

SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 6, 1991

AGENDA

1. Roll Call & Pledge of Allegiance
2. Report Out from the Spacial Needs Building Committee and Discussion and Possible Action on the Re-opening/Re-use of Yalesville School
3. Consider and Approve the Establishment of a Committee to Investigate and Frame a Program of Economic Incentives as requested by the Economic Development Commission

SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 6, 1991

7:00 P.M.

A special meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was held on Wednesday, March 6, 1991 in the Robert Earley Auditorium of the Wallingford Town Hall and called to Order at 7:08 P.M. by Chairman Albert E. Killen. Answering present to the Roll called by Town Clerk Kathryn J. Wall were Council Members Bradley, Duryea, Gouveia, Holmes, Parisi, Solinsky & Zandri. Council Member Papale was absent. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr., Town Attorney Janis Small and Comptroller Thomas A. Myers were also present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given to the Flag.

ITEM #2 Report Out from the Spacial Needs Building Committee and Discussion and Possible Action on the Re-opening/Re-use of Yalesville School

Ray Rys, Chairman of the Spacial Needs Building Committee introduced John Lathrop, Vice Chairman of the Spacial Needs Building Committee, Sharon Sissio, Gretchen Morzinski, members of the Spacial Needs Building Committee also.

Mr. Rys explained the charge the committee was assigned at its onset which was to hire an architectural firm to develop a plan for Yalesville School according to guidelines set basically by the old ad-hoc committee prior to the establishment of this committee. Those guidelines were basically Yalesville School renovated with the addition of six classrooms, a library and a cafeteria area.

The microphones servicing the Council Members were malfunctioning and did not record the Council's comments.

It must be noted for the record that the Board of Education and representatives from DeCarlo & Doll were unable to attend this meeting.

Mr. Killen felt that there was some confusion surrounding the original charge to the Spacial Needs Building Committee.

Mr. Rys read from the Resolution (undated) which indicated that, "after a structural engineering study is completed and finds this building solid it should be considered a viable solution to the spacial crunch of the elementary level. If six classrooms and a cafeteria were added to the existing 13 rooms at Yalesville, it would be equal in size to our other elementary schools."

Mr. Rys: You are right, the cafeteria is not included here. We must have added the cafeteria.

Mr. Killen's comments went unrecorded.

Mr. Lathrop: This committee is the third in a succession of

March 6, 1991

committees. It was never considered, as far as I know, to reopen Yalesville School with the existing space. It was felt that it was necessary to make it worthwhile to re-open it with additional classrooms. In adding classrooms, it would then not have sufficient cafeteria space. I believe the addition of a Library/Media Center was brought before the Council early on and added to our charge to consider that as part of a reasonable addition in expanding the school.

Mr. Rys asked if the Council had received a copy of the actual study. He stated that it was basically a preliminary report that had been given to the committee at one of their meetings previously. The committee had approved it and hoped that DeCarlo & Doll would have been able to present this in detail this evening. They still in his opinion do have the opportunity, and should, if requested by the Council, to come before the body and answer any technical questions they may have of any of the methods in which they came up with the three schemes. This report will become the permanent report. He explained the thorough audits performed by DeCarlo & Doll in preparing this study.

Mr. Lathrop stated that the three scenarios before the Council this evening, or possible scenarios, refinement of the type of building, the shape, configuration, would all come in the design phase. DeCarlo & Doll felt that the existing envelope, the brick of the building is in good shape, they did feel that it was feasible to open Yalesville but it would need a new roof, heating system and windows. The old portion of the building which is 1 1/2 stories tall, it seems the best alternative would be to remove that and make the entire building one level. DeCarlo and Doll did indicate that it is a possibility that in the new construction section, that could go two stories. These are the things that would be refined in the next phase, the design phase. The bottom line is that the envelope of the building is in good shape. The building could be re-used with the addition of new space. Their added information just gives everyone more information to look at to better make a decision as to whether this building could be utilized with possible additions. That configuration of the addition could come at a later phase.

Mr. Bradley pointed out on page 3 of the Feasibility Study under the section titled, "Roof", the second sentence reads, "There are obvious signs of roofing failure such as damaged ceiling tiles, obvious water penetration, collection buckets, plastic tarps within classrooms, etc. There is a clear need for a new roof including leaders and gutters which were observed to be greatly deteriorated or absent in some locations." Yet, on page 4, immediately above the section titled, "Oil Tank", it states, "The roof over the 1925 structure appears to currently retain its integrity in preventing water penetration". He asked for an explanation of this.

Mr. Lathrop explained that the 1925 section of roofing is a taller, separate section and, unfortunately, that is the part of the build-

ing that would be a problem with accessibility and it is the older section, it just seems to be a random chance that that section of roof seems to be in better shape.

Mr. Gouveia had several question surrounding the different schemes and the Area Requirements, existing and new.

Mr. Lathrop explained that, in terms of classroom space, Scheme 1 leaves the administration office over in the corner in the front of the building as a small space, and in Scheme 2 changes that administrative office to part of the new building and gives more classroom space.

Mr. Gouveia referred to page 11 which reads, "The completed building would be approximately 45,200 square feet". Yet, in Scheme 1 if you add up the last column titled, "Area", it totals 30,120.

Mr. Solinsky felt that perhaps common areas were not figured in, hallways, etc.

Mr. Lathrop: In Scheme 1 if you look at Appendix A under #2 - Area Requirements, it says, regular C.R., and it gives new and under the existing it says, varies. And then if you look under Scheme 2, it lists different square footage right there of existing.

Mr. Gouveia questioned Mr. Rys and Mr. Lathrop extensively regarding Scheme 1 and Scheme 2 and the square footage listed.

Mr. Lathrop: They are talking about usage of classroom space in the existing building and that does vary from Scheme to Scheme. I can only assume that is where you have the difference in square footage of useable classroom space.

Mr. Rys: If you look at Scheme 2, under New you have a proposed science lab, a music room, an arts and crafts room, computer room, these are rooms that don't exist in the original or the Yalesville School as it exists today. On an educational requirement basis, when they did their study with the superintendent of schools, this is probably one of the, and I can't answer for him, but I would assume that this is what he outlined them in order to make this elementary school compatible with the rest of the schools, this is the needs of the school. Obviously what is happening here is we are building the classrooms but we are utilizing them differently.

Mr. Lathrop: There are some rooms that have been changed around as far as usage. It almost worked out to 12 or 13 rooms but one was administrative.....

Mr. Rys: They also added a teacher's lounge, a health room, a kitchen storage room,.....

Mr. Zandri's comments went unrecorded as well due to the malfunctioning of the microphone system.

March 6, 1991

Mr. Solinsky pointed out that in a courtyard situation you would have some special exiting needs that have to be addressed. This could not be labeled as an exit area and in the design of the building there have to be exits going from the courtyard directly to the exterior of the building.

Mr. Lathrop: Exits would be around the exterior of the perimeter.

Mr. Solinsky: To egress from the courtyard to the outside of the building so that would have to be taken into consideration. Also in the second scheme the courtyard that is created in that scheme, I would think, unless that is fenced off that would only tend to allow vandalism to occur if someone could gain entry they would go undetected. The Assistant Fire Marshal has told me that a building this size would have to be fully sprinklered.

Mr. Lathrop: I believe that DeCarlo & Doll did look into that and in the stage area and one other section that would have to have sprinklers installed but not the entire school.

Mr. Solinsky: The Fire Marshal stated that the new code requires anything over 22,500 sq. ft. be sprinklered. That would result in an added cost.

Gretchen Morzinski, Building Committee Member pointed out in Scheme #3 the existing building is taken down, therefore it is not a courtyard. She stated that they, as a Building Committee, do not necessarily agree on the schemes per se. They are interested in whether or not it is feasible to open the building.

Mr. Rys stated that he is not advocating that the Town do anything with Yalesville School. The Committee felt that they would take the charge that the Council gave them and investigate whether it could be open or not, whether it was structurally sound or not. In his opinion, under new construction today, because of little being done out there you would probably find a lot of contractors fighting over new construction. He did not totally agree with the figures of \$130 - \$145 per sq. ft. for new construction. The committee is not making a recommendation on either of the plans.

Gretchen Morzinski stated that the Committee could not recommend any of the schemes presented since it is not part of their charge. The Committee has some questions surrounding how DeCarlo & Doll have put the buildings together, etc. She felt that the Committee needs to look into the additions to the buildings as Mr. Zandri indicated. Meriden has recently done so and the cost was somewhere in the neighborhood of \$21 million for three schools.

Mr. Rys stated that DeCarlo & Doll did meet with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Cirasuolo to develop the requirements for the schemes. If the building were to be destroyed, the Town could not build a new one in the same location due to the new rules by the State governing square footage per pupil.

March 6, 1991

Mr. Solinsky asked if the Board of Education is bidding to lease portable classrooms? He noticed invitations to bid out on the posting board in the hallway by Purchasing.

Mr. Rys explained that the Board Superintendent of Building and Grounds contacted the Spacial Needs Committee asking for the specs on the portables that were contracted from Williams Co. He did submit the information to him and those specs were in all probability sent out to vendors for bidding. The Spacial Needs Building Committee is not involved in that aspect at all.

Mr. Solinsky was trying to determine the planning of the Board of Education on this matter.

Mayor Dickinson stated that the bids could go out, the funding is the question. It raises the point that all of these plans necessitate operational dollars and it is a question of how much in the way of an increase there will be for any of the departments including education. We must have a caution light on what we are able to afford in the way of any additional classroom space since it will warrant additional personnel, whether administrative or in the classroom. He suspected that the town would have problems similar to every other community, the papers show what is happening to all the other communities including lay-offs. He stated, "I cannot sit here right now and say that we aren't facing similar conditions here in Wallingford with the upcoming budget". That is just a broader perspective on the issue of affordability of additional space at this time.

Edward Musso, 56 Dibble Edge Road felt that the ad hoc committee had a "pie in the sky" attitude. His opinion of the new superintendent of schools is that Dr. Cirasuolo is liberal and wants too many things. He felt all that is required to re-open Yalesville School is bring the electrical service up to code and made some repairs. He supported the idea of portable classrooms. They last longer and cost less.

Mr. Killen pointed out that the Spacial Needs Building Committee is performing the task they were charged with and they do so without compensation. Mr. Musso was out of line in verbally attacking them for doing their job.

Mr. Killen thanked the Spacial Needs Building Committee for their hard work and will notify them at a later date when their information and expertise will be needed on this subject matter.

ITEM #3 Consider and Approve the Establishment of a Committee to Investigate and Frame a Program of Economic Incentives as requested by the Economic Development Commission

Motion was made by Mr. Bradley, seconded by Mr. Parisi.

March 6, 1991

Don Roe, Program Planner, introduced Commission Chairman and Vice Chairman Gary Powell and Sal DiNoia, respectively. Chris McLaughlin, John Walworth and other members of the Commission were in attendance in the audience. This began as a concern over what was happening with industrial parks. Over the last 10 years a demise in the manufacturing sector of the community and with that the increasing vacancy among manufacturing buildings. A partial listing of some of the vacant buildings was made available. It was a significant amount of square footage that was vacant in the community. That translates to a loss of revenue to the Town, both in terms of personal property taxes and in terms of employment base. It also has a negative impact on the Revaluation Process. The Commission felt that it needed to look at whether or not it was possible to frame a program of assistance that would aid in the filling of vacant buildings, particularly manufacturing buildings.

Basically there are two State Statutes that address what Municipalities are allowed to do and not do on the abatement and incentive side. One is Section 12-65b, the Statute under which the abatement program was done with Bristol Myers. The difficulty with that statute is that it does not provide for the fixing of assessments on personal property. It has a built in incentive for new construction. The Committee's concerns are focused on existing buildings that are vacant. The other, Section 74-80, The Town and City Development Act, allows communities to adopt programs through which a variety of different things can be done, however, the program must be subjected to a town-wide referendum once it is adopted by the Council. Only one community has implemented this program, Bristol. A copy of the Bristol program was in the packet of information previously distributed to the Council.

The Commission, after reviewing this, in February invited Council Members to the next Economic Development Commission (EDC) Meeting. At that meeting, a few Council Members attended, and in the course of the discussions evolved the idea that perhaps an appropriate way to approach this would be to establish a committee that had representation from different sectors within the community. The committee would be comprised of some people from Council, business community, utilities, and EDC and use that as the mechanism by which to further dig into what might possibly be framed as some kind of local program. What would seem to be the most appropriate mechanism or incentive to use would be an abatement of personal property. To do that means that the Legislature to approve of that through a piece of legislation. There is a generic bill introduced this year that would be a vehicle for that to be accomplished. There has been no action taken on that yet, and the Committee did not feel it was appropriate for them to lobby on behalf of that until they had some sense as to whether or not there was interest on the part of the Town. That would have to be the necessary thing to happen if a program was going to include personal property abatement.

Don Roe felt that perhaps this may not be the feelings of people who are representative of other disciplines. Perhaps they feel there is a different way for this to be put together under the

current legislative structure or legal structure that the Town has.

Several of the Council Members commented on the issue, however, their comments went unrecorded due to the fact that the microphone system was malfunctioning. The only microphones working at this point were those at the witness bench, the Mayor's bench, the Town Clerk's bench and Mr. Solinsky's.

Mr. Killen made a comment to the lack of participation and interest in the town government on the behalf of business and industry.

Mr. Roe pointed out that it is often a lack of time, not interest. He was sure that if the Council pinpointed a specific time they were needed at the meetings, those parties would be cooperative. That, however, is impossible to do. They cannot be expected to sit and wait from between 7:00 P.M. and 11:00 P.M. awaiting their turn.

Mr. Killen felt his time was valuable as well and he makes it a point to attend many meetings during the course of the week.

A suggestion was made to have a formal welcoming committee greet new businesses in Town to establish a bond and interest in the government here. Mr. Killen was reminded that a lot of the business community personnel work here but do not reside here.

Mr. Roe suggested a committee comprised of eight individuals be formed to study the economic incentives within the Town. He felt the committee should have representatives from the Council, utilities, EDC and business community. He did not feel the committee should be restricted to eight individuals. Anyone interested in joining should be included.

The EDC will forward a suggested list of individuals for the committee.

Way Rys, 96 Pierson Drive agreed with the idea of establishing a committee since vacant buildings do not employ local people nor pay taxes to the Town.

Mr. Holmes made a motion to Establish a Committee to Study Economic Incentives Within the Town of Wallingford, seconded by Mr. Parisi.

VOTE: Papale was absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

Motion was made by Mr. Bradley to Adjourn the Meeting, seconded by Mr. Parisi.

VOTE: Papale was absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

- 8 - March 6, 1991

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:07 P.M.

Meeting recorded and transcribed by:

Kathryn F. Milano
Town Council Secretary

Approved by:

Albert E. Killen, Chairman

Date

Kathryn J. Wall, Town Clerk

Date