

**TOWN OF SEEKONK**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING COMMITTEE**

**DATE: Wednesday, May 1, 2024**

**TIME: 4:30 p.m.**

**PLACE: Planning Board Meeting Room  
Seekonk Town Hall  
100 Peck Street  
Seekonk, MA 02771**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** John Pozzi, Chair; Michael Gagne Michelle Hines; Kevin Hurst

**Absent:** Edward Monigan

**Attendees:** Shawn Cadime, Town Administrator; Jen Argo Town Financial Director; Nathan Ginsburg, Brewster Thornton Group Architects (BTGA); Marybeth Carney, CGA Project Management (CGA); Dan Tavares, (CGA)

- A. **Call to Order:** Chairman John Pozzi opened the Building Committee meeting 4:30 PM.
- B. **OPM Report:**
  - 1. CGA provided updates on activities held since the previous Building Committee meeting.
  - 2. CGA shared that the contractor prequalification Request for Qualification (RFQ) & Statement of Qualification (SOQ) were posted on April 22, 2024 and made available on May 1, 2024 adding that the contractor's SOQ are due on May 22, 2024. CGA stated that three General Contractors and fourteen sub-contractors requested the documents. The project announcement was published in the local newspaper, COMMBuys and the Central Register. CGA noted that if there is not enough interest in a category, the project team will contact firms they have worked with to initiate interest.
  - 3. The septic test pits and perk test report is still pending.
  - 4. CGA stated that twenty-two additional geotechnical test pits within the building footprint, salt shed and fueling station were completed in two days. The DPW provided 2 crews and the equipment to accomplish this work in the time frame provided. The geotechnical report stated their previous recommendation to remove and replace 5 feet of structural fill was not sufficient and 14 feet of fill was recommended to be removed, which is different from Schematic Design. The subsurface material under the building footprint is unsuitable to support structures. An alternative to removing the soil would be to use geotechnical piers under the buildings in any area that does not have trash. The report recommended removing 18" of unsuitable soils and installing a geogrid under pavement with 12 inches of processed gravel under heavy duty pavement and 8 inches under standard pavement. D. Tavares presented the plan showing test pit locations, with highlights on those that were completed last week. The Design Development cost estimates included removing 14 feet of soil under the building structures in the base contract, with an alternate savings of \$3 million to only remove 5 feet of soil, which is no

longer acceptable. N. Ginsberg noted that geotechnical piers might be more cost effective and worth exploring again, based on these findings.

5. D. Tavares reported that they've been collaborating with BTGA to identify potential value engineering cost savings options, which BTGA will review in more detail in their report. CGA noted that another potential opportunity to reduce costs by minimizing contractor markups would be for the Owner to direct purchase some of the new equipment for contractor installation. A meeting with D. Cabral to discuss this option will be scheduled.
6. CGA provided an example of community outreach ideas used in a neighboring city starting with creating a group to develop a marketing plan with a schedule and strategy to get facts to the residents. The town's website and social media should be continuously updated and include a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), upcoming meetings with various boards and groups. Public forums should be held to familiarize the town with the project and address questions and concerns. Local Access TV would also be beneficial if that platform became available. D. Tavares noted that it is outside of the Building Committee's purview to tell people how to vote, but the committee can present facts to inform the public.
7. S. Cadime presented a preliminary tax impact analysis based on the draft project budget with assistance from J. Argo, Finance Director. Two Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 snapshots, with estimated total project costs and a 4% interest rate were shared. The project with the garage had a total budget of \$39,490,986, a debt payment of \$2,283,768, and with the net retired debt, homeowners would have a \$1,910,900 tax impact. S. Cadime explained that the average home is \$494,807, which would have a tax payment per household of \$222.66, or approximately \$18.55 per month, noting that each year the debt is retired, the town household impact decreases. The project without the garage option had a total budget of \$31,490,986 and would have a debt payment of \$1,821,127, with the retiring debt would cost the residents \$1,448,259, with an impact to the average taxpayer of \$168.23. The annual cost difference between a garage versus no garage option is approximately \$50 per household or \$4.16 per month. S. Cadime noted that if no additional capital projects are added, the town debt would end in 2043.

#### **C. Architects Report:**

1. N. Ginsburg reported that the design team had identified the test pits in a rotated building footprint providing additional separation from the southwest abutters. The cost estimates had presented the worst case scenario removing the full depth of unsuitable soil, with an alternative only removing 5' of material. Per the geotechnical report, the alternative was no longer an option. The geotechnical engineer explained the option of using Rammed Aggregate Piers or Rigid Inclusions, which need to be reviewed with the cost estimators.
2. N. Ginsburg explained that D. Cabral updated the equipment inventory replacement costs. Over the life of the building, the replacement cost of the current equipment would be approximately \$9.8 million, which does not include upkeep and maintenance costs. Removing the garage would have an upfront savings of approximately \$8 million, but long term costs of \$9.8 million to replace the equipment over the span of 50 years. Current maintenance includes repainting, clear coating and repairing rot due to weather exposure. The Building Committee agreed that the lifecycle equipment cost confirmed that a garage was necessary. K. Hurst noted that the onsite barn, which was in a state of disrepair, housed \$200k of equipment.
3. The Value Engineering options proposed by the project team were shared. According to BTGA, the savings would be in the tens of thousands, therefore even utilizing all the reductions, the project would still be over \$30 million. N. Ginsberg reported that the project team's goal is to reduce the overall cost of the project, and a small group meeting would be

beneficial to discuss which items should be chosen. To reduce the cost of the project drastically, removing storage would need to be revisited. J. Pozzi noted removing the garage and loading bays would not make sense to him, he did not want to build a facility that is obsolete before it is finished. The town is salting the roads more than they are plowing, therefore reducing the salt shed would also not make sense.

4. The committee discussed an option of keeping the fueling station and salt shed on their current site. The DPW representatives liked this option, stating the gas tank on the fuel station was recently updated, and the 3-bay garage on that site could continue to be used. The diesel tank was not new and would need to be inspected. This would maintain any 24-hour work on Taunton Avenue and could reduce the overall cost of the project. Cost estimates reported the price of the salt shed is \$952K, the barn is \$500k and the fuel island appeared to be \$875K. Removing the salt shed from the new site could also reduce the pavement width since 18-wheeler deliveries would not be necessary. The committee agreed that the existing building on Taunton Avenue would need to be demolished. S. Cadime would like to explore this option, but expressed concern that the fueling station would be in an unmanned location.
5. The committee discussed whether the DPW could remove and relocate the trash on site, and do the site work as needed. BTGA explained that unsuitable soil could be spread over the site, but the trash removed required being dug out and buried elsewhere. The civil engineer would use the geotechnical report to conduct volume calculations, determining the volume of trash and unsuitable material that needs to be removed. Rotating the building pushes the building further into the landfill. BTGA would request the volumes from the civil engineer to get cost estimates for another meeting.
6. A special election is needed when the project gets approved at the November Town Meeting. D. Tavares explained that the General Contractor bids will be held for 45 days, which is more than the typical 30 days required per Mass General Law. The Board of Selectman must vote to on the language of the warrant article at least 30 days prior to the Ballot Referendum Vote. Therefore, the Town Meeting will be held on 11/18/24, and the ballot vote on 11/25/24.

**D. Review and discuss Board of Selectman Presentation**

1. The proposed Board of Selectman presentation was shared. Slides will include the current site plan with proposed building layout, and the two options shifting the building another 50' or rotating it from the northeast corner 100' away from the neighbor's property. The updated geotechnical investigation locations, the landscape plan explaining the goal to reduce plantings around building and along property lines, and the floor plan would also be included. A slide outlining comparable DPW construction costs and the proposed buildings overlaying the Taunton Avenue site will also be included. S. Cadime will speak to the tax impact analysis on the total project costs. The Building Committee recommended presenting the current design at the Board of Selectman meeting, with the additional option of utilizing the existing site, and direction to further refine and simplify the building design to avoid unnecessary criticism.

**E. Review and discuss the Tax Impact Analysis**

S. Cadime provided an overview of the Tax Impact Analysis during the OPM report.

**F. Review and Approve Meeting Minutes:**

Kevin Hurst made the motion to approve meeting minutes from 4/17/24. The vote was seconded by Michael Gagne. The vote was unanimously approved.

**G. Other topics not reasonable anticipated by the Chairman 48 hours before the meeting:**

1. Chairman Pozzi entertained the motion to approve the Commissioning Agent's Invoice. CGA reported that NV5 is actively engaged, they have attended meetings, conducted document reviews, and issued comments for design and engineering review. The fee for Design Development and Construction Document review is \$8,800, and they will review the Construction Documents when completed. Kevin Hurst made a motion to approve NV5 invoice #383733 in the amount of \$3,344, pending S. Cadime's approval. Michael Gagne seconded motion, the vote was unanimous.

**H. Public Comment:** None.

**I. Schedule Next Meetings:**

May 8, 2024, Joint Building Committee and Board of Selectman Meeting. J. Pozzi stated that he will not be able to attend, however, a quorum was confirmed. A Building Committee meeting is also scheduled for May 15, 2024.

**J. Adjournment:** John Pozzi made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:51 PM, which was seconded by Michelle Hines. Motion passed unanimously.