

TOWN OF ELMORE, VT
Maintenance Facility Informational Meeting #1

Meeting Minutes – prepared by G. Schwartz
Status: Approved

Meeting Date: February 03, 2022

Start Time: 6:00 pm **Adjourn:** 7:30 pm

Meeting Attendees: Caroline DeVore, Robb Wills, Glenn Schwartz, 6 in person attendees and 8 attendees via zoom

The meeting was held at the Elmore United Methodist Church and via zoom. The meeting was recorded and is available at the following link <https://youtu.be/iH4OjiTWhxA>

1. R. Wills began the meeting by presenting the following information;
 - The goal of this meeting is to provide information and answer any questions that the public may have as well as giving the community the opportunity to be informed about this project
 - The article was read as follows;
 - a) Shall the voters authorize the purchase of land and the construction of a new Town Highway Maintenance Facility, in an amount not to exceed \$2.5 million to be financed over a period not to exceed 30 years? Financing to be determined by the Selectboard at a later date.
 - The members of the Select Board were introduced
 - Sharon Fortune was thanked for allowing the Town to use the church for this and upcoming meetings
 - The next informational Meeting for the new Town Highway Maintenance Facility will be held on February 24, 2022 at 6:00pm

2. R. Wills presented the timeline of this project (copy attached)

3. R. Wills reviewed the following driving factors regarding the design and replacement of the existing Town Highway Maintenance Facility
 - Safety of our staff is the most important factor. Although some modifications have been made to the existing structure it needs to be replaced.
 - The design will require a useful life of at least 50 years and should be there for generations to follow.
 - We must learn from mistakes by others. Examples were presented such as the PA Facilities and The Morrisville ice rink. The Select Board wants to build it right the first time. It will only be more expensive to make modifications at a later date.

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4. Peter Garceau from Cross Consulting engineers stated that they evaluated 3 properties and selected the lower Keith property as the most suitable for the new Town Highway Maintenance Facility. He provided a summary of their report (copy attached) and stated that the new design was based on a recent project that they designed for the Town of Montgomery. Mr. Garceau then walked through their conceptual drawings (copy attached) and walked through their estimate (copy attached). G. Schwartz added that the total estimated cost of the project including the purchase of land would be approximately \$2,400,000.00

5. The meeting was then opened to questions and answers
 - 1) Question: Why is the purchase of 18 acres required?
Answer: The Town's zoning bylaws require that due to a 6% lot coverage of nonpervious surfaces we need 18 acres
 - 2) Question: Can we get a Town Variance to this rule?
Answer: It is possible to take it to the DRB but there are 5 key criteria for a variance to be granted. A self-created hardship cannot be used.
 - 3) Question: How much money is in reserve for the purchase of the building Answer: \$100k plus possible ARPA Funding. **Response to this question to be verified by the Select Board.**
 - 4) Question: What is the size of the building?
Answer: 120 feet long x 60 feet wide
 - 5) Question: Is the concrete foundation included in the estimate?
Answer: Mr. Garceau stated that he thought it was included in item #24. **Response to this question to be verified by Cross Consulting Engineers.**
 - 6) Question: Why is a 5 bay garage necessary?
Answer: Due to conversations with the Town of Montgomery that is of similar size and with similar equipment that was their recommendation to have 4 storage bays plus one maintenance bay. It was again noted that it is cheaper to build now as opposed to in the future. The design anticipates future expansion of the highway department due to the growth of the Town. In addition, if all Elmore equipment is to be stored in a heated space, this is the number of bays that would be required.
 - 7) Question: As a follow-up to the previous question. Do we need to store all equipment inside during the winter?
Answer: The current design is preliminary. Final decisions regarding the number of bays will be made during public meeting once the design is complete and pricing is received.
 - 8) Question: Why didn't we select a lot further south on the Keith property that is flatter?
Answer: The current lot was chosen due to several factors including but not limited to the following;

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- The Keith family was not interested in selling the property further south.
- Wind is a major issue the higher you go on the hill

9) Question: What is meant by the term cut?

Answer: The removal of soil from a high spot and placing it in a low area to create a level site.

10) Question: The last date on the Timeline appears to be incorrect

Answer: The 2021 date is incorrect and will be changed to 2022.

11) Question: What will be the potential tax increase?

Answer: Based on a maximum amount of \$2,500,000 at an interest rate of 2.125% the maximum tax impact would be .07 or \$70.00/\$100,000.00 of assessed property value. However, due to the response to Question #5 it is possible that the tax increase could be as low as .04 or \$40.00/\$100,000.00 of assessed property value

12) Question: Where did the money come from to purchase the temporary building/sand shed?

Answer: **Response to this question to be researched by the Select Board.**

13) Question: How much money can the Board approve without a Town vote?

Answer: Use of reserve funds does not require a vote. In addition any loan under 5 years does not require a vote.

14) Question: what is going to happen to the existing site?

Answer: the property will remain the property of the Town. There are no current plans to do anything with the property. Any future Town development will have to consider that the land is shared with the Fire Department and access must be maintained.

15) Question: Is the Price of the land included in the total?

Answer: Yes the price of the 18 acres is included in the \$2,500,000.00

16) Question: What are the implications of a no vote?

Answer: If a no vote is received it will certainly be a setback but will not bring us entirely back to step 1. We currently have a Memorandum of Understanding with a property owner for 18 acres, pending approval by the Town. If a no vote is received, it would terminate this agreement. It was stated that the process in finding a suitable property has lasted over two years, included the evaluation of 28 properties and the contacting of multiple property owners. The end result was one property owner willing to sell. As it turned out this was one of our top 5 choices and meets all of the requirements we were looking for. In addition this construction year would be lost forcing construction into the 2023 construction season. This would have financial impact as we are trying to take advantage of the current interest rate of 2.125%

17) Question: If a no vote is received how long would it be until a possible revote?

Answer: **Response to this question to be researched by the Select Board.**

18) Question: Would the Select Board consider having several choices on the ballot for example Option A, Option B and Option C. Say for a 3 bay or 4 bay garage?

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Answer: The current ballot is how the Select Board decided to proceed. We believe that what is proposed is a worst case scenario. The Board is very concerned about the cost of this project. We encourage anyone to participate in the process by attending our Select Board meetings. We encourage any input and welcome all to attend these meetings. The current estimate includes a 20% contingency. It is not the intent of the Board to spend the maximum amount. We have time for design and will evaluate the cost for each element as the design and bid proposals are received.

[Town Garage Architectural Drawings](#)

[Town Garage Cost Estimates](#)