

CANTERBURY TOWN BUILDING NEEDS
COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting
February 26, 2003

TIME & PLACE:

Meeting February 26, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. at Sam Lake House.

ATTENDANCE:

Kent Ruesswick, Chairman

John Bouton – Library Committee
Kevin Bragg – Historical District Commission
Mike Capone – Selectmen representative
Charlie Cook
Bob Fife
Ken Jordon
Gordon Jackson
Cathy Menard (guest invited by Chairman)
Billie Richert
Jeremy Slayton
Ted West

MINUTES:

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Kent stated that the committee originally had nine members and currently had eight. He moved that Billie Richert be voted a member. The motion was passed unanimously.

The committee then discussed last Saturday's public town meeting. Mike stated that he had observed during Kent's presentation he was challenged by a resident, and that it would have been helpful for Kent to ask for suggestions rather than end up in debate and becoming defensive.

Jeremy stated he felt it was important to respect others' opinions and positions and to make this clear when speaking. Kent stated that this has been noted and discussed with various members and it's agreed.

Ted stated he was getting lost when the town report was being read. I think we can improve it a bit.

Kent - The suggestion made was that this part of presentation was too long. I've asked John (Bouton) to join us to help us give a shorter speech. I've also spoken with Jeremy about pictures to display/project at school (slide show) while John presents at town meeting.

The committee members then spent time on reviewing the overall presentation and how to improve it. Kent stated that Jeremy was to obtain projector (from school) for presentation and John and Kent would work on presentation.

Kent then asked if the architect should go over slides during presentation. Charlie said no, have committee make presentation. Kevin stated I would mention numbers – factual input behind these numbers – for architect. Mike said this was a good point.

Ken asked if we were clear on numbers; Cobb Hill came back and said \$2.5 million

Kent said \$2.9 from Cobb Hill originally; down to \$2.5 million; look at other work for town hall; total is \$2.7 million of which \$2.5 is bonded; we have funds for difference

Ken - We need to be prepared for discussion we've had past week; people ask for fallback position. Reaction is "all or nothing". No fallback. Well that's right, but we need a better answer.

Mike - My pitch – this is the plan that did the most for all departments; gives them the most at the least cost. We don't really have a fallback.

Jeremy - We did not want to distract from focus.

Gordon - Fallback plan was looked at (separate projects); much more expensive.

Ken - response was how is it saving us money; where and how much? Bond fee I mentioned coming back for more each year.

Jeremy - put in graphics and show the impact all at once versus over time.

Mike - there is substance to that. We need a number from Cobb Hill about what we are saving doing it all together. Nice to know if they can give us that number.

Gordon - they probably can give you inflation cost, etc.

Ken - I think it would be helpful to address each area during the presentation. The committee then discussed the presentation some more.

Bob asked if selectmen were 100% and Mike replied yes, and I'm drafting a document – letter to editor (Concord Monitor) we are going to send supporting project.

Mike - the question 'How do you want to approach this?' Can do it now or later (reacting). We are in front of it. Cost us a lot more later. This is a key piece of presentation.

John - These are capital expenditures. Any long-term maintenance cost?

Kent - probably realize heating cost savings; \$6000 a year for fire station heating if price of oil goes up.

Mike - setting up reserve fund costs just as much as if you go ahead to bond it. We've looked at revenue numbers. \$2.20 (per thousand) first year not true; expenses are below budget and revenue exceeds estimate. Don't know how to present in a short period of time.

Kevin asked about increase in valuation. Mike replied during 1997 though 2002 there was an average increase of 3%. I ran new numbers with valuation numbers and 3% increase. Kevin asked if close to cap? Mike replied close this year; and a new construction was rolled into reports to Department of Revenue Administration. When we do revaluation(s), net results are same tax rate.

Kevin - other questions I've heard concerning industrial land – get more tax base in town.

Mike - I hope the Economic Development Committee would give report addressing this. Interest has been expressed but no one purchased lots.

Committee continued discussion on presentation detail.

Ted said he observed the use of the term “leap of faith”. We don't know what design is. Can we really do it for this and not bluff our way but convince people we have a handle on it?

Jeremy - we used experts; square footage is in middle (of cost for other projects completed by other towns).

Mike - we might be asked if we can make it smaller and yes we can but we'll be adding on in 10 years.

Kevin - we do rely on volunteer selectmen and volunteer fire department. Look at cost of not having that if we were like Concord and Bow; we'd have to hire someone.

John - my problem is selling the heart and the image; obviously doesn't work.

Ted - we need few props; main idea; we are not going to sell at town meeting.

Jeremy - I do think we need enough information to reach people not sure.

Charlie said make presentation 5 to 10 minutes; not 45.

Discussion then ensued on how best to call people and ask them to attend town meeting.

Kent asked Kevin if he could put numbers together on projects on other towns.

Gordon - plus population. John - per capita. Kevin – or based on valuation.

Jeremy - Cathy was going to present numbers; she's a CPA and will work with Kevin.

Kent – and bond impact; Cathy to present in a logical fashion.

Gordon asked when to have information and Kent said plan to have information for the 11th; need to discuss cost.

Cathy - give people numbers to justify cost. Kent - Cobb Hill will break out costs if we waited to build library. Jeremy – something visual for Cathy to present information.

Cathy – figures from other towns; some part of presentation would be devoted to cost; must convince people to show homework done.

John – trying to outline what Cathy is saying and what 10 minute presentation will include; hard sell at end; “folksy” at end.

Gordon – moderator for numbers and during presentation.

John – probably 20 to 25 minutes for questions and answers.

Discussion then ensued on sitting arrangements at town meeting.

Mike asked if information was organized for mailing.

Kent – write letter to put in town mailing. Jeremy – one side for letter; 10 pages.

Gordon asked if any more numbers.

Ken – I’ll do brief letter; 2 or 3 paragraphs; point out tax impact.

Mike – average \$150,000 (valuation); \$1 a day.

Kevin – put \$2.20 per \$1000 rather than \$150,000 valuation.

Mike – just let us know how to present. Be consistent and decide soon. Town portion has gone down not up last few years.

Ted – very appropriate for you to say this rather than us; as a voice of authority/steward.

Mike – we have to look at everyone’s issues. We support it as part of the bigger picture. Trying to put in perspective; give people decent facility to work in.

Jeremy – when does town report come out? Is it on record that selectmen are on board?

Mike – 10 days before March 11. Yes.

John – Do Robert’s Rules of Order allow summary at end?

Ted – You will want people to ask questions but we need chance to summarize.

Ken – I think committee needs to wrap up presentation – start and end.

John – Invite selectmen to speak at end.

Kent – I open presentation; John speaks; then Ken, then Mike.

Mike – Impact of bond hits in 2004. \$200,000 in library reserve. Land doesn't have to be bonded.

Kevin – Make clear option is available for bonding or not bonding land purchase. Also if land purchase price is reasonable.

Kent – Check with other real estate agents. We'll deal with Wayne on these things John to draft opening for letter. Everyone to try to write letter to editor (Concord Monitor).

Meeting next Wednesday, March 5, 2003 at Sam Lake Building.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

7:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 5, 2003 at Sam Lake Building.