

PART 1

The Maynard Public Safety Building Committee met for the first time on March 13, 2007. We are volunteers who were appointed by the Town Selectmen, and include people with experience in architecture, emergency dispatch, corrections, and information technology. The committee also includes representatives from both the Police and Fire Departments. Our primary task is to determine the best way to provide the Town of Maynard with a police facility that is safe, functional and economical. Our second task is to identify what should be done with the existing Public Safety Building, where the Fire Department will remain, which has served the Town since 1955, and is the only Town building that has not been replaced or renovated. Current conditions throughout the building are cramped, outdated and in disrepair.

Police Department Facilities

Within the police side of the existing building the layout of the main floor forces officers into dangerous and risky practices. They have to escort offenders from a vehicle, up the dilapidated front steps, through a public area, and into the unsecured booking area, where they are within arm's reach of the dispatcher and all of the dispatch and 911 equipment. There is no private area for interviews, counseling or investigations. Evidence storage is scattered around the building wherever space can be found, all of which is difficult to control and secure. The locker spaces are cramped, the kitchen is inadequate, and there is no break room or squad room. Nothing in the building is handicap accessible, including the main public entrance. Parking is extremely limited even for official vehicles.

A proposed new 10,000 s.f. Police Headquarters will relocate the police department from the wholly inadequate existing building, to a new functional, safe, secure, and economical facility, created by renovating and adding to the vacant old library facility attached to the Town Hall. The new location will be an efficient and economical reuse of the vacated old library space. This option results in an approximate 30 percent savings in construction costs over those of a new building.

The new police facility has been designed to address and surpass the inadequacies of the existing facility. It will meet all current public safety and law enforcement standards. It will meet the current and future operational needs of the police department, anticipating use for the next 30 years, with unfinished space above a new garage, to accommodate future needs beyond this period without extensive new construction. It is a durable, energy efficient, no frills solution. The project costs for the proposed police headquarters totals \$3,860,000 (complete, including construction, sitework, furnishings, equipment, fees and contingency).

The existing police and fire headquarters building together contain a long list of architectural, mechanical, electrical and plumbing deficiencies that have been long overdue for repair or replacement. And because the existing building will continue to be occupied by the Fire Department, our second task is to help plan for how that building could be renovated for their current and future use. Next week in the Beacon we will outline our findings and proposed plans for the existing Public Safety Building as they pertain to the Fire Department.

Our committee's unanimous opinion is to go forward with the currently proposed Police Headquarters as their most economical and immediate solution. We have a unique opportunity now to reuse the vacated library building for the Police Headquarters, and we believe it prudent to do so.

PART 2

Fire Department Facilities

Previously we outlined the need for a new Police Headquarters, proposed to be created by renovating and adding to the vacant old library facility attached to the Town Hall. Here we would like to outline our findings and proposed plans for the existing Public Safety Building as they pertain to the Fire Department.

On March 28, 2007, C.A. Crowley Engineering, Inc. made a site visit to the existing Public Safety Building, and subsequently submitted a list of mechanical, electrical and plumbing deficiencies in the building. Just some of those deficiencies include:

- The existing 52 year old boiler needs to be replaced immediately to avoid a complete failure in the very near future
- Degraded pipes encased in asbestos insulation
- The boiler room houses the turnout gear washing machine in violation of clearance requirements.
- There is no provision for outdoor air supply, as required by Codes.
- Heating Distribution - The steam distribution is old and in need of renovation. The system does not perform adequately, zoning is poor and the system is terribly inefficient. Other typical problems include failed traps, poor zoning, inoperative radiators, hot/cold spots, etc.
- Electric Service - The existing service is wholly inadequate for the building. For instance, in the fire department kitchen, various electrical fixtures must be unplugged or shut off to use other fixtures. The use of multiple through-wall air conditioning units makes the inadequate electrical situation worse.
- Vehicle Bays - There is no purge system or CO/Nox monitoring, as required by Massachusetts Building Codes.
- Air Pressurization - There are no means for mechanical ventilation in the building. This means that any fumes that are in the Vehicle Bays will migrate upstairs to the occupied areas. This is an unhealthy situation.
- Exhaust - There is no mechanical exhaust in the building with regard to the kitchen, toilet rooms, locker rooms, shower areas, laundry areas and janitor's closet. This is a violation under the current code requirements.
- Energy Code - The existing system does not meet any of the requirements of the Massachusetts Energy Code.
- Plumbing pipes are in such poor condition that when worked on they often fall apart. One toilet is not functioning for this reason.

The engineers went on to note that, "All of the items listed above are important. Prioritization of the items is not possible. All of the items listed require attention. A phased 3-5-8 year plan is not plausible. The work is either completed in its entirety, or it is not started [at all]." To remedy these deficiencies alone has been estimated at \$700,000. Another \$300,000 or more would be required to make architectural changes that would include handicap access, structural modifications, fire rating improvements, hazardous material abatement, and energy efficiency improvements. None of these estimates take into account the costs and logistics to temporarily relocate, for several months or more, the firefighters, their equipment, and fire dispatch.

Because of the extensive list of deficiencies the future status of the remainder of the existing Public Safety Building has turned out to be more complex than our committee had anticipated. The original plan was to renovate the existing building as required to put it in good working order and to bring it into compliance with modern codes and safety facility standards, keeping in mind that in 1955 there were no accommodations made for EMT's, ambulances, large water pumping and ladder trucks, and handicap accessibility, as are now required. In 1955 the fire department responded to 177 calls. In 2005 there were 773 Fire calls and 873 EMS calls.

It is not impossible to do all of the above, but one of our self-imposed tasks has been to take the long view. If the Fire Department stays in its present location there will be no room for expansion, as the site is already beyond its maximum capacity. Six vehicles are already squeezed bumper to bumper and door to door, with little room to service, clean or maintain them. Any future new ladder truck would need to be custom built to fit in the smaller than normal bays and to fit through the very low doors. There is already not enough on site parking for the current firefighters. As well there is no room for on site training with apparatus. All such training must be done off site. This is not a facility that can accommodate any future growth in personnel, equipment or training. Therefore we are hesitant to recommend spending another \$1 million or more to renovate a building that would still be inadequate, and might potentially be vacated. Our committee will be working over the next several months to identify any and all options available to the Town.

So why have we not proposed a new co-located Police and Fire Department in a new facility? For one, we have a unique opportunity now to reuse the vacated library building for the Police Headquarters. That building cannot

accommodate both the Police and Fire Departments. Each year we put off this current plan adds a roughly 6% escalation increase to the cost. Based on other recently constructed co-located facilities in other towns, we could expect a cost of around \$13 million to \$14 million in 2007 dollars, with that 6% in escalation added for every year we wait. There is currently no site available or identified for such a large facility. If such a facility were proposed it would take at least 5 years or more to complete the requisite studies and identify a site, if there were even a possible site available. And then there would be the even larger funding request, which would again have to be approved by the voters.

Before receiving the engineering report we had thought we would propose to renovate the existing Public Safety Building, or to find a new location and funding for a new Fire Station in another 5 years or so. But the report found such extremely inadequate and dysfunctional conditions in the existing building that we may have to propose something on a more compressed timetable. At the very least, replacement of the existing 52 year old Public Safety Building boiler needs to be done to avoid the very real risk of a complete failure in the very near future. The estimate for this work is \$200,000.

At Town Meeting next month the Town will seek to pass an article for the construction of the new Police Headquarters, the replacement of the existing Public Safety Building boiler, and several other of the Town's facility-related needs, all requiring funding outside of the budget. If the article passes it will then require a debt exclusion override vote on June 12. Discussion of the future Fire Department Facilities will occur at a later date. Please come to Town Meeting to make your voice heard on these very important Town issues, on Monday, May 21, 2007, at 7:00pm, at the Fowler Middle School Auditorium.

The Maynard Public Safety Building Committee will be making more detailed information available through various sources between now and the Town Meeting. Please visit our newly created web site where you can find more information: <http://www.maynardpublicsafety.com> .

Maynard Public Safety Building Committee:

Michael R. Smith, Chair

Ellen Duggan, Secretary

Dany Pelletier

James Matesanz

Pat Natoili

Paul Flynn

Christina Dearstine

Chief James Corcoran (Maynard Police Dept)

Tom Neufell Police (Maynard Police Dept)

Chief Steve Kulik (Maynard Fire Dept)

Jeff Boudreau (Maynard Fire Dept)