Middlesex Facilities Improvement Team Meeting 2026-04-01

Key Outcomes

The committee made significant progress on facility planning with three key decisions: **Bear Creek Environmental selected for wetland delineation at $1,559** (pending Select Board approval on April 7th), Carol will be asked to take meeting minutes going forward (budget confirmation needed), and the committee will launch a public survey before the May meeting to gather input on building locations and options .

Decisions Made

- **Wetland Study: Bear Creek Environmental chosen for wetland delineation ($1,559) over Grenier ($4k-6k) and Bowman ($5,800)**, with Mary Neyland donating her time
- **Note-taking: Carol to be contacted for meeting minutes (budgeted for 300 hours)**, with Select Board confirmation of funding requested
- **Zoom Setup: Lauri will create a recurring meeting series with proper committee name**
- **Public Engagement: Modified charrette system adopted with John R and Dave as moderators** to ensure thorough public input
- **Fire Suppression:** Added to non-discretionary requirements list for new garage construction

Working Group Assignments

- **Timber for Transit group: Sam, Kevin, Sandy, Dorinda**
- **Town Hall band-aid group: John, Kevin, Lauri, Larry**
- **Dave: Agenda creation**
- **Larry: FPF posts with links to WNM**
- **Lauri: Post materials to WNM website**

Planning Constraints Identified

Non-discretionary requirements:

- **No zoning restrictions (public facilities allowed in all zones)**
- **Height: 35 ft max; taller under certain conditions with DRB review**

- **No noise ordinances**
- **No hours of operation restrictions (though DRB could impose)**
- **Fire suppression: State permit issue**
- **Wetlands will restrict location**
- **Surveillance system recommended**

Wetland Status: Current DEC maps show wetlands on far side of sand piles, nowhere near existing buildings

Town Office Building Improvements

Immediate Needs (~$2,500):

- **Staff furniture/fixtures reconfiguration between upstairs & downstairs ($2,500)**
- **Lift access: smooth concrete, price automatic door opener**
- **Vault lighting replacement (down to one working light)**
- **Downstairs door locks replacement with keypads (potentially with remote control/Ring)**

Major Projects:

- **6 downstairs windows have rot and need replacing**
- **Building needs painting on all sides (could exceed $30K RFP threshold for all 4 sides)**
- **Front stairs winter access improvement with canopy (historic preservation consultation needed)**
- **Radon: Vault level still slightly high; will quote larger fan and more sensitive detector**

Available Funding: $110K currently in building fund, plus $10K to be added = $120K total

Cost Estimates for Major Moves:

- **Move town hall and attach to firehouse: ~$250K (excludes foundation work)**
- **Lower building in same spot: ~$80K (plus $30-40K foundation removal, interior work = ~$200K total)**
- **New elevator: $240K-$250K**

Town Plan Considerations

If town wants to locate building in a place conflicting with town plan, it's possible to revise the plan, but the process takes 6-12 months and requires Planning Commission drafting and voter approval. **Key impact: Projects conflicting with town plan would lose state grant funding eligibility**. The current plan designates commercial and public facilities in the village based on previous public outreach.

Public Survey Planning

Survey Development: Dave will write questions for public survey and work with Sandy and Susan, incorporating **John R's ideas about considering all options without jumping to conclusions**. Survey will be posted on What's Next Middlesex website with Front Porch Forum links. **Target:** Complete before May meeting.

Topics to Cover:

- Building location preferences
- Options for town garage (tear down/rebuild, renovate/insulate, add to existing, use for storage)
- Town clerk's office options (renovate existing, renovate firehouse, sell existing building)
- Old fire station utilization or demolition

Energy Modeling Progress

Enrique Bueno completed rough energy modeling for town garage using building measurements and insulation data. Next step: analyze software with actual propane and electricity usage data from Brenda to explore energy savings potential from building improvements. **Note:** Last year's propane spike was anomaly due to heater failures (replaced fall 2024).

Field Trip Suggestions

Committee may visit East Montpelier and Elmore town garages to observe best practices. East Montpelier nearing ribbon cutting; Elmore has ~1-year-old 4-bay facility.

Pending Confirmation

- Select Board approval for wetland delineation funding (April 7th agenda)
- Carol's availability and budget authorization for meeting minutes
- Historic preservation guidance on front stairs canopy
- Automatic door opener pricing for lift
- Window replacement estimates (6 downstairs windows)
- Building painting estimates (all 4 sides)
- Larger radon fan and sensitive detector pricing
- Vault lighting replacement estimate

Action Items

- **Larry:** Add two agenda items for Select Board April 7th meeting (wetland funding, Carol's hours); post Front Porch Forum updates with WNM links

- **Lauri:** Create recurring Zoom series; post agendas & minutes to WNM website
- **Dave:** Send thank you note to Mary Kneeland if wetland study approved
- **Kevin:** Present wetland estimates to Select Board; obtain pricing for automatic door opener, window replacements, building painting, radon improvements, vault lighting
- **Dave, Sandy, Susan:** Develop public survey questions incorporating John R's feedback
- **Sandy:** Research historic preservation contact for stairs canopy consultation
- **Dorinda:** Maintain spreadsheet of all project costs

Other Notes

- **CO detectors present downstairs**
- **Albie to do wiring for outlets and new light fixtures in vault**
- **Stone Environmental may have done previous wetland analysis, but wetlands change over time so new study needed**