

**MINUTES FOR EXETER FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC)
MEETING, THURSDAY JULY 16, 2020**

TIME: 4-5:15 pm, ZOOM Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Rob Corson, Chair; Kris Weeks, Vice Chair; Amanda Kelly, Peter Lennon, Clerk; Daryl Browne, Select Board (SB) Representative; William Campbell, Conservation Commission Representative; Russ Dean, Town Manager; Dave Sharples, Town Planner.

Scribe: Peter Lennon

1. **Previous Minutes:** The FAC briefly discussed the Minutes of the June 26, 2020 meeting, and no changes were recommended.
2. **Status of Request for Proposal (RFP) for Facilities Condition Assessment (FCA):** Vice Chair Kris Weeks reported that the FCA RFP would be ready for the Committee's consideration at its next meeting, Thursday, July 30, 2020, at 4 PM. Chair Corson stated that the RFP would represent a "qualification" package that could be implemented at any time in the future.
3. **Raynes Farm Update:** William Campbell, representing the Town's Conservation Commission (CC), gave the Committee a status report on the Town's Raynes Farm property, especially regarding facilities issues at the Farm.

Mr. Campbell asked that the Farm be included in the FCA, and the Committee took the request under advisement.

Mr. Campbell gave a history of the Farm and its acquisition by the Town in 2002 with the aid of a NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) grant of \$205,000 for the 48-acre property and the Barn.

Since the purchase, Mr. Campbell said, the Town replaced the Barn roof in 2014 (for \$33,350) and has done minor repairs to the structure. Mr. Campbell said the Conservation Commission believes the Barn should be restored and maintained as a "significant archeological and historic site as a classic example of a 19th Century (New England) barn." The Barn is the "largest barn in the area and is architecturally significant," he said.

Mr. Campbell said a June 2018 *Historic Structures Report* commissioned by the Conservation Commission concluded that the Barn "was worth preserving," and that the "framing and foundation were in fairly good shape, and the clapboards and windows were in poor shape." The CC is "very concerned about the barn, but we need a massive project to do the clapboards and windows," he said.

A copy of the study provided after the meeting by Mr. Campbell included a "Prioritized Work Plan" totaling \$209,500 that identified \$134,500 in "High Priority" repairs, \$61,000 in "Medium Priority" repairs, and \$14,000 in "Low Priority" repairs.

In 2018, the Barn failed to obtain an LCHIP grant, and the Conservation Commission is considering applying for another grant in the near future, Mr. Campbell indicated.

Chair Corson asked about the “envisioned use” of the Barn, and Mr. Campbell said the CC was looking at it as a possible music venue.

A discussion among the Committee and Mr. Campbell identified prior uses (pumpkin festival, stargazing walks, and birding and nature walks) and that walkers have increased their use recently due to the pandemic.

Ms. Kelly asked if there were any wheelchair accessible paths, and the FAC was told that the path from the parking lot toward the Barn could accommodate a wheelchair.

Mr. Lennon stated that he recently walked several of the farm’s paths and that much work would be required to bring the paths and trail markings/signage to a level comparable with the Town’s trails in the Henderson Swasey and Oaklands Town Forests. Mr. Campbell agreed.

Chair Corson closed out the discussion by saying that FAC’s next step was to obtain more documentation (provided shortly after the session by Kristen Murphy, the Town’s Natural Resource Planner), and to schedule a Committee site walk.

4. **Update on Facilities Plans by Town’s Energy Committee and Sustainability Advisory Committee:** As the Town’s staff representative to both Committees, Planner Sharples said there were no facilities-related projects being considered by these entities for inclusion in the Fiscal Years 2012-2026 (FY 21-26) Capital Improvement Program (CIP) currently being drafted.

Chair Corson asked Mr. Sharples for any Town directives that established requirements for the two Committees. Mr. Sharples said he would research Town directives and report back to the FAC.

5. **Status of New FY 21-26 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and FAC Role in CIP Process:** Mr. Lennon asked whether Planner Sharples and the Town Manager had had the opportunity to discuss how the FAC interfaces with the CIP process. Mr. Sharples stated that he held just recently the first meeting among the Town’s department heads to begin considering and assembling the new CIP. He said he and Mr. Dean would meet next week to review the CIP and discuss the FAC’s role in the process.

Mr. Sharples agreed to give the Committee a draft of the new CIP early in August and before the Planning Board considered the document at its August 13, 2020 meeting.

Chair Corson stated that a FAC Representative should attend the Planning Board’s CIP meeting.

6. **Status and Preliminary Discussion of Upcoming Department of Public Works (DPW) Facility Garage Project:** Just before the meeting, the FAC received a draft Project Request Form for the Public Works Facility Garage in the new CIP. The draft Request Form reiterated the statements in the current FY 20-25 CIP about the serious structural, safety, and operational deficiencies of the existing garage.

A comparison with the project as proposed in the current CIP indicates that the estimated cost has increased by from \$3,850,000 to \$5,212,000 or by \$1,362,000 or 35%.

The draft Request Form indicates that about 26% of this increase represents the addition of at least \$350,000 for a major sub-project – replacement of the gasoline and diesel fuel island and all associated fuel tanks, dispensers, fuel pumps, tank leak and level monitors, fuel management system, and a 24' by 36' canopy. The Request Form states that the current system is considered a critical component of the Exeter public safety and public works operations and is more than 30 years old and in fair to poor condition.

The Request Form further indicated that seven years of annual inflation since the original 2015 cost estimate also has contributed at least \$609,900 or 45% of the cost growth.

Mr. Lennon said that the FAC needed to have good confidence in the cost estimate for this project and the other CIP projects, especially if it decided to support them and argue for their approval by the voters.

Mr. Lennon also expressed concern that the bulk of construction for the new garage complex had been delayed from FY 21, the next fiscal year, until FY 22. He said the delay might jeopardize Town voter support for any new public safety facilities in the near future.

Chair Corson asked why the project schedule for the main construction efforts have been delayed by one year.

Chair Corson tasked Mr. Lennon to draft detailed questions about the cost increases and schedule changes for DPW to answer before the FAC's next meeting, where the DPW Director would be available to discuss the project.

Planner Sharples gave a short overview of the Town's CIP cost estimating process and concluded that until actual bids were received for any particular project, the out-year cost projections in a CIP could not be finalized. He explained that the estimates are based on the best information the Town has at the time, such as current square footage cost for construction and other factors that can change a year or more down the road as there are numerous market factors that can change and affect pricing.

7. **Update on Fiscal Year 2020 Maintenance Projects:** Town Manager Dean provided the FAC with a status report on six maintenance projects listed for the current FY 20. The list included \$89,000 (out of a total Maintenance Projects budget of \$100,000) for three higher priority efforts to repair the roofs of the Town Hall, Town Office, and Exeter Train Station. Three lower priority projects, at the Town Hall, Public Safety Complex, and Bandstand, fell below a "red line" and their status was uncertain.

Chair Corson stated the FAC needed more information about the Train Station roof replacement project for \$20,000, since that number represented a significant proportion of the structure's 2019 assessed value of \$52,700.

Subsequent to its meeting, the FAC was informed by Planner Sharples that, due to possible revenue constraints caused by the pandemic, the Town's FY 20 Maintenance Projects budget has been reduced from \$100,000 to \$50,000. This decrease makes it unlikely that there will be funds available for any work beyond the Town Hall Cupola/Roof/Soffit repairs for \$59,000, Mr. Sharples reported.

8. **Library Construction/Renovation Project Update:** Planner Sharples reported that the project is on schedule according to Doug Eastman, the Town's Building Code Enforcement Officer.
9. **Public Safety Study Working Group Status:** Mr. Lennon asked Planner Sharples about the status of forming a Working Group to advise the Town on implementation of the recommendations made in the recently completed *Public Safety Study*. Town Manager Dean informed the FAC at its June 26, 2020 session about the planned creation of the Working Group.

Mr. Sharples said meetings are underway among Mr. Dean, him, Fire Chief Eric Wilking, and Assistant Fire Chief Justin Pizon about how to move forward and how that relates to the Town's Capital improvement Program.

Chair Corson stated that a FAC representative should be an early member of the Working Group so it can weigh-in well before "the last minute" on facilities-related considerations.

10. **Next FAC Meeting:** Chair Corson said that the Town's DPW Director, Jennifer Perry, would be invited to the next ZOOM virtual meeting on July 30. Vice Chair Weeks suggested that the Committee gather in person at the DPW facilities at 13 Newfields Road so it could tour the existing complex and see its current limitations.

There was general agreement among the FAC members to hold a masked and socially-distanced meeting at the DPW complex on July 30.