

Holliston Community Center Task Force
Meeting Minutes
November 7, 2013
Town Hall, Room 105, Holliston MA

1. Meeting called to order at 7:05P by Heidi Schreuder-Gibson, Chair. Task Force members in attendance: Mark Ahronian, Carl Damigella, Kristen Hedrick, Bob Malone, Bob Naughton, Bob Nemet, Tom O'Leary, Heidi Schreuder-Gibson.

Also present: Paul Saulnier, Holliston Net News

A quorum was present.

There was no public comment.

2. On motion made by Bob Nemet, seconded by Kristen Hedrick, the minutes of October 7, 2013 were approved by unanimous vote.
3. Heidi summarized for the Task Force the discussion held on Thursday, October 24, 2013 (no quorum being present) with representatives of the Blackstone Valley Boys and Girls Club describing their facilities and activities.

The significant suggestions from their experience were (a) the facility needs to be within walking distance for primary users in order to be successful, as transportation becomes problematic, and (b) it is better to start smaller rather than try to create a large and comprehensive facility, since tastes and enthusiasms for programs change, and changing demands for programs create changes in facilities needs.

4. Discussion turned to the Wilde Building option for use by the Town. Heidi reported on a second visit to the property with her daughter (an architect). The property is deficient in handicap access, toilet facilities, and sprinkler system. Much discussion centered around the expressed desire of the Selectmen to take the Wilde property off the table. Some frustration was expressed by several members of the Task Force about apparent decision making to eliminate this property from further consideration without specific reasons for this decision being received by the Task Force.

Bob Malone noted that specific plans, or assignments of space, had not been done for the area of the building under consideration.

Further action on formal elimination of the Wilde Building from consideration was postponed by Heidi to later in the meeting.

5. Discussion then turned to consideration of the Flagg School for a facility to include Recreation, Youth and Family Services, Veterans Affairs, and town storage.

Kristen asked what the expectations were for the current Senior Center building, given the investment in roof repairs and potential parking expansion. Bob Malone replied that with modest additional investment and changes in operating procedures there could be extended continued use of the building as a Senior Center.

Current opinions, ranging from renovation of the property to tearing down and starting over was acknowledged. It was noted, however, that issues of waste water disposal (a huge consideration) would be more easily solved at that location.

Much discussion ensued about the ownership and control of the building and underlying property, potential expectations of the School Committee, and existing documents and historical record. It was agreed that further discussion with representatives of the School Committee and Town officials were necessary to explore this issue.

Attention turned briefly to the town-owned property across Woodland Street behind Holliston Oil. Carl pointed out that access was by easement only. It was also acknowledged that due to wetland consideration much of the acreage was not buildable.

6. There was consensus that further guidance should be obtained from the Board of Selectmen as to the direction of inquiry for the Flagg School property as well as determination of the agency with control of the use of the building.

It was further suggested by Carl that any proposal for use of a renovated or new building at that location should be comprehensive in its inclusion of other Town priorities for community purposes, such as remaining investment needed in the Senior Center building.

It was also suggested that guidance as to proceeding with the Flagg school property should include professional advice as to build vs. renovate, and potential footprint of a new building.

7. The proposal for formal elimination of the Wilde Building at 200 Summer Street for further consideration was then moved by Mark Ahronian, seconded by Bob Malone. The vote was 6 in favor, with 2 abstentions (Carl Damigella and Heidi Schreuder-Gibson).

Heidi will convey the Task Force's action to the building owner.

8. Heidi asked members to work on a cost/benefit analysis for construction plans for the Flagg School property, and distributed work sheets to aid in that process. This was for renovation only, not demolition and new construction.
9. The next meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for Thursday, December 12, 2013, beginning at 7:00PM in Town Hall, location TBD.

10. The meeting ended at 8:35PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin Robert Malone