

**Capital Improvement Planning Committee
Town Hall Kitchen
March 19, 2013**

Members Present: Kermit Eaton, Barbara Wilson, Mary Lou Knight, Don Taft, and Peter O'Connell

Members Absent: Heather Lemieux, Nick Thomo, Sheila Frangiamore, Jerry Johnson

Others Present: Bill Simpson, Donald Faugno, Chief Blanchard, David Holdcraft

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 PM.

1. **Minutes:** Mary Lou Knight moved and Barbara Wilson seconded the motion to approve the minutes of February 14, 2013; so voted.
2. **Presentation on the Community Preservation Act:** Bill Simpson distributed handouts describing the history of the CPA, which began in 1990 with about half of the towns in the commonwealth voting to participate. He noted that if Brookfield approves the CPA at a 3% surtax on real estate taxes, it would almost certainly qualify for 100% matching funds (approximately \$75,000 annually) from the state for the foreseeable future since real estate transactions, which provide funding for the CPA, are increasing. If voters approve both the CPA and the Town Hall renovation project, state matching funds would pay almost half of the cost of the Town Hall renovation while also supporting open space/recreation capital projects and making a start on an affordable housing project; the impact on the tax rate would be to increase it by 52 cents per thousand dollars of valuation. Conversely, if voters approve the Town Hall renovation, but do not approve the CPA, voters would have to raise taxes to fund \$1,300,000 for the project.

After Mr. Simpson responded to several questions, on a motion by Peter O'Connell and seconded by Mary Lou Taft, the Committee voted unanimously to urge voters to vote for the CPA at the Annual Town Election on April 30.

3. **Presentation on the Town Hall Renovation Project:** Bill Simpson and Donald Faugno reviewed the plans for the Town Hall renovation which included a senior center on the ground floor, renovations on the main floor and to the second or Auditorium level floor and elevator access to those levels. The cost is estimated to total \$4,500,000 but grants and funds to be raised privately would reduce the cost to \$3,475,000. Tentatively, the Municipal Planning Committee expects to recommend that both the Town Hall renovation and a new Police station be included in one article to be presented to Special Town Meeting voters in the summer of 2013 (if the CPA is approved by voters), contingent on a favorable debt exclusion vote in the fall. On a motion by Peter O'Connell, seconded by Mary Lou Knight, the committee voted unanimously to support the project, contingent on the passage of the CPA, grant and fundraising of \$1,000,000 and approval of a debt exclusion.
4. **Presentation on Proposal to Build a New Police Station:** Don Taft presented information on the need for a new police station, the consideration and rejection of proposals to purchase and renovate the existing station or to purchase another existing structure, and the proposal to build a 6,000 square foot police station on the Prouty Street property. The Committee worked with the Chief to identify specific space needs that drew on previous plans and a design developed by Reinhardt & Associates for the Town of Ashby. The proposed design included fully handicapped accessible offices for the Chief and Sergeant, meeting, interview, booking, holding, and dispatch offices, a salty port, garage for one vehicle, secure evidence locker, storage, changing areas for both male and female officers, and bathrooms for male and female staff and the general public.

The cost estimate of \$6,200,000 includes required seismic testing, administrative costs, furnishings, a contingency reserve, a new septic system serving police, fire, EMS and Town Hall, parking and landscaping. When asked to justify why the Police needed three times as much space as they currently have, Chief Blanchard said that the current offices were woefully substandard and the proposal includes only what is essential to meet the needs for the next 20 years. He noted that the proposed facility is smaller and less expensive to build and operate than the new stations in East and North Brookfield. He reminded

the committee that the Town is paying rent and utilities for the existing station, which would go toward debt service and operating costs in the new station.

The committee discussed whether the proposal could be reduced by 1,000 – 1500 square feet either by eliminating/reducing spaces or by deferring them to a future addition, thereby reducing the cost to perhaps \$2.25 million, but the consensus was that such a reduction would not be significant to the voters and that it would be better to present to voters what was needed. A two-story structure was discussed as being more cost-effective, but such a structure would require a lift or elevator.

Based on the data presented for Ashby and the proposed Brookfield facility, Peter O’Connell moved and Mary Lou Knight seconded the motion to support the proposed 6,000 square foot Police Station contingent on a favorable \$2,600,000 debt exclusion vote. It was noted that the vote left to the discretion of a future building committee to decide on the most cost-effective building design, including the possible reduction in costs by using the Highway Department to do some of the septic and site work. The committee voted unanimously to support the proposal.

5. **Review of Capital Articles for FY14:** Kermit noted that the Highway Department has submitted a new capital article for \$20,000 for fencing around the new salt shed. Because we do not yet have an estimate of revenue for FY14, nor about the cost for the proposed Saw Mill Pond Dam project, the Committee felt unable to make recommendations about funding or not funding specific articles. Kermit, Peter, Mary Lou and Sheila will meet with Betty Benoit and get figures from the Selectmen and Assessors to get a firmer revenue estimate for FY14. We will then estimate revenues and expenses for FY15-FY17.
6. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the CIPC is at 6:30 on April 18, 2013. The Agenda is as follows:
 - Approval of Minutes
 - Review of Revenue and Expense projections
 - Review Municipal Planning Committee proposal for Town Hall and Police Station
 - Review of 2014 Capital Requests:
 - Saw Mill Pond Dam Article
 - Transfer Station Capital Plan and article for FY14
 - Other articles
 - Other Business
 - 2013 Meeting schedule
 - Adjournment
7. **Adjournment:** On a motion by Mary Lou Knight, seconded by Don Taft, the meeting was adjourned at 9:07.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter S. O’Connell, Clerk