

Exeter Facilities Advisory Committee

Exeter Rec Department expansion and Rejuvenation- 4 Hampton Road Review and Recommendation

In fulfilling its Charge from the Select Board to advise the Board and others about town-wide facilities priorities and specific facility proposals, the Exeter Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) submits the following Report:

The Exeter Facilities Committee has reviewed the project plan inclusive of documents prepared by the following:

- Rec Advisory Board
- Recreation Department
 - Community needs assessments
- Tighe and Bond
 - Banwell Architects
 - Eckman Construction

Recommendation:

The Facilities Committee recommends that the Exeter Select Board not move the **Exeter Rec Department expansion and Rejuvenation project-4 Hampton Road** to a warrant article on the 2020 ballot. We recommend holding this project until the following items can be completed.

- That the Select Board conduct a dept service analysis of current dept burden in conjunction with anticipated dept burden to determine the affordability of all coming projects over a 10-year period. This analysis would assist in establishing a capital budgeting process that would create budgets that all project stake holders would need to adhere to.
- The completion of the Facilities Master to inform and consolidate replacement, renovation and maintenance projects town-wide. With this information the Select Board could then determine the priority of future projects and assess alternatives as they pertain to the available town budget.

The Facilities Committee concludes that these analyses will provide an objective basis for the feasibility and sustainability of the all capital projects.

1. Executive Summary

a. Capital Planning

- i. The FAC reviewed the information and evaluated the project based on the information provided in regards to long term capital planning. In this review the

FAC looked at this specific project in the context of all of the competing facility needs that the Town of Exeter currently have as well as projected project needs in the near future. These projects include (1) Public safety complex, (2) Public Works support facilities (garage), (3) Town Hall, (4) Town Offices, (5) Water and Sewer, (6) Existing Rec Department facility as well as continued maintenance of all existing facilities. The FAC considered that without a method to evaluate an overarching prioritization of these competing projects and that the development of this system would assist in evaluating, prioritization and moving projects through the budgeting process. The development of a facilities masterplan would be a valued tool to forecast capital needs for the community over a longer term period and would be updated periodically to insure that it represents current conditions.

b. Site Use

- i. The FCA Committee reviewed the information noted above in regards to the process to evaluate alternative sites and development opportunities. The FCA did not extensively review any information about alternative site solutions. The FCA noted that the concept of leveraging town owned property was a good start and should be used as a criteria for site selection and evaluation. The FCA based on the changes to the project over the last few years noted programmatic changes that modified the site use initiatives. These changes to the site programming and the evaluation over previous project proposals brought the committee to the consensus that the program and site evaluation need additional review and consideration.

c. Site Plan Development and program

- i. Past versions of the project were based on phased approach and focused first on athletic fields which seemed to be a higher priority. The current project is now focused on the construction of a community center with a high cost of site development required for the building construction and parking. The added athletic field is now a second priority. The current project and its high price tag is proceeding with a single phase and if not supported will not accomplish any goals of the parks & recreation department.
- ii. Recommend that the BOS consider a phased approach something may get accomplished at a lower cost.
- iii. It appears an analysis of the current athletic fields were not included in the project other than adding a new field.

- iv. It is our understanding that modifying the current field layout was not included in the project due to the recent improvements completed on the softball fields. This approach is commendable but an analysis should still be completed to determine the most efficient layout of the athletic fields since part of this project is adding an expensive field. The analysis should be part of a larger athletic fields' master plan that could identify short term improvements (i.e. adding a field) and long term improvements.

- v. Recommend engaging a parking consultant to review and project parking needs based on the use of all the anticipated programs. Determine peak demand. This would include review of wayfinding and managing parking adjacent to the building, drop off, pickup, van parking and turn around. This parking area does not have a visual so this would potentially generate undo traffic in pedestrian areas with people searching for parking. A pick up and drop off area for the pool and community center should be considered. It does not appear one exists now in the current design.

- vi. Recommend to engage a traffic review of the access to the site. This should include expected seasonal utilization. Access on to Hampton road and crossing at this location is a safety concern and parking should be provided on site to accommodate a high percentage of facility use.

- vii. Recommend engaging the owner of One Hampton Road to secure a long term lease on a defined number of parking spaces.

- viii. Recommend reviewing Wayside drive access with neighbors and determine wayfinding or parking area use to minimize traffic patterns looking for parking.

- ix. Recommend that the Rec Department develop a project growth model for parks and rec to test the capability of the program can be sustained over the minimum length of the bond.

d. Building Development and program

- i. Recommended that the replacement of the pool house be included as part of this plan or it is put onto a capital planning list to address its many deficiencies.

- ii. A comprehensive energy and sustainability goals should be established for this project. The design team has shared information on the current design approach and has incorporated some sustainability features such low flow fixtures and LED lighting. However, new construction is the time to really

incorporate high performance concepts such as above average building envelope that will greatly reduce the energy consumption. This would be an opportunity for the town to incorporate strong sustainability design goals that will make a difference for the life of the building. The building program stated that the fuel source for the heating system is propane. Is there an opportunity for natural gas or other energy sources? Building narrative provided by Greg offers more detail on what went into the cost estimate for the building envelope and MEP systems. Envelope insulation seems to just meet IECC 2015 requirements per state code. We should be looking at extending beyond that, and using energy modeling to quantify energy cost savings over the building lifecycle based on different design options.

- iii. Recommend further evaluating the possibility of utilizing the grade change and incorporating a basement space. This will be the only opportunity to gain that space.
- iv. Recommend reviewing and further defining individual program use and space utilization as the plan does not appear to address flexibility.
- v. Rest rooms should be balanced with building use and actual occupancy. Rest rooms should acknowledge changes to non gender specific use- accessibility, bariatric, and family bathrooms.

e. Miscellaneous

- i. The FCA reviewed the project plan and project approach as was outlined and presented to the Committee. The consensus was that the plan and schedule did not meet the timeline as we understand the budgeting process. It was noted that some parts of the projects would be started prior to full design of the building was complete and final bidding had been completed. This schedule and project plan should be further developed to insure that the overall project budget, schedule and program are aligned.
- ii. The FCA noted that the current town organization is not set up to support these type of projects that are outside of the typical DPW projects. The consensus of the FCA is that the town needs to adopt a project delivery process that has oversight of capital project management. When individual departments manage their own building projects, the oversight on scope (and cost) is limited due to their expertise and tends to be what is best for the department but not necessarily for the town. Centralized oversight and management can see the “big picture” and can weigh the department’s needs with other departments or initiatives. It could also ensure participation by various committees such as ours, energy committee, sustainability committee, etc. It seems to be inefficient

to make a department such as Parks & Recreation to meet with each of these committees and have to address their comments. Such an independent function should have continuing access to all project information and activities, and should have the responsibility to recommend to the Select Board and the Town Manager whether the Select Board should approve any changes in the project that significantly impact cost, schedule, and design before those changes are implemented. Such a function also could provide regular progress reports and serve as an early-warning system for emerging issues. Continuing oversight by an independent authority, the Town Manager, and the Select Board may be the

iii. The FCA also reviewed considerations of this project in regards to sustainability. There should be an evaluation based on the following:

1. Financial
2. Transportation
3. Site use and development
4. Multi-modal access
5. Energy
6. Storm Water
7. Light pollution

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