

**TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION
FIRE STATION RENOVATION PROJECT
March 30, 2015**

I. ROLL CALL

Council Members present:

Kristine S. Trocki, President
Mary E. Meagher, Vice President
Blake A. Dickinson
Michael G. White
Thomas P. Tighe

II. CALL TO ORDER

The Town Council Work Session for the Fire Station Renovation Project was called to order at 6:02 p.m. on Monday, March 30, 2015 in the Town Hall Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers at 93 Narragansett Avenue by President Kristine Trocki.

III. TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION

- A) Fire Station Expansion/Consolidation Project
- 1) Overview of Project: Andrew E. Nota, Town Administrator and James Bryer, Fire Chief

Town Administrator Nota reviewed the work performed by Chief Bryer, command staff, members of the Board of Fire Wardens and Town staff and the communication involved to reach this point and to present the first draft before you.

- 2) Design and Renovation: John A. Ahraonian, R. A. Aharonian & Associates, Inc.

Mr. Aharonian introduced architect Alex Ziemba. Mr. Ziemba gave an overview of the proposed site plans and floor plans. The project proposes to provide additional space for the Fire Department and move the EMS Division to the Narragansett Avenue location in order to house the two divisions and all vehicles at one location. Renderings of the current and proposed addition were displayed. Mr. Ziemba reviewed the renovations, including first floor: new entrance, radio room, rest room, de-containment room, handicapped accessibility elevator, storage space, laundry space, garage, vehicle bays, and apparatus bays; second floor: common space (training space), ramp, offices, EMS area with bunk rooms and suite, equipment storage, showers, conference room areas, and multi-purpose space above the apparatus bay.

Vice President Meagher commented the multi-purpose space above the apparatus bay is accessible by stairs and is not handicapped accessible. Mr. Ziemba stated this is not considered a public space. The other spaces are at the existing level.

Mr. Ziembra reviewed proposed exterior renovations, including the existing and proposed main entrance. The design was worked to match the current structure design with a mind towards cost. The new 14' bays eliminate the need for custom vehicles and the scale of the building works with the surrounding residential area. Existing and proposed traveling views were displayed with building (on Grinnell Street) removed and landscaping. The steamer engine would be moved from the museum to the fire station main entrance to make the building accessible and part of the community. The images displayed give a view of what the structure would look like.

President Trocki asked for the timeline and the architect's next steps. Mr. Ziembra stated they are working with the Chief and his group to incorporate the scope of the project, moving into design development, creating a timeline, and costs. President Trocki asked how many additional vehicles will be in the new structure. Mr. Ziembra stated the renovated structure would house the ladder truck, two tankers and three engines. Chief Bryer stated four additional vehicles from EMS would be housed indoors. Only the fire boat and two trailers will be housed outside.

Discussion involved final decisions on the plan, cost to be presented at the FTM, process through Planning and Zoning, and timing. The budget should be before the Council for approval April 20th, with an amount for the "not to exceed" number for the Fire Station renovation project at the April 6th meeting.

Vice President Meagher commented on the plan. Chief Bryer noted JFD member approval of the plan and the work involved to get to this point. The interior design and possible revisions were noted; the main concern was the exterior look and fit with the surroundings and the footprint. With this design the ladder truck will fit in the new bay on Narragansett Avenue. Discussion ensued of the best options. Chief Bryer reviewed turning radius and the determination where vehicles should be housed.

Council members commented fire engines using Narragansett Avenue is a nice response to the Grinnell Street residents. Vice President Meagher commented on the views and would like more stone. Chief Bryer stated this design accentuates the main entrance and people will know where to enter, especially with EMS services to be located there.

Discussion involved the roof lines of the building on the Grinnell Street side and Mr. Ziembra explained the reason for the size and balance. The area discussed is basically for storage. Chief Bryer noted this was space needed for storage and training and not planned for public access. Red cedar shingles in the new section would darken over time and blend in. Chief Bryer noted the doors would be painted red.

Councilor Dickinson states the building is aesthetically pleasing and functional. His only question is what it's going to cost. Town Administrator Nota commented what is proposed is a conservative footprint and efficient design to meet the needs of the department and integration of EMS. A not to exceed number will be proposed.

President Trocki asked about elimination of parking. Mr. Ziemba noted additional parking spaces (six by the museum), including visitor and handicapped parking. Parking spaces will be designated.

3) Review, Questions and Answers

Ray Iannetta of Stanchion Street asked about the customization of trucks due to door height. Chief Bryer explained where the current custom ladder truck would be located, which would be replaced with a standard truck in the future. Deputy Chief Tighe commented the 25-year truck life and 30-year ladder truck life. Customization can cause mechanical problems and increase the cost of the vehicle considerably (\$200,000). The purchase of standard trucks that fit in the new bays will save money. Discussion ensued of the cost, age, safety, and conditions of present JFD vehicles and the history of the bays that house the vehicles.

Councilor Dickinson commented on the footprint and whether anything could be put off or eliminated as a cost savings. Deputy Chief Tighe and Chief Bryer explained why the proposed spaces on the second floor are necessary for the JFD and EMS Division operations. The only space added is the multi-purpose area and storage. Chief Bryer stated the area above the bays could be postponed if necessary and shingling could be delayed for a year or two to save \$25,000, but may cost more to do outside of the renovation project. Town Administrator Nota stated once the project is bid out there may be savings realized. The addition is 7,970 sq. ft., bringing the total square footage of the facility to just over 16,000 (existing building is 8,700 sq. ft.), with 11,710 sq. ft. of renovation/construction space.

Councilor Dickinson asked for next steps. Chief Bryer stated the first step is approval for funding, application before Planning, and then Zoning. Any changes proposed by Planning and Zoning would be included before finalizing the plans.

Ray Ianetta of Stanchion Street stated going for the funding first is prudent. You want to get the project bonded first to lock in a rate.

Town Administrator Nota stated based on 11,710 sq. ft. of impact on the project comes out to \$177.45 per sq. ft. Overall that is a good sq. ft. number for the work proposed. The estimated total cost is \$2,078,111. This could vary in the open market but shows us where the “not to exceed” figure should be for the FTM.

The value of Knowles Court was questioned, and Chief Bryer stated a preliminary market value is \$750,000. Discussion ensued of past bond projects, including Town Hall. Vice President Meagher stated the Fire Station project will provide a proper facility and benefit the town. Council members were not surprised by the proposed amount for the project to house JFD and EMS division in one location. This is the future and what we are trying to accomplish. The Fire Department was thanked for their efforts.

Town Administrator Nota stated this will be on Monday's agenda for Council review and decision. Between the fire truck and building it is \$2,300,000 without a contingency. Councilor Dickinson requested leasing information as an alternative. Discussion continued. President Trocki asked for any additional questions or comments.

4) Next session: date, time location

President Trocki stated community input will continue at future work sessions to be announced.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no future business to discuss, the work session was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Attest:

Cheryl A. Fernstrom, CMC, Town Clerk

Copies to: Town Council
 Town Administrator
 Town Solicitor
 Finance Director