

**BYRAM TOWNSHIP SPECIAL JOINT TOWNSHIP COUNCIL/BUILDING SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING - MARCH 14, 2019**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Alex Rubenstein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

Adequate notice of this meeting has been made in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, NJSA 10:4-6.

ATTENDANCE:

Town Council Members: Mayor Rubenstein, Councilman Roseff and Councilman Olson

Also present: Township Manager Joe Sabatini and Municipal Clerk Doris Flynn

Building Subcommittee Members present: John Morytko, Jim Reinhold, Carlos Luaces, Cris Franco, Mike Pellek, Tony Chelpaty, Eric Serrilli, Scott Yappen, David Romano, Donald Robbins

The Nader Group - Wassim Nader, Daniel Grover, Paul Couvrette, Karen Wenschhof - Certified Interior Designer - partner

Alex opened the meeting and summarized what has taken place over the past few weeks. The Nader Group presented their analysis of the municipal building options to the Council and building subcommittee on February 26. The Committee directed the architects to price out the option utilizing the open space in the Byram Intermediate School and rehabbing or building a new police station on the municipal site. The subcommittee met on March 4 to collect additional comments, which were forwarded to The Nader Group to be reviewed and incorporated in an amended report that is being presented tonight.

Wassim Nader thought the comments sent by the Committee were very good, and they addressed them in the update. They also contacted the Township engineer with regard to environmental issues they would be dealing with regarding the open space options. His comments solidified what we had determined.

The two options added are:

- Rehabbing open space and rehabbing the mortar building for the police dept. is labeled 3A-\$5.4 M
- Rehabbing open space and building a new building for the police dept. is labeled 3B - \$5.6 M

Alex asked why The Nader Group to run through the hard costs of the open space options to explain the solutions that chose. For example, Alex asked why did they go with spray foam installation under roof vs. insulating above the ceiling tiles. Wassim stated that they selected spray foam for a variety of reasons: because of fire issues that could occur under the ceiling (fire retardant); it provides for better temperature control, etc. He commented that it is difficult to answer questions like these because of the stage we are at. Wassim stated that it is premature at this stage to decide which way to go. We are not going to get to the bottom numbers and unless we move to the next stage.

Scott Yappen asked about the 17,000 sq. ft number. Wassim stated that it is the total square footage of the open space area—9300 sq. ft. is proposed to be utilized for administration/meeting space. In the initial discussions with the BOE, it was requested to finish the entire outside of the entire building along with windows and HVAC.

Tony Chelpaty expressed concerns about the expense in finishing the outside of the entire building. John Morytko stated that the BOE would lease the building to the Township for \$1 and asked to finish the outside of the entire building. Carlos Luaces explained a few building regulations for construction in schools and stated that it makes sense to do it complete the rehabbing of the outside of the building at one time.

Carlos Luaces suggested using the school cafeteria for meeting space. Alex stated that we could explore it. Carlos didn't know why they call it a shed roof, because it isn't a shed. Alex stated that the builder, Fred Braun, referred to it as the shed roof. Carlos also asked about the foundation of the trailer area. He thought the roof

and the foundation were good, and asked what testing they did on the foundation. Wassim reiterated discussion from the February 26th meeting in which The Nader Group stated all the reasons in detail why they would not reuse the foundation. Carlos thought more testing should be done. The Nader Group stated that they investigated enough to determine the foundation would not support a new building.

Cris Franco stated that when they toured other municipal and police buildings, they emphasized that you can never have enough storage. She asked if we could use the shed building for storage instead of offices at a lower cost to construct. Wassim explained that if we did that, we would need to build a new building on a new footprint, which would far exceed the costs that have been presented in the reports.

Harvey asked how we should look at these numbers--are they tight and will they go up. Wassim said they feel very good about the numbers. Harvey asked what they are considering for the roof for the mortar building. Wassim stated they are not leaving a flat roof--they most likely will build a truss roof and it is built in to the number. Scott Olson asked if they allocated for contingencies. Wassim stated that they did.

Scott Yappen asked if there was additional research done on stormwater. Wassim stated that they have looked at all the environmental issues, but until they know what option will get moved to the next stage, they won't know any detailed information. Once an option is chosen, the Nader Group along with Township representatives, would go down to the NJDEP and review the option. Alex stated that at the last Planning Board meeting, he reviewed the conceptional plan of one of the options that the building committee zeroed in on with the Township Engineer. Cory Stoner thought the NJDEP permits would not be a problem with any of the options.

Paul Couvrette stated that with regard to disturbance on the open space property, the State may look at it as one project—BOE property and the municipal site. It would generate one more permit, which is the general permit #10, but it is attainable as is all the other permits that are required. It's time preparing paperwork and money for permits.

Scott Olson talked about the interest from New Jersey Future when we were working on the building project a few years ago. We would have qualified for a grant to assist with stormwater on the municipal property. We lost the opportunity when the project did not go forward.

Mike Pellek would like to hear a little bit more from the group about the open space option and what everyone thinks. Mike asked about the sprinkler changes—he wasn't aware that the building was sprinklered. On Page 12 in the report, the results of their field investigation were reviewed and listed out major challenges. Safety issues was one of the biggest challenges.

David Romano did not feel that the challenges listed for open space would be the same challenges you would have in the mortar building. David asked how did the school put on a new roof and not insulate to code. It was reported that at the time when the roof was done, they did put another layer of bat insulation. The problem was the roof leaked in many areas and compacted the batting, and now it doesn't meet code.

Eric Serrilli stated we need to focus on the issues. We would be putting the administration in someone else's building, we would be separating the police from administration, and it's a security concern having municipal next to school.

Alex stated if we chose not to use the open space, the cost to the taxpayer is environmental costs; i.e., heating and cooling. Maybe we could ask the school if we could lease 5,000 sq. ft. for storage.

David said that we need to take emotion out of making decisions. Security can be accomplished and work well.

David feels that the numbers are not true. He stated that you can't have a 5% contingency with a rehab. He asked Carlos what percentage he would put for rehab contingency, and Carlos responded 15-20%.

John Morytko had concerns about the open space option:

- No cost savings
- Parking is a concern
- Accessibility to the municipal building at 3 pm

Carlos stated that he looks at it differently. The taxpayers are paying to heat 17,000 sq. ft. He said that if you compound the cost over years it is a lot of money.

Don Robbins stated that he numbers are very similar for all options. He doesn't think the taxpayers will not want to pay \$5 million to \$7 million. He thinks the taxpayer will say do nothing or come up with a different plan.

Scott Olson stated that there are irate people who come into the town hall. If we in the school building, they could pose a danger. At times, the staff had cause to call a police officer during a situation, and they came over in seconds.

Alex stated that if there was significant cost savings for open space he would entertain it. He doesn't feel it is an option. He stated the school can do things to lower the carry cost of the open space area.

Other statements from the group and public:

- Use space in the open space for storage.
- Joe stated that the school could be used for meeting space
- David suggested building a new administration building 8000-10000 sq. feet. where the 53 parking places are laid out; and when that is built, renovate the mortar building for the police department. This would eliminate any need to relocate employees while construction is going on.
- Tammy Quaisis, Lockwood Avenue, referenced the conversation about the open space, and asked if we could use that area for temporary space instead of renting temporary space.
- Joanne Smith, 57 Lake Drive, stated when a public entity comes to you, do they ever give a budget to work with. Wassim stated that it doesn't usually happen that way.
- Charles Iulo, 100 North Shore Road, stated that he did a large addition on his house. His taxes went from a \$5000 to \$12000. He said that when a price is given to you, it always goes up.
- Harvey stated that we should start looking at consolidation. He feels we are looking to build another kingdom.
- John Morytko said that this subcommittee is made up of 15 people, all of who are just like the members in the public, and they are working on the public's behalf. We have toured other buildings. He feels the present building is not viable. John said that consolidation is a 5-10 year process, and if the Council is going to look at consolidation what does the subcommittee do now.
- Scott Olson said that a comment was made at the Park and Rec meeting on Tuesday night, stating that we need to look past the cost and realize this is an investment in the future of our town and our children.
- Scott Yappen stated that we need to sell this to the community.
- Harvey stated that maybe the best thing is to come up with an option, go forward, and put it to a vote to the public.
- Don Robbins stated that the building is not falling apart. He does feel we need a new police department and at the least a renovation of the mortar building, but he knows that taxpayers want their taxes to go down not up.
- Scott Yappen stated that he was surprised that the Council hasn't started a study for consolidation.
- Alex took a straw pole and asked who thinks it is a viable option to use open space. Only one person thought it was viable.
- William Larabee, 8 Crows Nest Road, asked if there is any reason why we are not utilizing an existing building instead of rebuilding, such as the building on Tamarack Road. Alex stated that this was discussed in the beginning of the formation of the subcommittee. They considered it but decided it wasn't an option. Alex referred him to the website where he could review the history.
- David Romano stated that we should take our time and look into consolidation.

- Alex stated that we have done a lot with shared services over the last 5 years. Dispatch, court, construction, and animal control are some of our shared services. Alex stated that he is not opposed to looking into consolidation.
- Joe stated that if the State supported consolidation, there could several services moved to the County level, such as construction, tax assessment and tax collection.
- Nancy Green, Lake Drive, thanked everyone for all the hard work. As a taxpayer who moved here 20 years ago – taxes were \$3500 and now paying over \$12000. They want to stay here because they love it. She is not in favor of paying \$5 million.
- Harvey stated that 5-6 years ago the Sussex County jail was in great disrepair. There was a concerted effort to rehab the building over the past 6 years. This week in the newspaper, Sheriff Strada stated that he is going to explore the option of moving the inmates to Morris County. He was willing to look into this option now—it may not work, but it’s worth looking at.
- Alex stated that we need to move to the next step by selecting an option so that we can get more definite options.
- John stated that the subcommittee should appear before the Council to present their recommendations.
- Mike asked what will happen to the subcommittee once the recommendation is made. Mike feels that the committee is very valuable, and they could continue to be useful. Alex said that can be put into the report, along with a historical account of what they have been through.
- George Shivas, 361 Amity Road, asked why there is a separation between the police department and the administration building. There would be a cost savings if there was only one building. Alex explained about the newer code. It must be built to an “essential” standard, and that is approximately \$50/sq. ft. more than standard construction.
- March 25 – 7:30 p.m. next meeting of building subcommittee to work on a recommendation report to be presented to the Council.
- April 16 at 7:30 p.m. – present to the Council

Alex asked if there were any additional comments from the public.

Joann Smith, 57 Lake Drive, asked how old the municipal building was. It’s 50 years old. Joanne asked why it wasn’t maintained, and why wasn’t there a maintenance plan. Alex didn’t have the answers for what happened years ago. Joe stated we are maintaining things as needed. Many of the problems would be major renovations because of the way the building was constructed.

Jack Moran, 7 E. Waterloo Road – asked if we looked at the NJDOT building. Alex stated that they are using it. Jack stated that the State doesn’t pay taxes, and he suggested that we approach the State to buy it. Jack stated that there would not be a relocation cost. Alex stated that he will place a call to the Governor’s office to express the interest in the building. Joe stated that it is not hooked up to the sewer.

Scott Yappen stated that we need to get the word out better. Alex asked Scott to present a plan at the next subcommittee meeting to communicate this information to the public.

ADJOURN

Motion by Councilman Olson, second by Councilwoman Kash to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. All members in favor.

Doris Flynn, Municipal Clerk

Alexander Rubenstein, Mayor