New Library Study Committee
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Room 3
October 12, 2022
Regular Meeting Minutes

Members Present: W. Barney, J. Bielot, M. Callahan, E. Dillon, J. Leatherbee, M. Lehmacher, R. Parady
Alternates Present: M. Mazur, C. McCarthy
Also present: M. Gilroy, J. Whitty, J. Leach, P. Griswold, D. Barlow (remote), E. Gilroy (remote)

Call to Order – Chairman Barney called the New Library Study Committee meeting to order at 7:01 PM, and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of September 28, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes – No comments or changes. Minutes accepted as presented.

Old Business –

A. Review of potential new library sites – J. Bielot brought up that town resident Brad Parker mentioned to him that there was a town owned property on Falls Rd that might be considered. He referred to it as the old distillery property on Rt 149. There had been a chicken coop there. The property is 1.64 acres and there is an access way approximately 40ft wide by 100ft long. Concerns raised were further distance from the center of town, lack of visibility, size that may require a 2-story building when a single-story building is preferred for multiple reasons.

   Properties being considered are: Municipal Office Complex (2-sites), Joe Williams Road site, Heritage Park, the Old Town Hall/Grange property (2-sites) and Rathbun/Old Bank property.

   M. Lehmacher mentioned that Parks and Rec has formed a committee to identify a location for a community playground to be constructed and two of the properties that they have identified are the same as what this committee is looking at. Those would be Heritage Park and the old athletic field at the MOC.

   Discussion of the various sites took place. The members agreed that having a location that is central to the town as a whole rather than central to the schools and MOC was the primary consideration and that of all of the sites, the Old Town Hall/Grange property was the preferred property for that reason. Visibility was an additional important consideration. The Old Town Hall/Grange property would have good visibility.

   Chairman Barney conducted a discussion and took a poll of the members to rank the sites. Several members would support either the Old Town Hall/Grange or the Heritage Park properties as their first choice. The final tally indicated that the Old Town Hall/Grange site was the top choice because of it's more central location, followed by Heritage Park and then the Municipal Office Complex. There were no votes for the Joe Williams or Falls Road properties. Both the Old Town Hall/Grange site and Heritage Park have (2) potential sites although both sites in both locations may not support the recommended single story building.

   - Old Town Hall/Grange – 8

- Heritage Park – 4
- Municipal Office Complex – 2

The members of the committee feel strongly that the design of the building, which this committee does not control, needs to be appropriate for the area/community and reflect the architecture of the area and not conflict with nearby structures.

B. Other – The survey results were distributed to the committee members. There were 191 responses. 53.4% East Haddam residents (06423) and 39.3% Moodus residents (06469). Multiple members felt it was unfortunate that the accompanying article was not published by the East Haddam News as several of the comments that respondents made would have been answered by that article. The initial impression was that the results mirrored those of the committee. Chairman Barney reached out to the East Haddam News to get a response as to why the article written by the committee was not published. As of the meeting, he had not received a response.

New Business –

A. Future Special Meeting Dates – Discussion occurred about adding Wednesday October 19 and Wednesday November 2 as meeting dates to continue working on the committees final report with meetings held at the MOC in Meeting Room 3 at 7pm. A motion was made by E. Dillon and seconded by J. Bielot to add special meetings for the purpose of preparing the final report OC for Oct 19th and Nov 2nd. The motion passed 7-0-0.

B. Assignments for Development of Final Report – Chairman Barney discussed including in the report the sites that were looked at and how we identified the final sites that were considered, so that it didn't appear that we had only looked at the final 3 or 4 sites.

Chairman Barney believes the report should have a section that includes the State Library Space Planning Guide Worksheet which was used to determine the minimum building size (among other things) and along with information gathered from members and Maureen Sullivan, the former ALA President, identifies the items that the committee believes the new library should include.

C. Other – C. McCarthy indicated she believes that there should be a single editor of the final report so that the writing of the document would be consistent throughout and that the final report be printed in color. She volunteered to be the single point of contact and editor. A brief discussion occurred regarding her comments.

At the next meeting the committee should plan to do a review of the survey results and continue to work on developing the final report.

Audience of Citizens –

The citizens present at the meeting indicated they agreed with the choice of the Old Town Hall/Grange size as the preferred site.

D Barlow, Chairperson of the Library Trustee Board wanted to provide her ranking of the potential sites. She indicated that Old Town Hall/Grange site as her first choice, MOC site second. She loved the survey,

is looking forward to the article when it is published, and agrees that collaboration with the playground site selection committee should be done.

E Gilroy indicated that she liked the Old Town Hall/Grange site.

The YouTube recording of the meeting is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qsPD6VQMso.

Adjournment -
Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

John Bielot, Secretary