



SDEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY STUDY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

JULY 25, 2022

7:00 PM

ACTON TOWN HALL, ROOM 204
472 MAIN STREET

PRESENT: Dean Charter, Fred Faherty, Ann Chang, Robert Puffer, Mark Hald, Roland Bourdon

This meeting was held in conjunction with the regularly scheduled Select Board meeting.

Mr. Charter called the meeting to order at 7:00, further noting a quorum of members of the DPW Facility Study Committee in attendance and called that posted meeting to order.

Update on the Department of Public Works Feasibility Study

Mr. Charter introduced Engineer John Comeau from Weston & Sampson who made a presentation of the feasibility study and an update for the Department of Public Works facility project that is included in the Select Board's Docushare folder packet for the meeting. The current facility is over 50 years old, and the population has increased since 1970, and the current building does not meet current building codes and is too small for its current operation and storage. Mr. Comeau proceeded to show the current conditions of the Public Works building. They looked at a preferred alternate scheme of a new facility keeping the one-hundred-foot buffer and vegetative storage to shield the neighborhood, moving the fuel island closer to Forest Road, keeping the existing salt shed, and having a south facing orientation for solar roof panels and in keeping with the Sustainability goals of the town, install electric vehicle charging stations and other amenities including wastewater management. The estimated constructed cost is approximately \$27 million, with a total project cost of \$32 million to \$34 million. Next steps would be if the town would want to two-phase approach to appropriate funds for additional design services, develop design documents for 60% completion, and Town Meeting approval of final design and construction. Mr. Snyder-Grant questioned if the current number of vehicles and equipment is required – Mr. Mangiaratti noted that the vehicles are needed especially in winter months for plowing and during the other seasonal periods for day-to-day

operations but could look into future needs, what the window is towards the Town taking ownership of the solar field on the former town landfill, Mr. Charter noted the roof is about 15 years old, and unsure of the current age of the landfill solar array but there is a purchase option in the agreement for future ownership, questioned if there was another location considered for the facility, Mr. Comeau noted the biggest challenge is equipment/vehicle maintenance and storage.

Mr. Martin questioned if the transfer station was included in the study – both are being viewed as separate projects, questioned heating the garage at sixty degrees, and noted that an assessment be made to accommodate the increasing electric fleet. Mr. Charter noted that the Transfer Station has so many moving parts that the Committee decided to focus solely on the DPW facility. Ms. Nagireddy asked if the sustainability measures mentioned in the presentation are the only ones that will be considered in the project moving forward – the study committee mentioned that they will continue working with different committees and town staff to ensure the environmental sustainability of their project.

Roland Bourdon, DPWFSC - concerned about a fully electrical operating system infrastructure and recommended installing battery backup in case of power failure.

Ann Chang, DPWFSC – thought the life expectancy for the solar array was 20 years and the efficiency degraded by a percentage for each year of use and would like to see future solar installations last 50 years. Asked for Select Board to connect the DPW group with the Green Advisory Board

Nijan Datar – questioned the reliability and cost-effectiveness of geothermal heating, concerned about the life span and improper disposal of solar panels.

Scott Smyers, Central Street – questioned about recycling of the toxic batteries from replacing vehicles and materials in the transfer station or to where it would be transported, concerned about the invasive plants on the property.

Alissa Nicol, School Street – same concern regarding the invasive plants on the property, heating the facility to sixty degrees, questioned if the committee has considered radiant heating with the concrete flooring.

Mr. Snyder-Grant was interested in the Finance Committee's and Staff's analysis of how the borrowing will affect other plans or projects in the Capital Plan for FY24 and FY25, and noted that battery backup can store up energy if needed for use when electricity goes out.

Mr. Martin noted that most lithium batteries are recycled

Ann Chang, suggests relocation of the fuel tanks as soon as possible, as their warranty is close to expiration and their location is in the middle of the current property.

At this point, the DPW Facility Study Committee meeting adjourned.

Materials Referred to: Acton DPW Feasibility Study presentation, located in the Select Board's July 25 meeting packet

