



The Town of Franklin

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Town of Franklin Board Meeting

September 27, 2006 - 7:00 pm

The Town Board of the Town of Franklin held a duly noticed Special Board meeting on Wednesday, September 27, at 7:00 pm at the Vermontville Town Hall.

Board members present:

Supervisor Mary Ellen Keith
Councilman Gene Goff
Councilperson Janet Ordway
Councilman Tim Goff
Councilman Walt Kretser

Others present:

Yellow Wood Associates: Shanna Ratner, Jeff Forward, Ann Holland and Melissa Levy
Building Committee: Frank Karl, Jean Baltzly, Bob Holland, Roger Symonds and Dave Dekkers
Adk. No. Country Association: Terry Martin

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited; the Town Clerk called the roll, announced the full Board was present and introduced everyone present.

Supervisor Keith noted that prior to the start of the meeting, several attendees had gathered informally at the Kate Mountain Recreation Park to evaluate the grounds. She introduced Shanna Ratner, Principal of Yellow Wood Associates.

PROGRESS REPORT BY YELLOW WOOD ASSOCIATES

Ms. Ratner thanked the Town Board and employees of the Town for all their input and explained that Yellow Wood had performed significant research. Yellow Wood Associates offers a "Green Community Technologies"

approach to help communities find solutions to infrastructure management that are better economically, environmentally and socially over the long term. Yellow Wood helps small rural communities with technology to apply to infrastructure. Their research is based on linking community needs with proven state-of-the-art approaches with community goals in mind. A slide presentation was prepared. Their experience proves that many technologies are being developed, i.e., building materials, lighting, etc., many of which are highly cost effective and environmentally and socially better than materials used at present. Yellow Wood is committed to small rural communities and assists towns before construction to understand what alternatives are. The Town of Franklin needs to look at the entire picture, so Yellow Wood is in process of performing a "life cycle cost analysis" which will demonstrate how improvements can be phased in over several years. She stated the purpose of the meeting was to report on Yellow Wood's progress in evaluating infrastructure needs of the Town and that they needed the Town to decide what solutions they wanted Yellow Wood to pursue.

- YW performed indoor space and use analysis at Vermontville Town Hall, Town Garage and at Merrillville Town Hall. They looked in detail at all existing buildings and the possible new structure at the Rec Park.
- Regarding energy efficiency, they spoke with officials at NYSEERDA, as well as experts regarding our historic structures, with NYSDEC about the oil/water separation situation at the Garage, with State Archives officials concerning records and with the Unified Court System about Justice Court requirements.
- They have identified preliminary funding sources.

Jeff Forward, the energy expert for Yellow Wood, explained "Life Cycle Costing" whereby new types of construction materials, which may or may not have a higher purchase price, would cost less in the long run to maintain and operate. Taking the long view is important. An example of this would be purchasing a \$10 energy-saving light bulb versus a regular bulb; the regular light bulb would have to be replaced in a few months and the energy-saving bulb would last years. Another example is a 50-year life metal roof versus a 20-year asphalt shingle roof. He urged the Town to compare materials alternatives over the life span of the building or item, including disposal costs. Because municipalities are organizations with long lives (as opposed to corporations with shorter ones) long term borrowing at low interest is available. He explained that life cycle costing looks at all factors.

Melissa Levy presented examples of successful municipal structures in the Northeast and Midwest reconfigured or newly built which utilize "green technology". These structures made use of "blue jean cotton" insulation, larger windows for additional lighting, steel roofs, cardboard siding, and local rough-cut lumber. Some were built using donated recycled materials and volunteer labor.

Mr. Forward emphasized the need to consider materials and design. He reported on his meeting with an official of NYSEERDA who performed an energy audit of the Vermontville Town Hall and the Garage. This report will be included in Yellow Wood's final report. With respect to the possible new structure at the Rec Park, NYSEERDA has grant funds available for new construction. A program named "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design ("LEED") uses a "green building" rating system, which is nationally accepted for design, construction and operation of high performance "green buildings". The rating system is relevant to sustainable site development, energy efficiency, indoor environmental quality, water savings and materials selection. He noted that NYSEERDA is inexperienced with municipalities so YW is "experimenting" with them in this instance. Yellow Wood can present options to help design the new facility to meet NYSEERDA design incentives and standards, acting as liaison between the Town and NYSEERDA, in that YW can help the Town to ask the right questions of NYSEERDA. This topic will be revisited at the meeting in December.

- Coun. Walt Kretser asked if the "green" options materials are more expensive, and Jeff Forward replied in the affirmative, adding sometimes the cost is less, i.e., using local rough cut lumber instead of lumber transported from out of state.
- Bob Hammond (TOF Building Committee) stated they are generally more expensive. Jeff Forward indicated for school construction NYSEERDA focuses on the design process and materials. Coun. Kretser asked in the event the Town used green technology would more grant funding be available to it. Both Ms. Ratner and Mr. Forward responded in the affirmative.
- Ms. Ratner stated capital costs would be more but significantly lower operating costs would be experienced.
- Bob Hammond inquired if construction costs are increased by 2%, how much lower will operating costs be? He asked if Yellow Wood could estimate the operating costs, and Mr. Forward indicated YW would list options and added it would be difficult to give hard figures about operating costs. Shanna Ratner stated if you respond, next step will be to engage engineers with knowledge of and experience with green technology. She indicated YW could not specify but would recommend certain experts. It would be important for taxpayers to know.
- Jean Baltzly asked if the Town opts not to use the recommended green materials, would the outcome be the same, and Shanna replied yes.
- Frank Karl said the Building Committee's responsibility was for the Kate Mountain project, not all the buildings. Shanna replied that YW's mandate covers entire infrastructure and agreed the survey encompasses more than the mandate for the Building Committee. Mr. Karl expressed concern for the taxpayers if the Town proceeds to do all at the same time. Ms. Ratner suggested the work could be phased in.

For YW's first set of questions to set priorities for their research, Jeff Forward asked if the Town Board wanted to pursue plumbing fixtures only at the Rec Park or proceed with the entire structure. The Town Board

determined it wanted to proceed with the new construction as recommended by the Town's Building Committee.

Ms. Ratner then set forth immediate priorities:

TOWN GARAGE

a. Oil/Water Separation. This must be dealt with now. NYSDEC has mandated this be accomplished.

(1) Coun. G. Goff stated that no one has a water separator that really works well.

(2) Ms. Ratner agreed it was a difficult situation, and offered these alternatives:

1. Purchase and install an oil/water separator. The Town of Brighton spent \$10,000 on its separator. There are problems with this solution in that it will require reconfiguring the site and reporting to DEC.
2. The "green approach" would be to establish a "dry shop" for the Garage operation. This would entail collecting water and pumping it into a holding tank. This would eliminate the need to report to the DEC. Running a dry shop means sealing the cement floor, eliminating toxic substances from the Garage and using steam to clean vehicles in a separate wash/steam bay. DEC is open to the dry shop option which is common in some New England communities and in California.

(3) Roger Symonds commented that if the Town spends \$160,000 for a new vehicle, taxpayers are entitled to proper maintenance of the truck, which will drag in salt and sand. The trucks must be washed regularly.

(4) Ms. Ratner suggested washing the vehicles at another facility which has an oil/water separator. The green approach will require reconfiguring the Garage and some training.

The Board concurred it would be wise to look into the "dry shop" method. Coun. Kretser asked how much training would be required.

b. Heating Solutions and Garage Reconfiguration. This work should be done immediately.

(1) Reconfiguration of Garage. Yellow Wood agrees with the suggested reconfiguration by Sutherland Engineering and indicated this should be addressed as soon as possible.

1. Jeff Forward stated Yellow Wood will investigate insulation issues and provide a general estimate.

(2) Alternate Heating Suggestions Currently Garage uses propane heaters mounted on walls. If the Garage doors are open, all heat is lost and the Garage is difficult to work in. Yellow Wood urged the Town to consider:

1. Radiant floor heating. As long as reconfiguration of the Garage must be done, consider sealing floor and install radiant heat floor.
2. Use boiler instead of heater. Alternative fuels include propane, oil using bio-diesel or waste oil from vehicles for a portion of the heat.
3. Consider a wood boiler. Price for cordwood is \$75/cord split and delivered.
 1. Jean Baltzly stated wood is environmentally friendly
 2. Jeff Forward noted newest technology boilers burn very hot and can boil water to be stored in a tank. This is renewable, locally available and carbon dioxide-neutral. Wood can be stoked in the morning and again at the end of the day. The Garage could use propane heaters as a back-up.
4. Combination oil and wood burner. Although not a conventional technology, this could be an option.
 1. Coun. Tim Goff asked which individual would stoke the wood boiler and how much time would be required daily.
 2. Supv. Keith noted that the hourly wage rate for an MEO is high, and did not think employees should be paid for stoking a furnace instead of working on the roads.
 3. Coun. Gene Goff commented that the salt shed is caving in and expressed concern that the structure might be condemned. The structure needs to be repaired and he has located an individual who will examine and correct it.

The Town Board determined not to pursue the wood boiler option. It also determined it needed additional information and recommendations from Yellow Wood before deciding

which.

MERRILLSVILLE TOWN HALL

1. Metal Roof. This will eventually require a new metal roof, although it is not an immediate priority.
2. Records Storage. This space is inadequate for the Town's records storage - it is not secure and not fireproof.

VERMONTVILLE TOWN HALL

PROBLEMS:

1. Water seepage. Water seeps into building basement from exterior. This must be remedied as soon as possible as it prevents basement from being utilized, is not healthy for building occupants and not good for building foundation, walls, etc. in general.
2. Heating System. An old system. Ducts take up space. Suggest changing to boiler and use basement space for records storage and custodian office.
3. Handicapped Accessibility. Both bathrooms are not built to meet handicapped standards, as they must have 5 square feet so a wheelchair can turn around.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

1. Reconfiguration - Old additions create water issues, so remove old addition and construct new one which would be shorter and match roofline. Install one large, unisex, handicapped-accessible bathroom.
2. Water Seepage - Building perimeter drainage must be developed. Perhaps the Highway Dept. could ditch the area.
3. Historic Preservation Issues - Yellow Wood spoke with NYS Historic Preservation office. They concur with replacing additions to conform to existing gable roofline.
4. Records Storage - YW met with State Archives official. Up to \$75,000 in grant funds are available for records storage area renovation. It is possible grant funds can be used to remove ductwork. YW estimates \$35,000 to renovate basement for records storage.

Supervisor Keith stated Board should consider humidity factors, fire, security and accessibility. She requested Yellow Wood to advise what needs to be done regarding ditching and said she would speak to the Highway Superintendent about the issue once she hears from YW.

1. Shanna Ratner indicated YW would recommend an expert.

The Board determined more investigation and information needs to be done concerning potential funding grants before it determined a priority for the Vermontville Town Hall.

KATE MOUNTAIN RECREATION PARK - PROPOSED STRUCTURE

1. Lack of Potable Water. Must dig new well.
2. Site Assessment. This should be done before construction plans are finalized.
3. Priority. Does the Town wish to proceed with the new structure as recommended by the Building Committee? Does the Town Board wish to phase in the construction of the structure?

The Town Board determined the proposed structure at Kate Mountain is a priority. The Board wishes to proceed with the structure as recommended by the Building Committee using green technology. The Board does not wish to phase in construction.

Coun. Walt Kretser stated the Board would like to situate the new structure to the left of the pavilion and eliminate the softball field. The structure would be closer to water supply, and the electricity is located there. The skating shack can be torn down.

FINANCING CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION PROJECTS

A discussion ensued concerning the methods of financing the projects.

1. Roger Symonds asked if the Town would have to bond for renovation of the Vermontville Town Hall at the same time as bonding for construction of the Kate Mountain facility.
2. Supv. Keith indicated the NYS Comptrollers Office will be consulted, and the Town now has retained Trespasz & Marquardt of Syracuse as bond counsel.
3. Jeff Forward noted municipalities have saved money by using volunteer labor and suggested interior painting as a good volunteer activity.
4. Shanna Ratner commented that the search for funding sources is going well.

YELLOW WOOD PRIORITIES SUMMATION

1. Vermontville Town Hall water seepage issues must be resolved.
2. The Garage is a priority.
 - a. The Town must choose a method for oil/water separation
 - b. The Town must decide on insulation
 - c. The Town must determine which method of heating it wants
 - d. This would be a good opportunity to test the "dry shop" method and set a standard for the entire Northeast.
3. Kate Mountain must have a site assessment, including reports on soil and water
4. Must improve storage of records presently located at Merrillsville Town Hall.

COMMENTS

1. Frank Karl raised an objection to the renovation of the Vermontville Town Hall basement. The Building Committee had already designed a space for storage of records at the Kate Mountain site. He stated it would cost more than \$35,000 to renovate the basement.
2. Ann Holland replied the \$35,000 estimate was just for records storage. Other sources of funding could be located for the cost of grading and ditching the ground and for sealing and dehumidifying the basement.
3. The Town Clerk stated it did not make sense to store records, which are her responsibility, at a site away from her location which requires driving.
4. Bob Hammond stated the public must understand what the liabilities are, and the Town Board must determine its priorities and develop cost estimates. He expressed concern over increased taxes.
5. David Dekkers emphasized the need for a State-mandated courtroom and for adequate office space for Town officials.
6. Supervisor Keith stated Town officials will relocate to the Kate Mountain structure while the Vermontville Town Hall is under renovation.
7. Terry Martino endorsed the Town Board's decision to contract with Yellow Wood.
8. Jean Baltzly opined that the Yellow Wood investigation was of tremendous help and asked for cost estimates. She said the Board made a good decision in going with Yellow Wood.
9. Frank Karl stated the Board needed a good description of plans with cost estimates to present to the taxpayers. He suggested it was wise to do as much groundwork as possible and added that it was time to move on this.
10. Supervisor Keith commented that the Building Committee was asked to attend this special meeting because the Board was impressed with all their hard work and because they had admiration for the intelligence of committee members. She asked them to stay involved.
11. Ann Holland stated the Building Committee members represent integrity and have the respect of the community.
12. Coun. Walt Kretser thanked Yellow Wood Associates for their hard work and complimented them on their holistic approach to infrastructure problems. He said he looked forward to hearing about funding options.

13. Coun. Tim Goff noted the community is growing and expressed the need to push forward with all the projects. He stated everyone involved did a very good job.
14. Coun. Janet Ordway stated the problems with the Town's infrastructure have gone on too long and emphasized the need to get things done. The projects need as much support as possible from everyone.
15. Roger Symonds commented that not everything needs to be done at once. It would be too costly.

FINAL REPORT

1. Shanna Ratner stated Yellow Wood's final report would reflect decisions made by the Board and provide rough estimates of cost per phase by square foot (perhaps \$615/sf for new construction; renovation approximately half that). She also indicated YW would engage an architect (at YW's expense) to draw preliminary sketches.
2. Coun. Walt Kretser asked that the Board learn the final report's contents first

It was agreed that the final report will be sent to the Board prior to a conference call scheduled for Wednesday, November 8, 2006, and the final report will be presented at a special board meeting on Wednesday, December 6, 2006.

Supervisor Keith thanked Yellow Wood Associates and the Building Committee for their diligence and hard work.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, the meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm

(M.Keith-T.Goff m/s/p) ALL AYE.

Respectfully submitted, Sandra J. Oliver, Town Clerk

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