Town offices would be located on two different floors.

Design C shows a single-story addition to the west side of the building. This design locates all Town offices on the main floor, and has an expanded meeting room on the second floor of the existing building. While the design is perhaps more esthetically pleasing than Plan B, it has a larger footprint and covers more of the west façade of the Academy building. Potential problems with the roofline gullies as shown will be addressed as the plans are further refined.

After Norman's detailed presentation, Roger turned to the Committee members for comments. Each member of the Committee expressed a preference for Design C, and explained the thought processes that had brought them to that conclusion.

Because the sight lines made the foam-board mounted designs difficult or impossible to see from many of the seats, Roger passed the designs around for closer viewing before opening the floor to questions from the audience.

Summary of public comments and questions (with responses from architect and committee members):

- Q: Could the building be moved forward toward the Common to allow for a larger addition to the rear? A: Moving the building would violate National Register standards, and so make attracting grant funding

problematic.

- Q: Were the Town Clerk, Tax Collector, and Select Board staff consulted on consolidation of Town offices in one location? A: Both Town Clerk Tracey Steenbergen and Tax Collector Madeleine MacDougall were present, and spoke in favor of consolidating offices in a handicap-accessible expanded Academy building and of locating all Town offices on the ground floor. Select Board Executive Assistant Karen Corliss was away on vacation, but had submitted a long and detailed list of advantages to consolidating offices: advantages to the staff and to the public they serve. Past-secretary to the Planning and Zoning boards Sheila Oranch also spoke in favor of locating offices on the same floor for efficiency reasons.
- Q: Have we planned for a vault to store Town records? A: Records would be stored in a secure fireproof and humidity-controlled space in the new full basement, but the primary focus would be to preserve the records from fire and physical deterioration, not from criminal activity as would be required in a bank vault.
- Q: Have we explored digital storage? A: Yes. It is important to preserve the Town's historical paper records AND to save records in digital format, but caution must be used because of rapid changes in storage technologies.
- Q: Have we planned for expanded parking? A: Because of the staggered hours that the three offices are open to the public, we do not anticipate the need for additional parking. Historically, the greatest need for parking has been for Planning Board evening meetings on new large subdivisions.
- Q: How about runoff and drainage? A: We are aware of potential problems and will present solutions as plans continue to be refined.
- Q: Why is the gable end of design C not on the west side of the addition, and why is the west-facing façade not shown on the design? A: The major focus has been on how the addition would look from the Common, not from West Shore Road. The west-facing façade is shown on all three designs.

At the close of public comments, Roger thanked the approximately sixty-five attendees (about 10% of Hebron's population) for coming, and invited them to stay after the meeting was adjourned to examine the plans in more detail and ask further questions of the architect. Many chose to do so.

8:30 Meeting adjourned

Note: The foam-board designs B and C will be on display in the Select Board office. Digital copies in pdf format will be uploaded to the Town web site. Please e-mail your comments and questions about the designs to Town Offices Committee Chair Roger Larochelle at roger@squamlakes.com

Next meeting: Tuesday, September 23, 2014 at 7:00pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ellie Lonske