

**TOWN OF CANTON, CONNECTICUT
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Wednesday, January 20, 2010**

The Annual Town Meeting of the Town of Canton was held on Wednesday, January 20, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in the Canton High School Auditorium, 76 Simonds Avenue, Canton, CT. James Bixler, Moderator, called the meeting to order at 7:03p.m. The Town Clerk, Linda Smith, read the call of the meeting and the return of notice.

Richard Barlow brought to the floor for discussion:

1. The current condition of the Public Works Highway Garage and the possibility of purchasing the property located at 5 Cherry Brook Road for the location of a new Highway Garage.

Mr. Barlow stated that as early as 1999 a study was done by the Board of Selectmen that identified the Town Garage as a substandard structure. In 2007 the Permanent Municipal Building Committee began a needs assessment. By the summer of 2009 they were searching for properties when 5 Cherry Brook Road became available. The Board of Selectmen asked the PMBC to evaluate the property.

Mr. Barlow then introduced Peter Reynolds, Chairman of the Permanent Municipal Building Committee. Mr. Reynolds acknowledged the other members of the PMBC; David Madigan, Ron Dymicki and Karen Berry, as well as Jeff Alberti from the engineering firm, Weston and Sampson. The PMBC was tasked with two issues:

1. addressing the situation at the existing garage with the underground storage leak; removal of the old storage tank and installation of the new fuel capacity;
2. master plan for the highway garage/needs and facility assessment.

The history of the highway garage issues goes back to 1990 when the Plan of Conservation and Development identified the Public Works Department (a former horse barn) as inefficient and insufficient in size. There was a need at that time for a new, larger building at a different location.

In 1999 another study was done by the Board of Selectmen with the same conclusions. It was recommended again that the location of the highway garage be moved from the river site. The junction of Routes 179 and 44 was identified as a possible new site because it was above the flood plain, there is good road access and it was a good size parcel.

In 2003 the Plan of Conservation and Development again came to the same conclusions. More space was needed for the highway garage and it should be moved from the river. It was also suggested at the time that additional ball fields be created near the river to replace the highway garage.

In 2007 the Board of Selectmen applied for and received a STEAP fund grant. The money has been used for engineer services and to do a master plan evaluation. It was at this point that the PMBC was asked to get involved to address the fuel tank issue noted above and the needs assessment.

The PMBC canvassed all properties available and not available in Canton. They also gave consideration to regionalization/shared services for the operation. They ultimately had over 60 properties to look at. Their initial requirements were that the site be between 2 ½ and 4 acres of flat land with utilities and away from neighbors.

Mr. Reynolds introduced Jeff Alberti from the engineering firm of Weston and Sampson to share his presentation. He explained that the existing site is no longer feasible for expansion because it is in the Farmington River floodplain, during flood events, the DPW as first responders would not be able to serve the community, and there are salt/fuel environmental issues. The current building is outdated, undersized and inefficient. There is a lack of storage space for vehicles, equipment and materials. The building has exceeded its useful life and there are substandard working conditions. The DPW responsibilities have increased over the years along with the number of vehicles and

equipment. The facilities have not kept pace with space needs, employee health and safety issues, environmental compliance or code compliance.

The space needs are approximately 25,000 square feet as opposed to the current 6500 square feet. Industry standards would be met with 25,000 square feet. As the 60+ sites were reduced to 10 sites they looked at 12 major evaluation criteria:

1. Property ownership
2. Location
3. Physical site features
4. Site history
5. Abutter/environmental impacts
6. Access to utilities
7. Permitting
8. Traffic impacts
9. Operational impacts
10. Cost of site development
11. Cost of construction
12. Zoning consistency

Three sites were then chosen:

- 51 River Road
- 100 Commerce Drive
- 5 Cherry Brook Road

Initially 5 Cherry Brook Road was being privately developed so they moved forward with site evaluation for the other two properties. Their initial recommendation was that an ideal site was not located because of various restrictions on those two sites. When 5 Cherry Brook Road became available, it was reconsidered and identified as the preferred site. The benefits to 5 Cherry Brook Road were that it was of adequate size, the site had potential additional space available for future needs of the Town (fire house or additional ball fields), some ledge removal would be required, the use of the 'bowl' effect would shield abutters, and it would preserve existing ball fields.

Robert Skinner, Chief Administrative Officer, explained the approval process to date. On September 16, 2009, the Board of Selectmen approved the appraisal of 5 Cherry Brook Road. It was \$875,000 based on a current value and improvements. Discussion with the owners settled on an agreed \$900,000 price (\$1,000,000 minus a \$100,000 gift to the Town). The owner wanted to close by March 1, 2010. On December 7, 2009, the Town entered into a purchase and sale agreement contingent upon the approval of the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and Special Town Meeting/Referendum. The Board of Finance has already approved it. The Board of Selectmen has it on their agenda later tonight to approve at their regular meeting. Tentative dates for a Special Town Meeting would be February 3, 2010, which may be adjourned to a referendum to be held February 10, 2010. The location of the referendum is questionable as the Town Hall auditorium was discovered to have lead paint in it. We need an opinion from the Farmington Valley Health Department soon as to whether we can hold the referendum at the usual location. The Zoning Commission is currently reviewing the zoning regulations to authorize a highway garage to be placed at that site. We also need an "8-24 referral" from the Planning Commission to see if it is compatible with the Plan of Conservation and Development. That Planning meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2010. One January 30, 2010, there will be an open house at the highway garage from 9am-1pm so that the public can see for themselves what the conditions at the highway garage are like.

Richard Ohanesian, Chairman of the Board of Finance, then spoke about the financing of the purchase. The purchase price would be taken from the fund balance with is larger than normal. When the building is slated for construction, it would be done with bonding. While we wait for some current bonding to retire in 2012, we would then have room to accommodate the Town Garage project. The Board of Education also has some Capitol Improvement Projects to bring before the Board of Finance. We could combine the BOE and Town Garage into a single bond. The new bonding question wouldn't come up until 2012/2013.

Questions and comments were made by:

Brian Demski	Gildersleeve Ave
Patti White	Dyer Avenue
Teresa Barger	Pond Road
Roger Clark	Sunset Terrace
Marianne Burbank	Mountain Road
Lowell Humphrey	Canton Valley Circle
Joe Pelehach	Thompson Hill Road
Mary Tomolonius	Bahre Corner Road
Marc Cerniglia	Ellsworth Lane
Steve Roberto	Pine Acres Drive
Glen Barger	Pond Road
Marjory Clark	Sunset Terrace
George Jacobs	South Street
Jonathan Thiesse	Wright Road
(inaudible)	Lawton Road
Henry Bahre	Breezy Hill Road
Bob Oswald	Torrington Ave
John Sugar	Wilders Pass
Gary Dotson	Torrington Ave
Paul Balavender	Andrew Drive
Barbara Bachman	Wickham's Fancy
Kevin Bradley	Town Bridge Road
Paul Czaplicki	Morgan Road
Ken Bierut	Wickham's Fancy
Larry Minichiello	Maple Ave
David Gilchrist	Lawton Road

There being no further discussion, Richard Barlow brought to the floor for discussion:

2. Transfer Station operations including methods to increase recycling such as single stream recycling and alternative fee structures such as “pay as you throw”.

The Board of Selectman will soon be evaluating the Transfer Station procedures. In an effort to increase recycling, CRRA will soon be taking all types of plastics and the implementation of single stream recycling will increase participation. In addition, State mandated e-waste needs to be addressed. The hauling contract for solids and recycling is up for renewal. While the Town has removed the tipping fee subsidy to those homes who have curbside pick up with Paine's, the current Transfer Station fees do not cover the costs of services to the approximate 1500 residents who use the Transfer Station. The Town is subsidizing their disposal. Taking away the subsidy would put the current sticker fee from \$100 to \$150. The State of Connecticut SMART Program (Save Money and Reduce Trash) suggests a 'pay-as-you-throw' policy that:

- Provides for cost reduction for light users
- Promotes recycling
- Is good for the environment
- Produces an average of 17% reduction in trash
- Produces a lower cost for disposal

In the next budget, the Board of Selectmen will consider Transfer Station options:

- Weight trash and pay by the pound
- Purchase bags/stickers/tickets per bag
- Recycle for free

Mr. Barlow would like to establish a temporary study committee to look at the options to change the fee structure and make it more equitable. After four or five months, the committee could recommend to the BOS their suggestions. An established program could begin in January 2011.

Questions and comments were made by:
Kevin Bradley Town Bridge Road
Emil Huyghebaert Freedom Drive
Teresa Barger Pond Road
George Lefler (inaudible)
Paul Czaplicki Morgan Road

There being no further discussion, the moderator adjourned the meeting at 9:36pm.

Linda Smith

Linda Smith, Town Clerk

Received for record January 21, 2010

Linda Smith

Linda Smith, Town Clerk