

LUNENBURG MUNICIPAL BUILDING DESIGN COMMITTEE



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Meeting Minutes February 19, 2025 5:30pm

Members Present: Brian Lehtinen, Michael-Ray Jeffreys, Greg Roy, Matthew Allison, Tom Gray

Members absent: David Blatt, Kristina Masaitis

Town Employees: NA

Community Guests: Tony Sculimbrine, Bob Doolittle

Meeting called to order at 5:40pm.

No public comment.

Michael-Ray Jeffreys discussed the warrant article process. Calculations are being calculated for debt. Michael-Ray to work with bond council on cost escalators and detailed breakdown of costs between the \$17 million and \$22 million estimates. Michael-Ray also discussed the cost of the project, which was estimated at \$17,000,800, but with a high range estimate of \$22.3 million, including a 25% markup for soft costs and an owner's contingency for potential scope creep. The committee was asked to discuss and decide on the appropriate number for the project.

Matthew Allison brought up the concern the hazardous materials were not included. Michael-Ray to contact Chris Ruth for more details on hazardous materials in Town Hall and Ritter building. Michael-Ray to follow up with the architectural team on the screening plans for 31 School Street and potential modifications to the parking lot layout.

Brian Lehtinen to continue monitoring social media for public concerns and questions about the project. Committee members to draft a public presentation addressing key concerns raised on social media, including funding mechanisms, project necessity, and transparency. Committee to determine the final number to request in the warrant article for the annual town meeting. Committee to explore the feasibility and cost implications of using fossil fuels vs. all-electric systems for the buildings. Committee to obtain more information on the capacity and payback period for the proposed solar panel system. Committee to include alternates (like EV chargers, Meeting House basement slab, solar panels) in the bid package for potential future implementation.

In the meeting, it was discussed the town should not install \$281,000 worth of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, but rather a couple of charging stations that cover 4 spots. The town could add more stations in the future if needed. The town should put in a minimum of two charging stations. The team also discussed the potential for solar panels, with concerns about the infrastructure needed to support them. Michael-Ray mentioned that the center of Lunenburg is identified as having capacity for more solar, but there have been delays in connecting to the grid. The team agreed to further explore the feasibility of solar panels and EV charging stations.

The committee discussed various aspects of the town building project, focusing on alternatives and energy systems. Michael-Ray explains the complications with the PV canopy funding due to the frozen Inflation Reduction Act funds. The group debates the merits of all-electric versus fossil fuel systems, considering new energy codes, executive orders, and operational costs. They acknowledge the need for more information on energy improvements and their potential savings to make informed decisions and prepare responses for public questions.

The committee noted that the town had passed a solar canopy bylaw, but the capacity limits were unclear. They also discussed potential hazardous materials in the Town Hall and Ritter buildings, with Tony confirming the presence of asbestos in the window glazing of Ritter. They discussed the possibility of remnants of underground oil tanks from the old fire station, but concluded that this was unlikely due to the construction of the new Public Safety building in the early 2000s. Michael-Ray proposed working with Bond Council to estimate escalating costs for the project, which is currently estimated at \$22.3 million. Greg requested a more detailed breakdown of the costs between the \$17 million price tag and the \$22 million estimate. Michael-Ray confirmed that the 5% OPM (Owner's Project Manager) fee is standard and not negotiable.

Bob Doolittle raised concerns about the impact of the proposed solar panel installation on the viewshed and architectural preservation district. Tony clarified that the architectural preservation district only deals with existing structures, and the impact would be more relevant to the planning board. Michael-Ray suggested that the design could incorporate screening to minimize the impact on the viewshed. Bob also questioned the extension of the parking lot, which could potentially impact the legal right of way. Michael-Ray confirmed that the parking lot's layout could be modified in the construction document phase, but it was not a significant concern in the schematic design phase.

Michael-Ray leads a discussion about the town hall project and public engagement. The committee addresses concerns raised on social media, including prioritization of funds, transparency, and project necessity. The committee plans to create a presentation to address these concerns and provide more information to residents. They are looking for someone to take the lead on drafting this presentation using PowerPoint.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:49pm, due to a technical issue with the zoom closing.