Town of East Haddam
Municipal Office Building Committee
Public Information Meeting
January 12, 2017
7:30 p.m.
DRAFT

1. CALL TO ORDER
The East Haddam Municipal Office Building Committee held a Public Information Meeting on January 12, 2017 at 7:30p.m. at the Grange.

2. ATTENDANCE
Municipal Office Building Committee Members: Craig Mansfield, Edward Blaschik, Chuck Smith, Phil Barlow, Roy Parker, Al Howat, Erik Dill, Tracey Gionta (BOE), and Harvey Thomas (BOF).

Absent Member(s): Daniel Alexander, Tiffany Quinn (P&R), and Sue Link (BOS).

Other(s) First Selectman Emmett Lyman, Paul Wojtowicz, Scott Scholl, and Thomas Romagnoli (Downes Construction), David Stein (Silver Petrucelli), Ron Turner (Facilities Director), Cindy Varricchio (Finance Director), Jared Smith (Fuss & O'Neill), Randy Dill, Linda Zemienieski, Denise Dill, Terri Dickinson, Charlie Dickinson (recorded the meeting with a digital camera), Charlene Rilings, Todd Gelston, Charlotte Gelston, Jim Ventres (Land Use Administrator), Forest Anderson, Beth Dillon, Charlotte White, Karin Blaschik, Alan Blaschik, Carl Stofkow, Kevin Staehley, Joe Szezech, Arthur Merrow, Dick Everett,Laurel White, Patty Stricker, Wendy Vincent, Laurie Alt, Bryan Perry, David Nelson, Deb Denette, Joan Loger, Jeff Pernardo, Michelle Grant, Candy Carl, Juliano Milardo, approximately 8 townspeople and Ruth Ziobron (Recording Secretary).

The following documents were made available as handouts:
-Municipal Office Building Committee Charge
-Potential Capital Improvements, Town Meeting Flyer mailed in June 2015.
-4 page progress update

A power point presentation titled Municipal Office Building Committee Progress Update was presented. It is filed at the Selectman's Office.

3. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Joan Loger (house is next to the proposed parking location) voiced concern with the appearance of the parking lot and entrance from Town Street. Mr. Mansfield replied there would be islands in the parking area to collect rain and Mr. Stein reviewed the site plan pictures. There will be a line of trees planted as a buffer. There are 126 parking spots. The extra overflow parking would be grass (16 spots) and if there is money left in the project, the parking would be reinforced with grass pavers. The DOT and a traffic engineer had reviewed the entrance and site lines. There will be no blinking lights.

Jeff Pernardo questioned mold testing and abatement. Jared Smith replied the sections with water damage were being removed as a part of the project and there was no requirement for large scale mold abatement. The original Hale building was in good condition. Mr. Mansfield stated the committee had made a commitment to town employees to perform mold testing to verify there is no mold in the building.

Responsive to a question by Charlie Dickinson, Mr. Stein replied procedures were being developed to remove items with mold and replace during construction.

Michelle Grant questioned the foundation of the outbuilding and addition onto the Hale building. Mr. Stein replied the outbuilding would be a traditional slab on grade and the Hale portion would have an elevated slab with no basement.

Terri Dickinson asked if there was a plan in place to test the wells. Mr. Mansfield replied it would be a public water system and would need to meet the DPH testing requirements. There were no issues with the wells when they were tested when the building was a school.

Art Merrow questioned what type of heating system would be used. Mr. Stein replied propane. The tanks would be buried near the outbuilding. There will be zoned split units.

Charlene Riling asked if estimated operating costs had been determined. Mr. Mansfield replied if the timeline for completion is met, half of the operating costs would be included in next year's budget as a part of the normal budgeting process. Operating expenses is not the prevue of the Municipal Office Building Committee. Ms. Riling asked if any town employees would be repurposed to work on the project outside of the hired contractors. Mr. Mansfield replied no, the contractors would be a part of the demolition and needed to be licensed to do so. Mr. Stein added the project was mandated by prevailing wage rates, Office of Civil Rights, Labor Laws and liability licensing.

Ms. Zemienieski asked if the committee had considered using solar. Mr. Mansfield replied the committee had discussed solar but because of the budget decided against it. Mr. Mansfield explained it was more expensive to use solar up front with a building project. Zone heating provides an efficient system.

Dick Everett asked about cost overruns/ unforeseen expenses. Mr. Mansfield stated the project would have a guaranteed maximum price. The committee had started the value engineering process to help reduce costs. Mr. Everett voiced concern with the vacated buildings at the East Haddam Village once the project is complete.

Candy Carl stated she was excited to have all town offices located in one place. She thanked the committee for their work on the project. Responsive to a question by Ms. Carl, Mr. Mansfield replied tennis court repair was in the project as an alternate. The town would use a tennis company to redesign/resurface the courts. Ms. Carl asked if the stage would remain. Mr. Mansfield replied yes. Ms. Carl informed the committee that the East Haddam Art League would provide artwork for the building.

Responsive to a question by Juliano Milardo, Mr. Mansfield replied there was currently an IT department for the town and schools. Mark Knittel has contributed to the design plan documents. IT is included in the construction budget and owner's costs. This building would be an attachment to the town's current IT structure. Mr. Mansfield reviewed the security system. There will be a card system for the entrances, exits and main office doors. Mr. Mansfield added the police department entrance would be located near the skate park.

Responsive to a question by Mrs. Dickinson, Mr. Mansfield replied most items had been cleared from the building. The Lions had used the building for their tag sale. The town uses the building for eviction storage and will need to find a new area. The town employees would move the eviction storage items.

Joan Loger asked the type of outside lighting. Mr. Stein replied there would be site lighting which would be pole lighting which shines down. No lighting would shine over the property line. The Planning and Zoning

Commission has approved the photometric lighting plan. There will be building lights and lights in the parking lot and all the fixtures would have an architectural look to them.

Responsive to a question, Mr. Mansfield replied USDA funding and unpredicted spring weather could potentially delay the project however the committee has been proactive with the USDA and has added contingency funding in the budget for unforeseen weather delays.

Kevin Staehly asked about the tax impact of the project. Mrs. Varricchio replied the Board of Finance had established a debt service plan and that there was 2.5 million dollars in reserve. The BOF had decided as old debt service was retired, the remainder would be put aside. Mrs. Varricchio stated as of this current fiscal year there was 3.3 million dollars in the bank to offset the debt service. The goal of the BOF is that there will not be a tax increase for the debt service of the new building. Structuring the funding will maintain the town's high bond rating. The USDA has given the project a fixed interest rate of 3.625% which can never increase. If the USDA reduces their rate, the town would qualify for the lower rate. The BOF is also monitoring going out and getting debt from the bond market. The BOF will do whatever is the most cost effective for the town.

Responsive to a question by Ms. Rilings, Mr. Mansfield replied he did not see value engineering as changing the plan shown this evening. Mr. Mansfield and Mr. Wojtowicz reviewed some of the value engineering items the committee has included in the plan documents. Mr. Mansfield stated he was comfortable with the estimated cost of the project. Mr. Mansfield noted that completely different construction companies, O & G and Gibbs Construction provided similar budgets. Ms. Rilings questioned if there were protections in place once the project is complete. Mr. Wojtowicz replied Downes Construction had been in business for 83 years, they were bonded as well as their contractors and they would be there to resolve any issues.

Charlotte Gelston asked if the committee had to choose the low bidders for the project. Mr. Wojtowicz explained there was no obligation to use the lowest bidder, however good reason for not using the low bidder must be shown. Mrs. Gelston voiced concern with the low bidder using change orders because they under bid. Mr. Wojtowicz stated Downes Construction's responsibility is to make sure nobody is cutting corners, and that the superintendent and project manager will make sure the contractors are building based on the specifications. Mr. Wojtowicz stated on a job like this there would be change orders, but that in the documents, the percentage allowed and markup fees are all stipulated in the contracts. Responsive to a question by Mrs. Gelston, Mr. Stein replied renovations for the project were approximately $269 a square foot verses $450 a square foot for new construction.

Linda Ziemienieski asked for the committee to explain the benefits of the FF & E already received to date. Mr. Mansfield stated there had been a donation of all of the furniture for the project. Demountable walls, cubes for every office, filing cabinets, etc. All furniture has been inventoried. If purchased new it would have cost over $1,000,000. The furniture was an anonymous donation. It was in an office building which had been installed and never used. It cost the project $38,000 to move it out.

Todd Gelston asked about lighting and drainage. Mr. Mansfield stated a privacy fence would be installed to divide the skate park from the adjacent neighbors. Mr. Stein reviewed the site plan map illustrating lighting and drainage. No lighting or drainage will leave the perimeter of the property. Responsive to a question by Mr. Gelston, Mr. Wojtowicz reviewed the contingencies. Mr. Wojtowicz stated normally on a project like this, Downes Construction returns 75% of the contingencies. Responsive to a question by Mr. Gelston, Mr. Stein replied the vault would be pre-fabricated concrete and was State compliant.

Karin Blaschik thanked the committee members for their time and efforts overseeing the project and volunteering their time.

The meeting convened at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted;

Edward C. Blaschik
Secretary