

**Minutes
Town Council Steering Committee Meeting
June 27, 2016
Town Hall Conference Room B**

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM.
Present: Thomas Pope, Lisa Thomas, Julie Blanchard
Also present: John Elsesser, Town Manager
Absent: Richard Williams
2. **Acceptance of minutes, May 23, 2016.**
The minutes of May 23, 2016 were accepted as submitted.
3. **Reports:**
Chairman: none.
Committee members: none.
Vacancy/Board & Commission Reports: Reviewed.
4. **Resignations:**
School Building/Energy Efficiency Building Committee, Jeffrey Arn: Resignation accepted with thanks for service to be sent.

Lisa asked what is going on right now to try and fill vacancies especially the Zoning Board of Appeals which is elected and needs to be filled by a Republican. Also the School Building Committee – it looks like the term dates are flipped on the report. The School Energy and Building Committee is in jeopardy. John said he thinks someone moved over so they are just down one member. Lisa said there is also still an open seat on the Farmers Market Operating Committee. If we get that information out she is sure someone would want to sit there. People must not know.

5. **Library Building Expansion Project – Policy Considerations, WPCA Issues:**
Tim Timberman, Chair of the Building Expansion Committee, Kristi Sadowski, Library Director and Kathleen Willett, President of the Library Board of Trustees were present. Several other Library Board and Expansion Committee members were present as observers.

Tim Timberman said the Steering Committee has asked about a number of issues several times and we are here to address those concerns, which including parking ratios, book sale fees, ownership of the building and land, and WPCA capacity. Kristi Sadowski distributed a handout outlining each issue and outcome for each (*attached to these minutes*).

- a. **Parking.** The concern about adequate number of parking spaces was referred to the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) on March 14, 2016. We made a presentation before them utilizing established formulas to determine parking needs. The conclusion from the research and formula was that off-street parking for 76 spaces would be appropriate for the community and needs of the proposed Library facility. This could be supplemented on rare occasions with the 17 spaces located in the nearby municipal parking lot, although that is not required by PZC. The following motion carried by the PZC: *“The Coventry Planning and Zoning Commission supports the research and conclusions for*

parking requirements in regards to the Library expansion project.” Thomas Pope asked how many spaces were added from the original proposal. Tim said it went from 67 to 76, so 12 in total. Thomas asked if there were any other changes from the original proposal. Tim said no.

- b. **WPCA – sewer capacity:** At the last meeting the Steering Committee informed us that WPCA had concerns regarding sewer capacity issues related to the expansion. We went to WPCA on June 2, 2016. Despite the addition of bathrooms and sinks, the WPCA reviewed water usage data and determined that the proposed expansion would not contribute a substantial amount of flow to the sewer system. The following motion carried by the WPCA: *“To approve sewer service for the proposed expansion of Booth Dimock Library with no change in billing based on water usage readings.”*

Thomas Pope asked if WPCA said anything about the impact on other development in the area. Lisa said she doesn’t think it would have been relevant for WPCA to bring that up in the conversation. Tim noted that each property is assessed a per-equivalent dwelling usage (EDU), and 1 equals 600 gallons per day. Residential dwellings with washing machines, showers, etc. are more. The Library is far below one EDU, and WPCA said we could add ten bathrooms and still not get to the equivalent of one EDU. The expansion will not alter what we are already being allotted.

- c. **Annual Used Book Sale Preview Fees:** This event is a fundraiser for the Library. Each year the decision to offer a preview, and at what price, as a perk to Library members is evaluated. Over the past 15 years the price has varied from \$1 to \$15, most recently in 2015 at \$7. In April 2016 the Board made a decision not to offer a preview price for the book sale any longer and we think that addresses the Council’s concern.
- d. **Ownership of building and land:** The Board of Trustees has supplied the Town Council with a letter of intent to transfer future ownership of the library building and land, subsequent to a favorable referendum and completion of a project supported by the Town Council appointed Building Committee Expansion Committee. We accept this is a working document provided that all final terms are agreed upon by both the Board of Trustees, Town Council and their representative legal counsel. Kristi indicated that a lot of the Board members are present tonight to discuss the letter of intent or to clarify/answer questions.

Thomas asked if there are more questions. Lisa said she thought (Council member) Matthew O’Brien had questions, but he didn’t share them with her. Kathleen Willett said she was at the last Council meeting when he brought it up. He seemed concerned that we might be boxing ourselves in if changes were to occur going forward. As long as the expansion committee is on board with those changes the Board of Trustees supports that. John said he had also mentioned the two year timeframe as a concern. Kathleen said at the rate the project is proceeding we could be past the deadline for the state grant. If the project should not go forward due to loss of the grant and cannot be completed then the transfer would not go forward. John noted there are other alternatives such as holding the deed in escrow. Tim said we not sure when we will have a referendum. We want some assurances if we lose the grant. John said the State Library can also

issue an extension. Thomas asked to clarify the grant deadline. Kristi replied it is three years from fall 2015 (fall 2018). John said he believes it is three years to have funding in place. They have historically granted extensions but we are in different times now. Lebanon got their grant a number of years ago but they are still in line to proceed. Kathleen said once we are on the same page we can get everything prepared and have everything to sign once the referendum goes forward.

Tim said the Building Committee has answered everything that the Steering Committee asked of us. Thomas asked if there have been any other changes. Tim replied the project scope has been reduced from 24,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet. We did that by centralizing where staff is located to provide visual sightlines, and tightening up estimates for site and staff work. There is a firewall between the existing library and the expansion. An advantage to that is we don't have to close down during construction or remove books for storage or pay storage rental fees. The Council Finance committee had asked us if we could reduce the size further. We asked our architect to cut the size but the new plan didn't meet our objectives because there was no expansion to the assembly area and it did not address sight lines which is important for safety and security. Because of that the Expansion Committee did not support the revised plan. Kristi said in addition the reading and conference space would be completely cut off, and we would have computers in the middle of aisles which was another problem. Also there would be no windows in the children's room which would be dungeon-like. It also took away the existing staircase which complicated entering and exiting the building. John noted that one of the other reasons to maintain the firewall is to avoid the cost of a sprinkler system. To do a larger building would require sprinklers which would require a generator or water tank. He also noted that the revised plan calls for an interior corner which is more expensive.

Tim said the Expansion Committee did not feel the revised plan met their objectives or achieved significant cost savings. Kristi researched size of meeting space in other communities. (*See list on attached document*). We felt space for 125 people was in the ballpark with norms throughout similar towns and the state. The Expansion Committee felt right from the beginning of the project that cost and space would be paramount. Each space we went over with the architect was always in a cost-conscious manner. We felt confident and still feel confident this was the right plan. We feel we can achieve some savings with site work and staff work, reducing this to a 4.3 million project with the million dollar grant, so the project went from \$6.6 million to \$5.3 million. Thomas said it looks like the committee made a good rejection of the additional size reductions – it doesn't seem like it would have saved much. He asked what they did to save in technology costs. John said that the Finance Committee had asked that durable goods be separated out so they would not be financed for 20 years. A lot of what they did was to modify what the architect specified for a full scale renovation of the existing library, resulting in savings for items like shelving units etc. and they also felt the price per square foot in the existing library was high. Also in the parking lot, since it is already there it just needs drainage enhancements instead of new lot. Plus the materials specified for retaining wall to the left of the driveway could be significantly reduced. So basically we went from an architect's planning number to a hard look at several aspects from a construction aspect.

Thomas said he has some concerns with getting the short-term items out of the bond - how are you going to get the items you need? Kristi replied that the items we think will

last will still be included. Some things will be reused. We will use the computers we currently have and will acquire one at a time until we fill the space. Thomas asked if they would need additional appropriations in future budgets to cover furniture or technology. He wants to make sure the "gotta-have" items are funded. Tim replied were asked by Finance to remove them because they could be funded by the general annual budget or capital. John said that computers are already in the Capital Improvement Plan on a five-year replacement cycle. Phones are being done now and will just carry over. There is not a lot that would show up in future budgets. There is no looming bill coming. There has also been discussion about how some special projects can be targeted for fundraising. When we built the existing building the Lions Club focused on equipment for visually impaired children. We should net out from the CIP budget the cost for items such as the boiler, oil tank etc. that would be covered by this project. The boiler, HVAC system and elevator have been due for repairs for several years. If the project does not proceed will have to those costs factor back in at approximately a half-million dollars.

Thomas asked what the majority of the savings was. Tim replied the retaining wall and parking lot. We can use modular materials for the wall and do not need a full scale installation of a parking lot. We can mill and reclaim it. Thomas asked when we added in parking across the street if there was any discussion of adding additional safety features. Tim said we will have to see what improvements are put in place. We know a sidewalk and lighting is coming in. If the referendum passes and we need that parking we will look at safety features to include. John said there will be a textured crosswalk feature – the State will put it in at their expense at the end of construction to match the rest of the Main Street project. Other safety features such as paddle light controls would have to be looked at as a separate project. They are not in this budget at this time, but the State is starting to allow such projects which they did not before.

Thomas asked the Steering Committee if they had any further questions. Lisa and Julie said no. Kristi asked if there are any further concerns or other questions. Thomas replied there are some concerns with letter of intent, but it says what it says so we will take it as it is. Kristi said we have indicated it is a living document and we are prepared to address whatever concerns there are. Lisa said she thought Council Member O'Brien had concerns. Thomas said he does not want to make up questions for Mr. O'Brien. Tim said the Expansion Committee is here to address your concerns. If you don't have any at present you can send them to us - we will come back if desired. We are at your pleasure; just give us some direction.

Thomas said the two-year transfer stipulation might be a problem. If that is the final word we can take it or leave it. Tim said he doesn't think those are the options. We submitted the letter in good faith and it is not a take-it-or-leave-it document. It is a dialogue and if you have wording concerns we are prepared to address them. Thomas said he asked if there were any changes to the project you said no. Tim apologized, saying he misunderstood Thomas' question. He thought he meant the items Steering had raised, i.e. the parking, WPCA, book sale and ownership. Kathleen said the Board is not assuming there will be no changes between now and the referendum – if the Expansion Committee is happy then the Board is happy. John noted this is a concept plan. There will be changes once we get to construction and permitting. If that is the concern we could see whether something could be changed to reference the concept plan as attached so it is in one packet, so three years from now there is no issue. We could ask the attorneys to work out the two-year transfer issue in case the project runs longer. Thomas said he doesn't want to see the type of code issues that have come up like in

Hartford with the baseball stadium. When the document says "will be done in two years" he has some concerns. Lisa said she wishes Thomas had expressed that in the beginning of the meeting. Language issues could be tackled without such a lengthy discussion. Thomas said we have the letter and he is perfectly willing to act upon it. Tim asked if the letter will be forwarded to entire Council. Lisa asked if there is a possibility the letter might be revised before going to the Council. Kathleen said we are happy to make revisions to address areas of concern. That's why we thought we were here tonight. Lisa said she thinks they heard some specific areas of concern. Thomas said the Steering Committee doesn't speak for the full Council. Tim said it was our understanding that we would receive some initial direction here. This letter has been approved by our Board and revisions will need the Board's review. Then if so, will we keep coming back to Steering and then to the Council? Julie said she wouldn't send it back to Steering again. She thinks the whole Council should discuss it. The next Council meeting is July 18, 2016.

6. **Consideration: Acceptance of Avery Shores as Town Road:** John said he had hoped to have a document prepared to modify Gerald Park Association's terms of transfer to be more amenable to the Town. It is not done and he will have it for the next meeting. Thomas asked for Lisa's opinion on the requirement for a 50 foot easement. Lisa said she would like to know more about what kinds of solutions or problems they are going to have. It is very volatile and has been an issue for a long time. Thomas asked if she feels the 50 foot easement is something we should stay with. Lisa said she is not sure it is possible and if not we will have to be very careful with our language. Thomas said he feels it is possible they already have it. Our job is to protect the taxpayers rather than a small group of people. Lisa said she could make the same argument about S.T.O.P. (senior tax abatement program). She would like to hear back from Avery Shores.
7. **Consideration: Implementation of a noise and/or ATV ordinance:** A large volume of background information was provided with the agenda regarding other towns' experience with noise and/or ATV ordinances. Lisa said the Willington article was helpful as well as the CCM documents. She questioned how we can measure and enforce such an ordinance. Thomas asked how severe the problem is. Do we hear a lot of complaints? John replied in his first-hand knowledge nobody has an ordinance they feel really works. First you have to buy the equipment. Ongoing calibration is required. Operators must be certified and trained and those certifications have to be renewed. Then there are overtime issues because noise issues usually happen on nights and weekends. Thomas said in reading the volume of information it doesn't seem any one of them is easily enforced. John said there are some things that can be done with breach of peace. If people are using ATVs illegally something can be done. Julie said even if we were to create an ordinance it might not apply to use of an ATV on private property. Lisa said she feels it creates an expectation we can't live up to.
8. **Consideration: Tax Abatements for Seniors:** Thomas noted the background material provided was interesting to read. You can't just decide you want to give your residents a tax break without getting the State involved. Lisa said it looks like concerns about establishing age and residency are addressed. There is also potential to conflict with our code of ordinances. Do we have a sense of what the tax savings would be? Thomas said it is very minor. John said one option would be to eliminate the lien. It extends our program which is income based. If it applies to everybody then there is no conflict because you are not creating a special class of citizens. Lisa said since the original idea seems complicated and would offer a minimal benefit, should we be doing more to

publicize the program we already have? John said the program we have has about 65 that qualify and only a handful take the benefit because they don't want a lien on their house. Contrary to popular perception a lot of Coventry's senior population is not poor. Thomas said if you look at the criteria he believes it is about 300 households. John said the financial impact is not huge but it is cumulative over time. Lisa asked if this is something to still pursue or should we try to maximize what we already have. Thomas said he would like to eliminate the lien. John said we could have our attorney look at the language going forward but he doesn't think we can forgive the ones already in place. We could run numbers showing the impact of releasing the lien. Lisa said she cannot make the July meeting but would like to see the information so she can give some feedback. Thomas asked if we decide to go forward with this method if we would need a study committee. John said he doesn't think so.

9. Other Business:

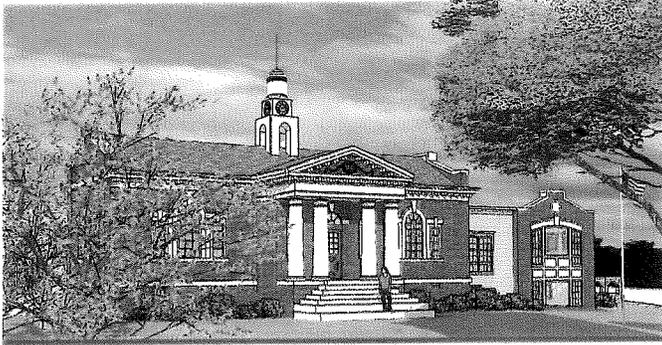
The July 2016 Steering Committee meeting will be cancelled due to lack of a quorum.

10. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM on a motion by Lisa Thomas, seconded by Julie Blanchard and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Stone
Town Council Clerk



BOOTH & DIMOCK MEMORIAL LIBRARY
BUILDING EXPANSION COMMITTEE &
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REPORT OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED TO THE
TOWN COUNCIL STEERING COMMITTEE
JUNE 27, 2016

PARKING:

Referred to the Coventry Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on March 14, 2016.

Motion carried by PZC: *“The Coventry Planning and Zoning Commissions supports the research and conclusions for parking requirements in regards to the library expansion project.”*

The below formula was acquired using studies and recommendations from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), examples provided by the American Planning Association (APA) through CROG, research from the Connecticut State Library Statistical Report supplemented with information from local libraries and Coventry Zoning Regulations as pertains to retail, businesses, museums and assembly spaces. A more comprehensive derivation of this formula is on the reverse.

The conclusion from this research and formula was that off-street parking for 76 spaces would be appropriate for the community and needs of the proposed Library facility. This could be supplemented on rare occasions with the 17 spaces located in the nearby municipal parking lot.

Booth and Dimock Library Proposed Renovation

	Gross Area (S.F.) (GA)	Public Access Area (S.F.) (PAA)	Assembly (Seats)	Spaces Required Assembly	Spaces Required (PAA)	Spaces Required (PAA - Assembly Area)	Spaces Provided On Site
Proposed Library	20,000	14,400	125	42			
Proposed Library (minus Assembly Area)		12,988	125	42		34	76
						Additional Parking Off-site	17
						Total Parking Available	93

OWNERSHIP:

The Board of Trustees has supplied the Town Council with a Letter of Intent to transfer future ownership of the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library building and land, subsequent to a favorable referendum, and completion of a project supported by the Town Council appointed Building Expansion Committee, as dictated in the aforementioned Letter. We accept this is a working document, provided that all final terms are agreed upon by both the Board of Trustees, Town Council and their representative legal council.

ANNUAL USED BOOK SALE:

The Annual Used Book Sale is a fundraiser for the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library, as is membership to the Library Association, which works similarly to joining a Friend’s of the Library group, and is quite common for Association Libraries. Each year the decision to offer a preview, at what price, and as a perk to “Members” is evaluated. In the past 15 years that price has varied from \$1.00 to \$15.00, most recently in 2015 at \$7.00 (less than half the cost of membership). In April 2016 a decision was made not to offer a preview for that particular sale.

SEWER USAGE

Referred to the Coventry Water Pollution Control Authority meeting on June 2, 2016.

Motion 6-2-2016-2: *“To approve sewer service for the proposed expansion of the Booth Dimock Library with no change in billing based on water usage readings.”*

Despite the addition of bathrooms and sinks, the WPCA reviewed water usage data and determined that the proposed expansion would not contribute a substantial amount of flow to the sewer system.

Parking Requirements Booth and Dimock Memorial Library

Coventry Zoning Proposed Library Expansion

	Public Access Area (S.F.)(PAA)	Assembly (Seats)	Spaces Required Assembly	Spaces Required (PAA)	Total
Section 5.02.04 Off-Street Parking Requirements					
Assembly	1 space / 3 seats	125 seats	42		
Retail	1 space / 250 S.F. (PAA)	12,988	42	52	94
Museum	1 space / 500 S.F. (PAA)	12,988	42	26	68
Library	1 space / 375 S.F. (PAA)	12,988	42	34	76

Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)

	Spaces / 1,000 S.F.	Spaces for 20,000 S.F
Average Peak Spaces / 1,000 S.F.	2.61	52
Average Supply / 1,000 S.F.	3.5	70
ITE Formula $P=1.48x+27$ (x=1,000 S.F Building)		57

Connecticut Zoning from American Planning Association (APA)

Town	Population	Library GA	Assembly (Seats)	Spaces Provided	Spaces / 1,000 S.F GA	One Space / S.F.
Enfield	11,303	19,509	93	56	2.9	348.4
Meriden	5,934	12,630	120	60	4.8	210.5
Newtown	7,591	21,428	125	46	2.1	465.8
New Fairfield				50		

Connecticut Library Parking Comparison

Town	Population	Library GA	Assembly (Seats)	Spaces Provided	Spaces / 1,000 S.F GA	One Space / S.F.
Enfield	11,303	19,509	93	72		
Meriden	5,934	12,630	120	72		
Newtown	7,591	21,428	125	40		
New Fairfield				50		
Coventry	12,419	20,000	125	76	3.8	263.2

Booth and Dimock Library Proposed Renovation

	Gross Area (S.F.) (GA)	Public Access Area (S.F.) (PAA)	Assembly (Seats)	Spaces Required Assembly	Spaces Required (PAA)	Spaces Required (PAA - Assembly Area)	Spaces Provided On Site
Proposed Library	20,000	14,400	125	42		34	76
Proposed Library (minus Assembly Area)	12,988	12,988	125				17
							93

Additional Parking Off-site
Total Parking Available