

A Public Hearing to allow public input on the Highway Garage Project was held Thursday, June 19, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. at the Brighton Town Hall, Paul Smiths, NY, with the following:

PRESENT: Supervisor Robert Tebbutt
Council Members: Alicia Bodmer
John Quenell
Steve Tucker

ABSENT: Council Members Linda Dobson

OTHERS PRESENT: Elaine Sater-Town Clerk, Don Oliver-Superintendent of Highways, and Joe Garso-North Woods Engineering

RESIDENTS: There were 17 residents present

Public Hearing was **Called to Order** by Supervisor Robert Tebbutt **at 7:00 p.m. for the purpose of public input on the Highway Garage Project for the Town of Brighton.**

Public Notice was faxed to the Adirondack Daily Enterprise on Thursday, June 12, 2003, and posted at the three local post offices and local businesses and on the Town Clerk's Sign Board at the Town Hall.

Supervisor Robert Tebbutt stated that a bid opening was held on Tuesday, June 17, 2003, and the bids were disappointing. The bids were higher and fewer than expected. A summary of the bids is attached to these minutes. John Quenell will discuss this summary further. Joe Garso from North Woods Engineering is here to answer any questions.

The Floor was opened for discussion and this is a summary of the discussion:

Pat Willis-Garondah Road-Rainbow Lake: Would like to make a report for the Citizens Committee and will turn in the minutes from the 3rd Citizens Committee meeting held on June 17, 2003, for the record (attached to these minutes). The Committee would like to propose a diagram of a possible highway garage building (attached to these minutes). The financing for the Town Hall should be considered at the same time as the Highway Garage Project so the Town Hall is not neglected. The questionnaires have been received and summarized by Kevna Moss and a copy provided to the Town Board (attached to these minutes).

Willie Sheridan-Rainbow Lake Road: There was a sub committee that met to look specifically at the design of the Highway Garage plans and see if there was a better way to use the square footage and allow for archival storage. The break room could be moved to the second floor since the American Disabilities Act wouldn't apply to the Highway Garage. A shower should be added so the men can clean themselves up if a spill occurs. The downstairs would be opened up to allow for archival storage. The dry storage area could be used for equipment storage. The Food Pantry could be moved closer to the bathroom. The pitch of the roof should be changed to keep the snow from falling in front of the doors where the men and vehicles could be hit with falling snow and ice. If the cost is too high, the garage could be reduced by one bay. The Food Pantry could be moved to the Town Park. Extra equipment could be stored in the Salt Shed.

Art Robertson-Split Rock Road: Was the Town Superintendent of Highways at any of the meetings of the Citizens Committee?

Willie Sheridan said that Andy Crary (Deputy Superintendent of Highways) was at the last meeting and had the idea of moving the food pantry to the Park. Other ideas were to move the air compressor so it would not be so noisy and add a door to the back so trucks could out the back if needed.

Andy Crary-Rainbow Lake Road: Would just like to see the garage built and we should go with the plans as they are since any changes will cost more money.

Robert Tebbutt: Asked the Highway employees to comment on the Highway Garage Project.

Don Oliver-Superintendent of Highways: The pitched roof would leave no room for a door in the back. There is no need for a door. The break room should be downstairs since it has been used for a meeting room when the Town Hall was not available. Has spent "a hell of a lot of time" putting this garage plan together. Went to other garages and come up with a plan that suited him and was good for the Town. Thinks we ought to give the board the chance to approve or disapprove the current plan.

Willie Sheridan: Does the proposed plan have any benefits over the present plan?

Don Oliver: Doesn't see any benefit; when the plan started it was just a garage, now it has an archive room and a food pantry. I just want a Highway Garage.

Andy Crary and Glen Perrino: Agreed with Don Oliver and had nothing more to add.

Rouse Fountain-State Route 86, Paul Smiths: Was on the Citizens Committee but wasn't aware of the sub-committee and feels offended about not being notified there was a sub-committee. The break room upstairs could cause more accidents and a fire escape might be needed. The Citizens Committee has given all sorts of information to the Board and the Board needs to come up with a decent plan for the garage.

Pat Willis: The Citizens Committee did not appoint a sub-committee. There was an informal meeting and these people presented their plan at the Citizens Committee meeting and it is documented in the minutes.

Willie Sheridan: The Citizens Committee was formed to allow the citizens to bring their ideas to the Town Board. We tapped into the community to find out what was important to them and records storage is one concern. Thought the board

members gave the impression that records storage was a priority. Records storage is an important issue and the board was going to look at the issue. Need to get the clutter out of the Town Hall and stored in reasonable space. The Food Pantry should be moved out of the Town Hall. The sub-committee went beyond the scope of the Committee and provided a very good plan, sorry if people were offended.

Gould Hoyt-Keese Mills Road: The Board seems concerned with the bids that were submitted. What are the ramifications from the board's point of view and what is the ramification if the bid is accepted? What is the mood of the Board?

Robert Tebbutt: If we were to accept the bids as they are the cost will be \$682,000 for the Project. The tax assessment would be \$43 per \$100,000 per tax evaluation. There were so few bids; one less bid and the building wouldn't be built. One contractor quoted \$11 per square foot and \$25,000 for the bathroom and \$28,000 for the Superintendent of Highways office. The bids did not make any sense. There are many questions to be answered and there is a lot of work ahead for the Board. They have to put together something that will fly. There are clocks running that will make or break the Project for this year. There are a lot of questions the board has to answer in the next 30 days.

Gould Hoyt: How are things going with DEC and APA?

Robert Tebbutt: Feel very comfortable that all those issues will come together; they are not an issue right now. DEC recognizes that the Town is going to raise the level of the ground and the water is not a big problem. John Quenell and Joe Garso are in contact with the APA. The problem is with the bidding and what that means.

John Quenell: In my opinion all the bids were too high, this is based on looking at other new highway garage project recently completed in the region. It should cost between \$450,000 to \$500,000 not \$682,000. Receiving only one bid for electrical, plumbing, and heating makes this a non-competitive situation. Have been in contact with the bidders and they said some value engineering needs to be done to reduce the costs. The best we can do is to not rush into doing this but take our time and re-bid the three other contracts.

Joe Garso: Some of the bids were irregular in the breakdown. We asked for pricing in separate areas to compare the bids. The bid for \$11 a square foot should be \$13. A questionnaire was made up to make sure the bidders didn't forget any items that made the price be off. So far everything was included in the bids.

Nik Santagate-McColloms: As a contractor I bid on houses and I know a contractor who added up the windows and multiplied by \$300 and that is how he came up with his bid. Determining how the contractors came up with their numbers may be a struggle. Why did we get so few bids? Could they have been scared off by the start time?

Joe Garso: There were 14 plan holders; has no idea why.

Robert Tebbutt: Asked the bidders and they were just as flabbergasted that there were so few bidders, maybe because it was hard to get here except they came to work on the firehouse and at Paul Smith College.

Lydia Wright-Keese Mills Road: Did you ask the contractors who didn't bid, why not?

Joe Garso: There are some contractors I could ask, but I didn't do it. The money is nonrefundable if they don't bid.

Rouse Fountain: Does the APA permit call for tearing down the old building before the Salt Shed is built? Could you use the old garage for the salt shed to save money. Demolition of the old building is \$17,000 and \$40,000 for the salt shed.

Robert Tebbutt: It is in the APA permit to tear down the building and it would complicate the building rights if the building was not torn down.

Don Oliver: The APA won't allow the old garage to stand.

John Quenell: We could probably reduce costs in the "Additional Project Costs" by \$75,000. There may be a grant available for the salt shed and the town employees could do the demolition of the old garage. The demolition cost is based on one quote.

Rouse Fountain: With inflation these costs could go up by next year.

Robert Tebbutt: The financing right now is so attractive it is unbelievable. Had a discussion with a contractor about eliminating the mezzanine above the garage offices, this could reduce the cost of the building by \$20,000.

John Quenell asked if Don Oliver would mind losing the mezzanine since he didn't want it anyway and **Don Oliver** said no.

Robert Tebbutt: The plans could be changed to reduce costs but it will cost to change the plans.

Gim Louie-Hoffman Road: Did the Town price buildings to see if it would be cheaper to purchase the building?

Robert Tebbutt: The Town has to follow state rules and pay fair wage at union prices for steel workers.

Joe Garso: A law has been on the books since about 1916 saying any government building over \$50,000 has to have four contracts, not one contract with subcontractors. A request to change this law to a higher amount has been in the works for about 15 years and has not been changed because the union has a strong lobby.

Jim Louie: You are saying this building will cost twice as much because it's a government project.

Joe Garso: The reason volunteers couldn't put up the building would be because the insurance would be so expensive especially if someone was hurt and there would be no guarantee on the building.

Tom Willis-Garondah Road: Is it the board's intention to include all the additional project costs in the bonding? There are items on the list that have to be paid for regardless of a garage being built, such as the salt shed for \$40,000 and the purchase of land for \$7,000. These items are misleading as to the real cost of the project.

Robert Tebbutt: The board will meet on Monday, June 23, to vote on the funding for the garage. The whole amount can be reduced. Until the vote is taken there is no funding for the garage and this may have been a problem for getting bids.

Willie Sheridan: One of the things the Citizens Committee discussed was people wondered if the size of the garage was too large based on the fact that they only maintain 17 miles of road. One of the ideas was to cut out one bay and remove the food pantry to the Park. Would this save on the cost of the building?

Robert Tebbutt: Economy of scale comes into play. The committee has done a lot of work and provided a lot of recommendations for the board to consider. The board has a lot of work to do to determine if this project can be done this year or not.

Tom Willis: When the original garage was built in 1950, I'm sure the town felt they were building something to meet their needs. In the 80's an addition was added and another one since then. The building has not been maintained very well and it is too small and it's old. We have to build a new garage. If this building is supposed to last for 50 years I would make it bigger because each new piece of equipment bought to replace the old is bigger. The town may have more roads in the future if the land on State Route 30 is developed. We are trying to cheapen this project and it should be done right the first time.

Pat Willis: Al Fuller expressed the same idea at the Citizens Committee meeting. Build a good building and if you have to roof the current garage to last another year, you can sell it for scrap when the building is torn down. If you didn't get the bids you wanted wait until next year.

Willie Sheridan: If you spend a tremendous amount on the Town Garage is there going to be funds available to renovate the Town Hall in the future. There is not going to be enough grant money to cover the cost of renovating the Town Hall.

John Quenell asked when was the renovation of the Town Hall was ever part of the Highway Garage Project? The project started as a garage and will probably end as a garage project. The Town Hall project should be done as a stand alone project.

Willie Sheridan: The tax payers need to know if there will be enough funding to renovate the Town Hall even with the cost of the Town Garage.

Robert Tebbutt: The Town Hall is a precious and special asset of the Town. There is no one on the Board that doesn't feel that way. I will support what ever is reasonable for the Town Hall. The board appointed the Citizens Committee and looks forward to the recommendations made by the committee. The board will have to deal with the recommendations made by the committee and next year the board may not have three of the people on it that are there now. I don't think there is a problem of the board supporting the Town Hall renovation. How does the rest of the Board feel?

Steve Tucker: The Town Hall has to be kept up that's why we asked for the study.

John Quenell: Would like to have the Town Hall restored, he would like to remove the ceiling and expose the roof and remove the tile from the floor. He doesn't want to hold up the Garage funding to add in funding for the Town Hall.

Willie Sheridan: That is not what was meant, I want to be sure the Town will fund the renovation project next year even if the highway garage is built.

Pat Willis: Would like to see an endowment fund or line item in the budget so this building (Town Hall) can be kept in good repair, it has been let go.

Robert Tebbutt: Would like to separate the Highway Garage Project from the Town Hall Project. The board needs to focus on the Highway Garage Project and get it underway. The Citizens Committee should start to focus on the Town Hall. This board will be sitting until December 31, 2003; believes they will have recommendations about the Town Hall before the end of the year. The budget is done in October and November if it's to be included for next year.

Pat Willis: Has a package already to go and a call into the preservation architect to see about his schedule. He will want to meet with a few people, one from the board and the people who work in the building. The Town will get a written report after the visit.

Robert Tebbutt: Would like the architect to meet with the Town Board after he has reviewed the building and give them a briefing.

Tom McKernan-Rainbow Lake Road: The board has already made a commitment for this building (Town Hall) by eliminating the offices from the Highway Garage Project. That implies this building will continue to be used.

Robert Tebbutt: That is absolutely correct

Gould Hoyt: This building has been here for about ninety years. Couldn't the Town wait one or two years beyond the construction of the Highway Garage without the building coming apart? Some masonry work could be done to shore up the footings. Let's not cloud the issues. It tomfoolery to think there will be money available for next year to renovate this building (town Hall).

Rouse Fountain: The board should pursue the plan as it is and move on to see what they can do to bring the cost down.

Alicia Bodmer: Likes the idea of moving the Food Pantry to the Park. The equipment cannot be stored in the salt shed because it would get corroded.

Robert Tebbutt: This Highway Garage Project has been well underway for two years. After coming on the Board, sat down with Don Oliver and went over the project. Back in January he drew a diagram where all the equipment would go and made a recommendation to the Board that this was the building he wanted. Several board members went to visit other garages; visited 11 during February and March. Smaller towns have bigger buildings and had added the town offices. This seemed like a good idea so we added the offices onto the plans. Every time the plan is changed it costs more money. We can save a lot of money by removing the mezzanine. If we look at other things we can reduce another \$50,000 off the project. We need to work on this and preserve what the highway department needs to do their job.

Dave Knapp: Don't cheapen the building just to cut costs, make sure the highway gets what it needs so you don't have to add on later. Make sure the plans have everything on them because that's what costs money after the construction starts. Don't get into change orders. You are coming into the main building season, if you have to put off building another year make sure by April to have every thing in place (contractors, equipment) to get the maximum savings.

Joe Garso: Last December we had to bids go out and they were far lower than my estimates on both projects.

Art Robertson: When will you be making a decision as a board? Will be this be the last public hearing on this project?

Robert Tebbutt: There will be a meeting at 5:15 p.m. on Monday, June 23 to make the financing decision. A final decision for the Project will be made within 30 days. Another public hearing can be held if necessary. There are no secrets here. The public needs to be involved with the process.

John Quenell: If we build this year the contracts would have to be awarded by Aug 1.

Amber McKernan: If the project goes on thru will the cold be an issue for heating? Will it cost the Town more money?

Joe Garso: This was already included in the bid based on the completion date of January 2004, so the contractor should have taken this into consideration.

Gim Louie: Does the town need to build this year because of financing? If the Town gets more money than needed can it build the project next year and not use all the money?

John Quenell: The interest rates were at 1.7% a month ago and could go lower. The Town would get a BAN for the first year to build and float a Bond to pay for the actual amount expended.

Robert Tebbutt: The old garage needs a new roof to make it though the next year, to wait another year will be expensive.

Willie Sheridan: Is the APA application completed yet?

John Quenell: The application determination was to be made on Wednesday, June 18; did not call to see if it was accepted as complete. Did any one else hear anything?

Joe Garso: Wasn't able to contact the APA and find out the status

Lydia Wright: When do you think the land purchase from Paul Smith College will go through? Is every thing ready to go, the survey and the deed?

Robert Tebbutt: That will go though before construction is started, the money has to be approved and it is in the funding resolution for approval on Monday. There is no hurry to purchase the land. The survey has been done and the Attorney for the Town has drawn up the deed. The transfer of the Town Hall property will probably be done at the same time.

Rouse Fountain: Will the Town do the grading of the site? Can they start doing it now?

John Quenell: The DEC was just in today to look at the water level issue.

Don Oliver: The grading of the site can be done after the building is built. The DEC doesn't want the level brought up higher than the roadbed to prevent runoff into the road. The building has to be raised 2'6"

Joe Garso: The contractor will build up the area where the building is going to sit. The final surface will be from road millings when the State reconstructs State Route 86 from Gabriels to Donnelly's Corner.

Robert Tebbutt: Have asked the DOT to provide the road millings from the road project for the Town Garage parking lot.

Gould Hoyt: Is the road project going to go through? And if you can't build the building this year can the millings be used before the building is in place?

Robert Tebbutt: The millings will be available next spring and would like to see the building built so we don't lose this opportunity. The millings can be used at the firehouse also.

Tom Willis: What is the cost each year to the Town for a \$650,000 project? It seems to be a \$50,000 a year project, this is not a big deal for our budget. In the 2003 budget there is a \$54,000 item that will not be in there next year so the budget will not be increased by \$50,000. There are other one-time items in the budget as well. There is \$22,000 to buy the new truck and it goes away in 2007. There is \$35,000 for paving this year; maybe we should pave every other year instead of every year. The loan is not going to increase the budget by \$50,000, the most a taxpayer will pay is the \$43 per \$100,000 and they may not have to pay even that. It is not that big a deal.

Nik Santagate: That's \$50,00 a year for a 50-year project; there are line items that will go up next year. I haven't seen a "living cost" budget to see what the costs of the new building will be. The state and federal budgets are getting cut so we will probably have a larger county budget next year. The surcharge on court fines is going up. This increase to the budget shouldn't be considered as nothing in terms of the budget. This garage is a big deal for this town. This is the biggest project ever seen in this town.

Robert Tebbutt: Is there anyone here against this garage project? Is there anyone against building this year?

Willie Sheridan: With a caveat as to the cost, we have a lot of people on fixed incomes and \$43 per \$100,000 could be a problem for them. We have a responsibility to the residents of this town who can't afford this. The dollar figures are high and we need a new garage and it should be built this year but the cost needs to be considered.

Robert Tebbutt: Board has a lot of things to look at from everyone and will do a diligent job in considering all the input.

Lydia Wright: Would there be a benefit to waiting till spring to go out again for the bids?

Robert Tebbutt: The board will have to look at that; the old garage will be expensive to heat another year and I don't want to put any more money into it. If there are no more questions, thank you for coming.

There were no further comments from the public.

Motion to Adjourn the Public Hearing was made by Alicia Bodmer at **8:30 p.m.**, second by John Quenell; Aye5

Respectfully Submitted,

Elaine W. Sater
Brighton Town Clerk