

Town of Brookfield  
Facilities Study Committee  
8-16-2012

In attendance: Betsy McIlvaine, Howard Lasser, Bill Leverence, Carol Howe, Dennis DiPinto, Anita Barney

Chairman Betsy McIlvaine reviewed the proposed Final Report of the Committee, and made changes as suggested by committee members. Mr. Lasser suggests adding intermediate steps reflecting the timing of projects. Board of Finance asked for priorities; Mr. Lasser noted that the 2009 report already noted priority projects. The proposals need commitment from community both to maintain current buildings and build new ones. The time the Town approves a project and the time a project is financed are different. The 2009 report did not build in a timeline. Mr. Lasser noted that a timeline need not be linear – projects and constituencies can work in parallel.

Art Colley (Board of Education) told Mr. Lasser the school project will be \$18 million, not \$12. The huge high school bonding debt has hindered the town's ability to do any other projects. The Town needs to plan debt better so the same thing doesn't happen again.

The group agreed the slide for "Maintaining Our Assets" should delete the list of deferred maintenance and use it as printed handout to the Boards of Selectmen and Finance. The \$4.5 million proposed bond includes some Fire Department needs.

Senior Housing – The Committee recognizes that this project was not included in the 2009 report, but is needed.

Huckleberry Hill Elementary School – the project includes reconfiguration of classrooms/grades, the elimination of portable classrooms, and improvements to the building. If any construction or renovation is done, the entire school will need to be brought up to code. The timeline proposed by Mr. Colley shows this project in 2015, with a projected cost of \$18 million, \$12 million of which would come from the town as bonding. Mr. Lasser said 2020, or even 2022, is a more reasonable date.

Mr. Leverence thinks this committee should prioritize the projects. Is this (HHES) more important to the town than any other project – for ten years? Can the school be done in stages so it fits with bonding schedules and allows other projects to be done? Mr. Lasser will talk to Superintendent of Schools Tony Bivona and Art Colley about timing for the project.

Parks & Recreation project – Mr. Lasser recommends adding two years to the timeline, and asked if the library and P&R could share program space and/or meeting space.

Should this committee continue?

Hal Kurfehs told Mrs. McIlvaine that land at Four Corners would be around \$370,000 per acre. Southbury Library sits on about 5 acres, so we would need close to that, including parking. Purchase price for that size parcel could be up to \$1.5 million. One possibility would be a shared-use municipal

parking lot for all buildings in the Town Center District. The Four Corners group needs to talk to developers & do an analysis to show that a library would draw business. Mrs. McIlvaine will talk to First Selectman Bill Davidson about wording. Should the Town ask for donation of land for a library? Mr. Lasser stated we need to recommend a specific next step.

Mr. Lasser also noted the need to sit down with Art Colley and ask about the school project – can it be done in stages? Can it wait? If not, the community will need to commit to higher taxes or do without a renovated school.

It was suggested that the Town look for a piece of property at Four Corners big enough to accommodate both a library and a field house. Mr. DiPinto suggested adding a final slide showing successes – senior center, high school, roads, Kids Kingdom – and next steps/projects like Cadigan Park.

The Library Foundation can't move ahead with fundraising without a location and plans. The property will determine what the library looks like. The report to selectmen should include a slide about the original proposed location on the Municipal Campus. Four Corners could be developed with the library as an anchor in north, and Mystery Acres as the other anchor. State DOT has given permission for a curb cut on Laurel Hill Road, which would provide access to Mystery Acres.

Next steps: Mr. Lasser will talk to Mr. Bivona and Mr. Colley about the school project. Mrs. McIlvaine will talk to Katherine Daniel about Four Corners. This committee will plan a Preliminary Presentation to the Board of Selectmen in September. Mrs. McIlvaine will revise the presentation to incorporate suggestions from this meeting.

This committee will meet again on August 30, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.

Meeting notes submitted by  
Anita Barney