

**MEREDITH CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Date: June 1, 2005

Members Present: Peter Brothers, Chairman
Jack Carty, School Board Rep
Frank S. Michel, Selectmen's Rep
Lou Kahn, Alternate Planning Board Representative
Miller Lovett
Tony Candage
Mark Flanders

Members Absent: Bill Bayard, Vice Chairman, Planning Board Representative
Scott Nolan

Staff Present: Carol M. Granfield, Town Manager
John Edgar, Town Planner
Brenda L. Vittner, Director of Administrative Services
Kevin Morrow, Chief of Police
Chuck Palm, Fire Chief

Call to Order: Chairman Brothers called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm, at the Meredith Town Hall Annex. First order of business was the review and acceptance of the minutes from May 25, 2005. Jack Carty moved to accept the minutes as presented; Lou Kahn seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the minutes as presented.

Fire Department Update: Chief Chuck Palm reviewed the updated Project ID Forms with the Committee, which was originally identified in 1998. Chief Palm distributed a memo in reference to the Downtown Fire Station in an effort to update the CIP Committee. The memo indicated that the Department has voted to establish an internal committee to review in detail the recommendations of the Space Needs Committee and to evaluate the recommendations with the goals and needs of the Department. The Downtown Fire Station was originally built in 1954, Chief Palm pointed out that the Town is certainly bigger than it was then. The Fire Department is proposing to purchase an aerial fire truck that can't fit into the downtown station. It will have to be housed temporarily in the Meredith Center Station. Chief Palm indicated that there is an internal committee of volunteer firefighters currently reviewing the Space Needs Committee Report and options for the current location of the Downtown Fire Station. The goal of the committee is to be able to update the Chief with recommendations concerning the Fire Station. The Chief will then be back in the fall to update the CIP Committee with recommendations.

Chief Palm has a number of concerns with the current location of the Downtown Station; one of which is the ability to back the apparatus into the building and the proximity of Route 3. Chief Palm indicated there have been a number of close calls with the public trying to navigate around trucks that are trying to back in. He is investigating the option of installing two sets of working warning lights to stop traffic for entry and exit into the Fire Station. Chairman Brothers asked about the present site, and if there are any changes to the site since the last report. Chief Palm indicated that, as part of the internal committee's review will be a survey of the site and to make recommendations based upon the information that is gathered.

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Chief Palm was asked as to the wisdom and value of adding someone from outside the department to be on the Fire Department Committee. Chief Palm felt that the Space Needs Committee fulfilled the public's initial involvement. Frank Michel spoke about the need for separate facilities, however items were continuously being looked at, and that the internal committee for the Fire Department would bring ideas and issues forward to be dealt with.

Miller Lovett remarked that he had no personal issue with a re-study but strongly felt outside points of view need to be included on the committee. Frank Michel reminded the CIP Committee that the Space Needs Committee has sunset, and he stands with the opinion that the Fire Department should continue to update the ID Forms and present the CIP Committee with recommendations and preliminary building costs. Frank also indicated that as the project goes forward, there would be public interaction at the time. Jack Carty indicated he felt that it was the Fire Departments responsibility to provide the information and dollar amounts, as they will be the group defending the findings.

Fire Department Update: Chief Kevin Morrow was introduced and began his presentation by inquiring of the CIP Committee who had a tour of the current police Station. Miller Lovett expressed the need for those who had not to do so. Chief Morrow indicated that the need for the Police Department has originally been identified in 2002 along with the Fire Department. At Town Meeting, March 2002 the Town approved an Expendable Trust Fund for a Safety Building Complex. At Town Meeting 2004 the need to establish a Space Needs Committee was apparent and the Board of Selectmen appointed a number of local citizens to the Space Needs Committee to evaluate the needs of all the departments and buildings within Meredith. The report as presented by the Space Needs Committee indicated the Police Department was the #1 priority. Chief Morrow pointed out that in updating the Police Department ID Form, that question #3 – “Needs that are not seen...” is a priority for the department. Safety issues for the department, including access to personnel by prisoners, containment of prisoners, safety hazards by not having a sally port, safety issues in the booking area; where a prisoner is handcuffed to the wall but would have access to the rest of the building should he/she escape.

Jack Carty questioned Chief Morrow as whether Police Department Buildings have certain standards to meet. Chief Morrow indicated there were no set standards. Frank Michel indicated that the Chairman of the Space Needs Committee was Steve Stokes, who is an accredited architect and that he felt that building standards were included in the final Space Needs Report.

Chairman Brothers spoke as to understanding the need for the building, however questions as to when, how, how soon, how much and bonding requirements must be addressed. Fast tracking this project will ultimately result in the need to reshuffle other projects that may already be scheduled. Frank Michel indicated that the Selectmen have made no determination at this point and that he would like to see if we could get through another year and discusses the issue at the budget hearings. Frank indicates that the need is there and that the capacity for the CIP Committee to make decisions was self-imposed and has acted as good stewards to date. However, it may be time to review that capacity.

Discussion continued concerning the capacity issue. Mark Flanders interjected that he felt it was premature to be discussing capacity at this point. Mark felt that all department proposals and updates should be laid out for review.

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Jack Carty felt that the PD Building should to be looked at short-term rather than long-term. Jack also stated that the Town's liability should be addressed because if something goes wrong in a sub-standard building the Town would really have a problem.

Discussion continued concerning the proposed site for the building. Chief Morrow indicated that the Town owned property was approximately three acres and looked to be a suitable site. Carol Granfield indicated that the Town had hired a company to do test borings on the site. Along with the borings and an environmental assessment – level 1 will done. DES has already been contacted and has made an initial visit to the site. Carol indicated that an RFP for Architectural/Engineering was issued on May 10, 2005. The RFP closed on May 26, 2005 and had 16 respondents. Mark Flanders asked about the review process for these proposals and that the Town needed to be budget conscious. Frank Michel stated again that the need was not the issue however determining when was critical. Frank was not convinced of bringing this to Town Meeting in 2006. Frank indicated that the CIP is a process and that the Police Department ID form would continue through the process just like any other project. Carol Granfield stated that public safety and security is important. In her capacity as Town Manager, she supports a new Police Department Building because she sees it as critical.

John Edgar summarized the process and what needs to be done going forward. The major studies that have been brought forward and others to be presented may change the CIP self-imposed constraints. Frank Michel spoke about capacity being a continuing question and that the Town needs to pursue prudent risk management and realize that there may be stiff opposition going forward with a new Police Station.

Adjournment: Lou Kahn made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 pm. Mark Flanders All voted in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda L. Vittner

June 2, 2005

Approved: June 15, 2005