

Minutes
Coventry Town Council Meeting
July 18, 2016
Town Hall Annex

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.
Present: Hannah Pietrantonio, Andy Brodersen, Julie Blanchard, Thomas Pope, Matthew O'Brien, Richard Williams.
Also present: John Elsesser, Town Manager; Beth Bauer, Finance Director.
Absent: Lisa Thomas.

2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. **Audience of Citizens:**

Police Chief Mark Palmer said it has been a difficult few weeks for law enforcement, including our agency. When violence against law enforcement personnel happens it affects law enforcement people nationwide regardless of the size of your community. Our officers continue to do excellent work which is often hard, difficult and stressful. We are appreciative of the many gestures of kindness from the community that have occurred recently, including, meals, cookies, cards and kind words. We will continue to do a good job for the citizens of Coventry. Chief Palmer also presented four commendations to staff for the same incident in which a person had a knife and was threatening to kill himself or harm others. Coordinated efforts by Dispatcher Cote, Officer Vail, Sgt. Iger and Officer Hicks resulted in the subject surrendering and being transported to a medical facility for treatment. There were no injuries to the individual or the officers and their efforts brought credit to the Coventry Police Department. Officer Vail mentioned the donations of food and kind words and expressed his thanks.

Howard Haberern, 99 David Drive, wanted to thank the Town, especially John Elsesser and Wendy Rubin, for the community garden project. He and his wife have been helping in the community garden. It started last year and was somewhat successful. The soil was tested and improved upon. The only problem this year is we have so many vegetables and have to give them away. We are appreciative because many of us live in shady areas where vegetables cannot be grown. Our community garden is more successful than some in towns with deeper pockets.

Jen Beausoleil, 221 Eastview, noticed an item on the agenda regarding a safety survey being done by the Town of Bolton to evaluate the impact of increased truck traffic from a proposed gas infusion station on Rt. 6 in Andover. She would like the Town Council to consider a similar action to at least evaluate the impact on safety, public works and resident use of that transportation corridor.

Gerry Zak, 88 Riley Mtn. Road, is a member of the Coventry Lake Advisory & Monitoring Committee, but is here as a citizen to express concerns about CT DEEP's treatment plans to eradicate Hydrilla in Coventry Lake. We all want to see Hydrilla go away. He has concerns about the timing of the treatment – which may happen by the end of the month. He knows the Town has already expressed concerns to CT DEEP but they plan to do what they plan to do. His concern is that this time of year is a little too early to be killing vegetation which can create other problems. He wonders if the Town Council has any thoughts and whether the Town might be willing to talk with CT DEEP again. He

thinks there is a lot at risk and it might be wise to wait until later in the season. Julie Blanchard noted there will be a public meeting on July 21st where CT DEEP will present their treatment plan. Gerry said his impression is that they will hear the questions and then do what they want to do. He thinks we should try a little harder to get them to delay.

Ben Garcia, 54 Bradbury Lane, has lived here for seven years and the one thing he loves the most is our library. Hearing about the proposed expansion made him happy. He used to come to the library even when he lived in Springfield. When he became old enough to work he immediately applied for a job at the library because it is a nice place to go. He thinks the expansion is a nice thing to do and speaking on behalf of other teens it gives teens a nice amount of space to do what they want, as well as younger kids. It will be very nice if the Town Council could think of having the town go to vote on whether the expansion should happen or not.

Hearing no further requests to speak, Julie Blanchard closed Audience of Citizens.

4. Acceptance of Minutes, June 20, 2016.

Motion #16/17-01: Matthew O'Brien moved and Thomas Pope seconded to accept the minutes of the Town Council meeting on June 20, 2016. The following corrections were requested:

- Page 1, item 1, line 2: Correct the spelling of Lisa Tomas to Lisa Thomas.
- Page 1, item 9B, line 2: Spell out the acronym MOU – to be known as Memorandum of Agreement. Same paragraph, line 5: Correct the title of Jen Beausoleil to Board of Education Vice Chair.
- Page 3, paragraph 2, line 1: Revise first sentence to read, "Matthew said if we could we should put in the Memorandum of Agreement that this is for regular education expenditures only."
- Page 5, paragraph 1, line 4: change "Richard to consider a different report..." to "Richard to consider other reports.."
- Page 6, Motion #15/16-408, line 6: change increase to increased.
- Page 7, paragraph 1, line 3: Add the word "a" before "long-standing."
- Page 7, paragraph 4, line 2: Spell out the acronym PSA – to be known as Public Service Area.
- Page 7, Reports: A – Council Chairwoman. Change "none" to "previously stated."
- Page 11 – paragraph 9A, line 8: Change "raising" to "repairing."

The motion to accept the minutes as corrected carried on unanimous vote.

5. Consent Agenda:

Motion #16/17-02: Hannah Pietrantonio moved to accept the Consent Agenda, seconded by Richard Williams. The motion carried on unanimous vote.

Reports:

A. Council Chairwoman – Julie Blanchard: Julie appreciates what Chief Palmer said and what our police department does and all police departments do.

B. Council Members:

Andy Brodersen said over the past few weeks the horrors we have heard about and seen have touched us all. Black and blue – injured and dead – a confused and misdirected society. We have all watched and heard about these recent horrific events on TV, radio and the Internet. Many in small towns like Coventry think that they may be immune to the behavior we are

seeing. However, as we just said in our Pledge of Allegiance, we are one nation under God – indivisible. What hurts our neighbors hurts us also. It reminds him of a song he learned in Sunday School a long time ago. Red and yellow, black and white – all are precious in God’s sight. We don’t know all the reasons, we don’t have all the answers, and we certainly don’t know what the future may bring. But – we can pray for healing for our nation and for our towns. He is reminded that our scriptures tell us – “If my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” We as a Town Council can make assurances to our people that everything reasonably will be done to keep our town safe. His heart grieves with those who grieve and he will continue to pray for healing in this time of great rift.

Hannah Pietrantonio wants to give heartfelt thanks to the members of the Coventry Police Department for their donation of the pay they are receiving from construction traffic work to Ruthie Marquez, a young person who lives in Coventry, so she can get a service dog. She thinks this is wonderful and commendations to them for their large hearts.

C. Finance Committee – Matthew O’Brien:

(See full remarks attached to these minutes.) It is anticipated that the Town will finish the year in solid fashion. He didn’t have a chance to review Board of Education reports prior to the Finance Committee meeting so he has prepared a working document that outlines dramatic changes in the areas of the general fund and special education tuition excess cost from January – May 2016. We haven’t received the June report yet – the next Board of Education meeting is cancelled but he would like to request an end-of-year report in the interim and not have to wait until their August Finance Committee meeting. We are developing a list of questions for the Board which will be finalized after we see their reports (*attached to minutes*). They are required to do a narrative, and he would like to see official reports with dates and an explanation of the changes. The Finance Committee also discussed the Board of Education’s request to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for operation of the preschool fund. They withdrew their request. The Chair expressed disappointment that Board of Education did not appear to be forthcoming about their plans to take over the preschool. The Chair raised questions about the Board’s discussion in their minutes about taking over the preschool. It was only after David Petrone and Jennifer Beausoleil attended our last Council meeting that the Council was told that the signing of the MOA had a direct impact on the Board’s ability to take over the preschool and that was why they wanted a new MOA signed by the Council. Then we were told that the new MOA didn’t make any changes to the original language approved by the prior Council. This looked to be not accurate. The Chair recommended that if the Board would like swift action on this or other items in the future that they present the Council with the action requested, all of the facts surrounding their request, the reason for the request and any timeline, and the impact of any such action they are requesting the Council to make. The Town Manager reported this message has been conveyed to the Board.

The Manager told the Committee that the Library Building Committee and the Building Energy Committee would be coming to the next Town Council meeting to discuss next steps. The Chair asked if the issue of probate was still a concern for the Town’s ability to take ownership of the Library and land if the Town were to move forward with the project. The Chair said that if the Council decides to move forward he would suggest that any approval be contingent on the Library clearing up any question about the will’s impact on the ability of the Town to assume ownership following the completion of the project.

The Manager reported that we still do not have any further information about the impacts of the additional \$22 million in municipal aid cuts that the Governor included in the final State budget. The Chair expressed concern over the potential impacts on this year's budget and the real expectation that revenues in this year's State budget will be hundreds of millions of dollars less than those built into the budget by the Democrats and the Governor and the potential impacts of things that are hanging over us that we can't control.

D. Steering Committee – Thomas Pope:

The Steering Committee met on June 27th. There is a significant need for volunteers to serve on a variety of boards and commissions. There is a list of vacancies on the Town website and we would really appreciate anyone who could donate some time. The Library Building Expansion Committee is a prime example of people who have put in a great deal of volunteer time and effort. We really appreciate it.

Representatives from the Library Building Expansion Committee gave an update to the Steering Committee on the status of their project including savings they have been able to achieve by reducing the site work costs and the scope of the project. This is a prime example of why you look more closely at a project when it is proposed and not just approve it in advance.

Moving forward we have acceptance of Avery Shores as a town road and the Town Manager plans to prepare a document for the next meeting. Also there was some discussion about the use of all-terrain vehicles and/or a noise ordinance, and the senior tax abatement initiative. What we had originally discussed for the abatement seems to be great problem in that the State doesn't allow the municipality the authority to change the way we tax without their approval. We can alter what we currently do. We have a program now where people qualify based on income – it puts a lien on what isn't taxed, and we are in discussion about eliminating that lien. There will be more to report next month.

Julie Blanchard noted we had discussed at Finance Committee the possible development of a policy regarding inter-fund allocation transfers being something that the Steering Committee should review. It was agreed to put this item on the next Steering agenda.

E. COVRRRA. – John A. Elsesser:

We are in the process of upgrading the rail system at the transfer station to meet required OSHA standards and will have to do that on overtime to get it done within the compliance timeframe. We are expecting something on the study later this month regarding possible relocation of the transfer station. It has been narrowed down to two options – the third location didn't have any benefits. Matthew O'Brien asked whether the scale that was damaged by lightning has been replaced. John replied yes.

F. Town Manager – John A. Elsesser:

1. **Project updates:** A lengthy written memo has been provided. There is a lot going on this summer. Thanks to the public for tolerating all the road work - we are all over town and we know it can be a great inconvenience when you're in a hurry. We are wrapping up. A few miles are left for paving. We will start shimming for August chip seal and do some prep work for next year's chip seal. A list of roads to be chip sealed will be in next week's e-blast. By the end of August the bond money will be spent and DPW Director Mark Kiefer will do a presentation about what has been accomplished. We think the public will be impressed. We have already repaired or replaced over 40 catchbasins. We are finding many more that are failing. They are reaching their life expectancy (30-40 years).

We are doing the final electrical work at the Laidlaw Park soccer field to get the irrigation system going by the end of the week. There has been major volunteer work by Water Wizards. It is a complicated project.

We got deeds for 275 acres of open space filed. What was the Rt. 6 corridor is now open space. We will have it on the next agenda with a map. It is a very significant acquisition.

We are beginning round two of the Solarize Coventry campaign. There is a kickoff event on July 28th at 7:30 PM at Patriots Park Lodge. A lot of citizens have been inquiring about another opportunity to get solar. We did a competitive bidding process and chose Encon – the same installer who did it last time. The price will be \$3.77 per watt.

Thomas Pope asked about a reference in the written project update under public safety that mentions Chief Palmer being invited to the White House. It is not often this happens and he would like more information. John replied he would like the Chief to report on it personally. It is quite an honor. Thomas noted that many town roads are really in need of chip seal - are we holding off until after the natural gas project is done? John replied that their temporary patch will hold for many years. Our preference is to wait a couple years and then do the whole road. We don't want to waste a lot of money – we will do it in a couple years after people connect to the gas line.

Hannah asked when the gas line comes up Eastview – is there nothing in the plan to go down to the cul de sac? A lot of homes there could benefit. Would CNG come back at another time? John said if the neighbors get together and tell CNG they want it they might come back. It will probably not be done as part of the initial project but once they are in town we imagine they will start looking at expansion where there is demand. They are moving fairly rapidly on the project, but still do not have some of the state permits they need. We hope to get lines to the school buildings before the start of the school year.

2. **CRCOG Annual Report and Member Benefits:** John said he thought the attached report was presented in a way that you can see the value we get from belonging to CRCOG. Julie explained the CRCOG acronym stands for Capital Region Council of Governments. It is an opportunity for towns to do things together as a group.

7. Old Business:

A. 16/17-1: Booth & Dimock Library Expansion Project: Next Steps: Julie Blanchard said she feels there is such uncertainty with our state budget that she is not comfortable moving this project forward. She appreciates all the work the committee has done. She asked other Council members to share their thoughts.

Andy Brodersen said that we as a Town Council have spent or authorized spending of a considerable amount of money since our installation. Some of us ran on a platform of controlling spending, and he believes we have worked hard to do that. Our spending has been well thought out and necessary to keep Coventry the great town that it is. Our state is in a financial crisis and the amount of monies returned to cities and towns is in great jeopardy. We cannot accurately predict what the state funds for Coventry's schools will look like over the next few years. Most probably the Town of Coventry will need to spend more of its own tax money to maintain school resources at current levels. At the same time other services in our town are important and must also be maintained, including police, fire,

medical emergencies, road services, recreation and many more. Coventry is a great place to live. The choices we make at these times should help keep our town great and perhaps make Coventry even greater. We need to be thoughtful that money we authorize to spend is done prudently. He commended the library expansion team for all their hard work. They have worked diligently to bring us to where we are now in the process. If we move forward we could be committing to a library expansion project that should meet our library facility needs for up to the next 30 years. It has been stated that due to advancements in technology and other areas, the nature and mission of libraries is changing. He can agree with this. However, none of us really know what the future will look like – especially in the area of technology. He has heard it said that libraries are changing and becoming more than just a place for books and study. Libraries are also becoming technology centers and a place for people to gather. He would like to ask three basic questions in regards to the proposed library expansion:

- 1) Is a commitment of millions of dollars for a library expansion the best use of that money for our town at this time?
- 2) Under the current proposal is there a risk that what would be built would not meet our future needs and a new path may later need to be chosen?
- 3) Have we as a Council sought out independent, unbiased, professional guidance to help us determine the direction we should go with our library?

He believes the library is not a project we should rush into. Let us be sure we've done all our homework. Let us be sure we have sought the best professional advice and that we make the final decision based on the best information available. Let us not work desperately to meet a deadline but let us work conscientiously to produce the best possible direction for the future of our library and our town at this time.

Hannah Pietrantonio said she came prepared to either move this matter to our next meeting because the full Council is not here, or put it out to referendum. It is time to go to referendum so townspeople can see the plans. The expansion is important for our town.

Richard Williams said this is a lot of money. The majority on the Council ran on not spending a lot of money and to be as fiscally responsible as we can be. He personally doesn't feel this is a project that should go forward because of the cost. He felt it was high when it first came to us. He was surprised it came back lower the second time but it was only through prodding. He doesn't like to spend a lot of money.

Matthew O'Brien commended the committee – he feels they have done pretty good work. They haven't answered all his questions but he feels the project can be considered again when we know the impact of the state budget. The issue of crumbling concrete foundations is another concern. Coventry has 1500 homes that were built during the period of the concrete problem - now that people can reevaluate their assessments there could be a major impact. Plus there are a number of school projects that have to be done. He thinks the library expansion is a good project but it could be put off until we have a better handle on our finances and hopefully it will work out.

Thomas Pope said he will probably repeat some things that were already said. He wants to thank the volunteers and staff for their contribution and dedication – your vision and foresight is a community asset. It is apparent how emotionally involved they are in the project. A library can and is so much more than a building for books. For the young it is an introduction to a world of learning and discovery. It is a gathering place for students offering far more opportunities than libraries of past generations. For seniors it can be a social gathering place to attend informative events. Libraries today have evolved beyond the role

that many of us may remember from childhood. The future will bring new ideas, programs and opportunities. Like computers from the past, our library may work but the days of using a Commodore 64 are past. We must update our library – we are in a position where an investment must be made. We cannot ignore pressing capital improvement needs – our future will include an investment in our library, the real question is how much and when. The library committee has put forth a great deal of effort in formulating plans and a proposal for the future. He attended a presentation at the library to become informed. He was excited and supportive of the plan. He read the expansion committee reports. He even applied their formula and data to determine required parking spaces to verify the correctness of the plan. He questioned why the formula results did not match the plan. He was told the formula was not valid for our project but it was in the report provided to substantiate the needs and the project. He was bothered by that disclosure – it did not alter his personal feelings about the merits of improving our library – it did, however, give him doubts about the report in general. With the disclosure about the parking formula one can easily view the report as intellectual cotton candy spun to validate a vision. When the project was first proposed to this Council we were urged to immediately send it to referendum. We chose to ask questions and review how this project fits into the future of Coventry. The expansion committee was provided full opportunity to discuss changes and alter the proposal. To their credit they invested time and effort to address a variety of concerns brought forth. They found significant and substantial savings, they looked at policies and conditions to protect the taxpayers and citizens. It was not an easy task but they did not waiver in their vision. Their commitment was and is to bring excellence to their project and the community. If this project were to stand alone this would be an easy project for me as an individual to fully support. It is at times like this that the burden of elected office weighs upon the issue. The library expansion must be viewed not with tunnel vision but rather in a panorama. There are a number of issues we must look at and the key issue is financial. While the library may at first glance look to be a small additional burden on our taxpayers it is not the only building block in our coming budgets. This year we have seen the State reduce funding after municipalities set their budgets. Once our Board of Education budget is passed any State reduction is a burden on the Town. While the Board of Education has annually shown significant surplus funds the Town budget does not. Town increases in expenditures will be the burden of the taxpayers. This will be a year of financial uncertainty. The issue of crumbling concrete foundations could have significant impact on our grand list. We have a school building project, a multi-year teacher contract and the largest unknown is what will come out of our state capitol. This state is facing generational financial challenges. The past history of leadership in Hartford has provided us with burdensome unfunded mandates, historic tax increases and recently reductions in State funding for municipalities. As a Town Council member he feels it would be financially irresponsible to recommend for approval a project he personally likes at this time. He would prefer to wait until we know the State budget impact and bring the project back for consideration this time next year, probably in June. If the State doesn't give us the money they said they will give us, we will be in a huge hole.

Julie Blanchard asked for consensus to review this matter after the State budget is known next year. Hannah Pietrantonio disagreed. Other members present were in agreement. The Expansion Committee members were in attendance to make a presentation. Julie felt it was not necessary at this time and asked that the Committee leave their handout materials to be distributed for review. (*The handout materials are attached to these minutes.*)

B. 15/16-113: Discussion/possible action: Request for financial information from the Coventry Board of Education: Julie Blanchard noted this request was begun at a previous meeting by Richard Williams. We discussed some of this at the Finance Committee meeting

and Beth Bauer was reviewing some of the reports generated by the Board of Education to see if they would serve to meet the request. She asked Beth to provide an update. Beth indicated the report was attached to the Finance Committee agenda but was not discussed. It is called a Disbursement Detail report and includes fields for date, vendor, description, account number and amount. The sample report was 43 pages. Julie asked if the Finance Committee wants to discuss it further at their next meeting. Matthew O'Brien suggested sharing the report with Richard. Richard said he thinks this report would be helpful but he wants to request any internal reports that are created and shared with staff that would apply – he wants to see an example of each report that is created that is used. John said he believes all fiscal reports are shared with us monthly. Richard said he wants to see anything internally that is created. Matthew noted that John is suggesting that what is produced is what we see. It was agreed to continue this discussion at the next Finance Committee meeting. Matthew said we will review this same report again plus any others that may be relevant. John said what we are trying to determine is what information Richard is looking for and we thought this report might accomplish that. Richard said he is looking to get any reports that are generated that they use. John said he will have Beth talk again with (School Business Manager) Bob Carroll but we believe this report provides an even more comprehensive review than what they use internally.

8. New Business:

A. 16/17-2: Update from School Energy and Building Efficiency Building Committee on Natural Gas Conversions: Representatives from the building committee were introduced: Tom Kolodziej, chairman; Greg Longo of BL Companies (the engineering company); Danielle Kloster, who was also on the energy committee; and Bill Trudelle, Director of Facilities for Coventry Public Schools. Tom said the last time we were here we talked about several options. Our recommendation is to replace fully the boilers in the old high school/middle school - two boilers in each, replacing them with three smaller condensing boilers. These boilers are more efficient and can be staged. The other recommendation is for the Complex - that boiler is only about 15 years old so we are only recommending replacing the burners on those - they have about 15 years of life left. That will get us to being able to satisfy CNG when the gas meter is at the building and ready to go. Costs were outlined in the document attached to the Council agenda packet, with the recommended option totaling \$533,799. The committee expects this cost to be the high bid. Matthew O'Brien asked whether we are making the right decision not to do the full replacement now. Would increased efficiency offset the cost increase for the Complex? Greg said it will operate at similar efficiency as it is now. Maintenance will come down but we won't get energy savings. Matthew suggested we bid the project both ways and then make a decision. Greg replied yes, that is what committee recommends. We would bid the Complex replacement boilers as an alternate. Matthew said he is excited about the project and thinks it is good. John Elsesser said the committee wanted to come in and touch base – they have validated the numbers. Tom said he understands the contract with CNG is December 31st or 90 days from the time the new meter is up and running. So to meet that deadline we need to go out to bid next week in order to get bids in and evaluate them. Then the equipment needs to be manufactured so it can be delivered by 12/31. We are not going to do anything until the meter is there. We don't want to tear up the facility until we are sure we can pull the plug on the oil burners. The project should not take too long or be too disruptive to the schools.

Richard Williams asked how many vendors would typically bid on this type of project. Greg replied for a small town like Coventry it can be difficult to get people to come out. So we will

do a non-mandatory walk-through and allow bids based on the drawings. We will make sure bidders will know about the project through our network so they won't have to rely on seeing it in the newspaper. We hope to get six bidders. Richard said if we post the project don't bidders know where we want to come in on price and set them high? Greg said we expect the bidding will be competitive. We make sure we get the right firms here to bid. John noted it is more of a gravy project in that swap-out is a little easier than new construction. Also it will be off-season – for schools in the summer it is hard to get contractors to do anything because everyone wants work done in two months. Off-cycle work might be in our favor. Greg said having all of the work together is a benefit too because prevailing wage is less of an issue.

Motion #16/17-03: Matthew O'Brien moved to a authorize the School Energy/Building Efficiency Building Committee to move forward with getting bids on the gas conversion project as presented tonight for both options one and two. The motion was seconded by Richard Williams and carried on unanimous vote.

B. 16/17-3: Consideration/Acceptance: Conveyances, Warwickshire on Godiva Lane: John Elsesser noted this is basically a storm drainage easement. It has been approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission and reviewed by our attorney. **Motion #16/17-04: Matthew O'Brien moved to accept the storm drainage easement for Warwickshire on Godiva Lane as presented. The motion was seconded by Thomas Pope and carried on unanimous vote.**

10: Executive Session:

Motion #16/17-05: Matthew O'Brien moved that the Town Council enter into Executive Session pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 1-200(6)(B)-discussion of strategy and negotiation with respect to pending claims and litigation to which the public agency or a member thereof, because of his conduct as a member of such agency is a party until such litigation claim has been finally adjudicated or otherwise settled with the following people in attendance: Town Council members except Lisa Thomas, the Town Manager and the Finance Director. The motion was seconded by Thomas Pope and carried on unanimous vote.

Motion #16/17-06: Matthew O'Brien moved that the Town Council enter into Executive Session pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 1-200(6)(E)-discussion of any matter which would result in the disclosure of public records or the information therein contained described in sub-section (b) of Section 1-210 with the following people in attendance: Town Council members except Lisa Thomas, the Town Manager and the Finance Director. The motion was seconded by Thomas Pope and carried on unanimous vote.

Motion #16/17-07: Matthew O'Brien moved that the Town Council enter into Executive Session pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 1-200(6)(A): discussion concerning the employment, appointment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee with the following in attendance: Town Council members except Lisa Thomas, the Town Manager and the Finance Director. The motion was seconded by Thomas Pope and carried on unanimous vote.

Executive Session commenced at 9:08 PM.

Motion #16/17-08: Richard Williams moved to leave Executive Session at 9:38 PM. The motion was seconded by Hannah Pietrantonio and carried on unanimous vote.

11. Adjournment:

Motion #16/17-09: Thomas Pope moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:39 PM. The motion was seconded by Richard Williams and carried on unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Stone
Town Council Clerk

Finance Committee Report (7/18/16 meeting)

Beth Bauer reported that as of June 30th the Town has collected 100.6% of anticipated property tax revenue and ahead of last year's collections.

Our general fund revenue collections are at 101.19% of anticipated.

Anticipated Revenues for 2015 - 2016 from the State of Connecticut have been reduced by \$26,000.

The Conveyance tax and Building department revenues are still projected to exceed anticipated by \$54,000.

COVRAA revenue collections are now at 111.6% of anticipated revenues and ahead of collections from last year. The projected end of the year balance is now \$553,282 AFTER accounting for the Transfer Station study and the allocation of 5/12 year of ¼ of the DPW Assistant's salary to COVRAA (as of January 31, 2016).

Overall, we anticipate that the town has finished the year in solid fashion – primarily due to the additional revenue realized from the tax sale.

Beth Bauer will have final numbers for the August Finance Committee meeting.

Finance received the April and May Board of Education reports at our last meeting at the table and had not had time to review or comment on them.

I created a working document tracking the changes in the projected sub total of general fund surplus, the Special Ed Tuition/Excess Cost surplus and the Total General Fund Surplus from the January Board of Education Management report through the May report. The Board's Management reports reflect some dramatic changes in both during that period. The anticipated sub total of the General Fund Surplus was projected to be \$151,275.78 as of January. It was reported to be \$186,936.45 as of February (an increase of \$35,660.67. As of March 31st the projected surplus had grown to \$198,512. Following transfers and spending approved by the Board the April report projected a surplus of \$63,417.08 (a decrease of \$135,095.42). The May report reports a projected over expenditure of -\$104,998.12 (a further decrease of \$168,415.20). The total change from January to May was -\$256,273.90.

The Special Education Tuition/Excess Cost was predicted to be \$94,199.04 as of January. It was reported to be \$79,654.95 (a decrease of \$14,544.09). As of March it was projected to be \$57,595.41 (a further decrease of \$22,059.54). As of April the predicted surplus from Special Education Tuition was reported to be \$135,320.81 (an increase of \$77,725.40). The May report showed a projected surplus of \$218,890.06 (which was a further increase of \$83,569.25).

The Total projected surplus was projected to be \$245,474.82 in January. It was \$266,591.40 as of February (an increase of \$21,116.58). As of March 31st it was reported to be \$256,107.91 (a decrease of \$10,483.49). The April report showed a total projected surplus of \$198,737.89 (a decrease of \$57,379.02). The May 31st report projects a remaining surplus (after transfers and new spending) of \$131,582.88.

We are waiting for the June reports from the Board. However I recently saw that the Board has canceled their next meeting and canceled their Finance Committee meeting. I would ask that we be given the June

reports by the Board and not have to wait until their August Finance committee meeting. That will allow us to complete our look at the changes in these areas.

We are developing a list of questions for the Board of Education. Their policies call for them to provide a narrative and explanation for changes in their reports. We have requested copies of all of the completed transfers the Board has made. We will be requesting that the Board of Education

- Provide a detailed description of the events and actions taken that resulted in the changes reflected in their reports
- identify the total of all excess funds realized in the 2015-2016 budget year
- identify the reasons for the surplus funds generated
- identify how all of the unexpended/surplus funds from their approved appropriated budget were used/spent (What was the Board able to fund that did not appear in their approved budget?)
- Identify the source and amounts of all of the additions to the Board's budget beyond what was appropriated

Once we have the June reports and receive the completed transfer request documents we will finalize these numbers and formally submit our questions.

We began a discussion of whether the Council should develop a policy governing authority to make inter-fund allocations. We discussed the types of instances that may necessitate a re-allocation of expenses or purchases.

The chair suggested that as this would be a policy issue that Steering be asked to consider it as well.

The chair said that he would try and work out some draft language for a possible policy – for further discussion.

We discussed the fact that the Board of Education withdrew their request for the Council to enter into a new MOA with the Board of Education concerning the operation of the Board's preschool and early childhood education program (the "Coventry Preschool Fund"). The Chair expressed disappointment that the Board did not seem to be forthcoming about their request. Initially the Board only asked the Board to enter into the new MOA and made no mention of their plans to take over the pre-school. The chair raised questions about the Board's discussion in their minutes about taking over the pre-school. It was only after David Petrone and Jennifer Beausoleil attended our last Council meeting that the Council was told that the signing of the MOA had a direct impact on the Board's ability to take over the pre-school and that was why they wanted a new MOA signed by the Council. Then we were told that the new MOA didn't make any changes to the original language approved by the prior Council. This looked to be not accurate.

The chair recommended that if the Board would like swift action on this or other items in the future that they present the Council with the action requested (with timelines if applicable), all of the facts surrounding their request, the reason for the request and any timeline, and the impact of any such action that they are requesting the Council to make.

The Manager reported that this message has been conveyed to the Board.

The Manager told the Committee that the Library Building Committee and the Building Energy Committee would be coming to the next Town Council meeting to discuss next steps.

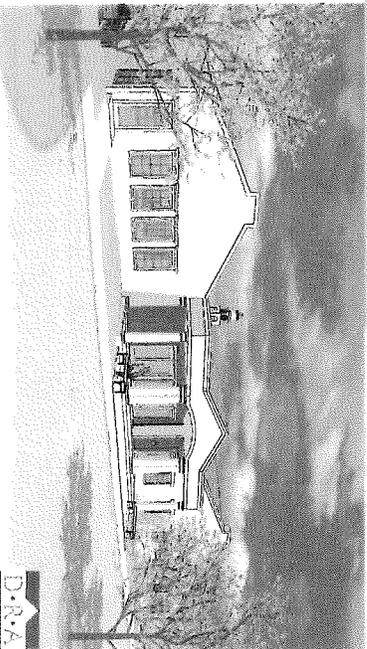
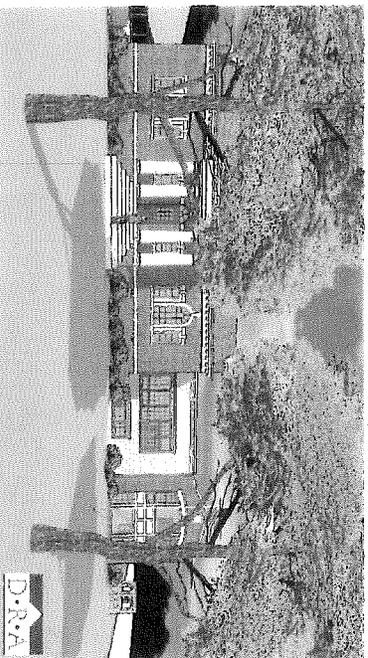
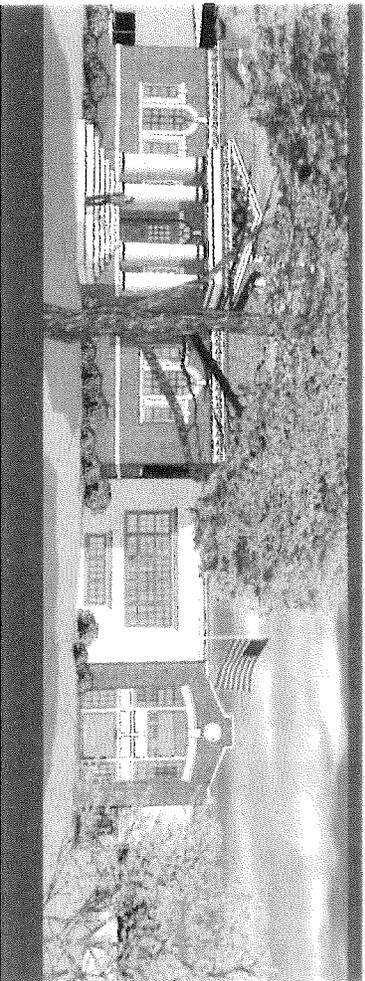
The Chair asked if the issue of probate was still a concern for the Town's ability to take ownership of the Library and land if the Town were to move forward with the project. The Chair said that IF the Council

decides to move forward he would suggest that any approval be contingent on the Library clearing up any question about the will's impact on the ability of the Town to assume ownership following the completion of the project.

The Manager reported that we still do not have any further information about the impacts of the additional \$22m in municipal aid cuts that the Governor included in the final State budget. The Chair expressed concern over the potential impacts on this year's budget and the real expectation that revenues in this year's State budget will be hundreds of millions of dollars less than those built into the budget by the Democrats and the Governor and the potential impacts of things that are hanging over us that we can't control.

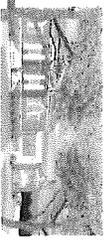
Matthew O'Brien
Chairman, Finance Committee

Our plan allows us to keep everything we love about our library, while addressing our community's expanding needs for space, technology and resources fit for the 21st century.



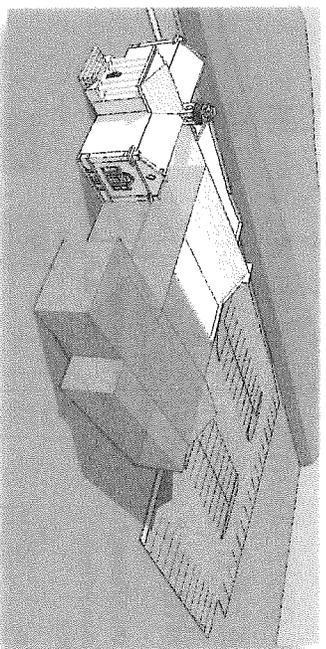
Project Priorities

- Provide plans for a functional, aesthetic, future facility for the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library at the lowest cost to the community.



Have There Been Changes?

- Yes: The project is better and cheaper

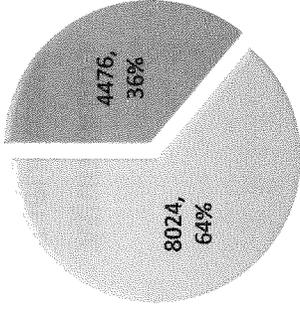


Library Usage

- Coventry Residents that have active Library

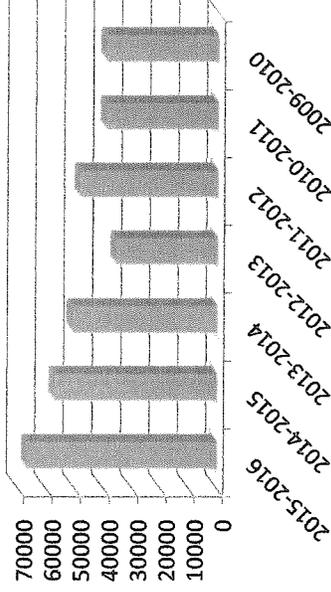
Cards: 8,024

- That is 531 more than last year!
- 64% of the Coventry Population
- Does not reflect families where a parent uses one card for everyone.



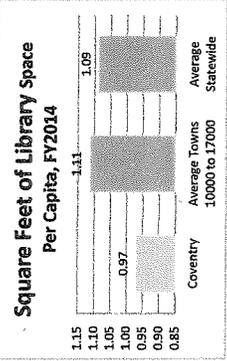
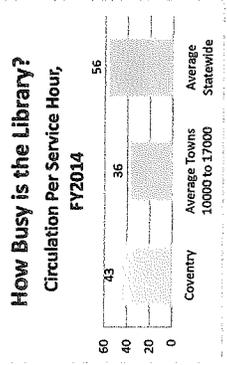
Library Usage

- 67,056 Visits to the Library counted by electronic door counter
- That is a 17% increase since last year!



Library Usage

- The Library is 19% busier than that of the average Connecticut town of similar size, yet it has 13% less space than the average for such towns—this only counts circulation, not in house usage of materials which has nearly doubled in the last year.



Council Concerns

- Financial Impact
- Parking
- Sewers
- Building & Land Ownership



Council Concern – Financial Impact

- Revisions from Space Needs Report, made before Concept Plan Created
- Concept Plan absorbed many outstanding CIP projects
- Revisions made to Preliminary Cost Estimate

Money Saving Adaptations

- 33% Reduction in Square Footage called for in the Space Needs Plan:
Accomplished through an effective design featuring multi-use spaces.
Space needs plan called for adding 12,000 square feet and our proposal only adds 8,000 square feet.

Saved: \$ 1,200,000



Construction Costs: Site Relocation

CONSTRUCTION COSTS		\$ 6,600,000	Misc. Admin Costs	\$ 12,000
Demolition	\$ 0	Architectural Team Fees	\$ 594,000	
Site Work	\$ 600,000	Reimbursable	\$ 5,000	
Building Construction	\$ 6,000,000	Geotech & Survey	\$ 30,000	
Land Acquisition	\$ 200,000	Testing	\$ 15,000	
Escalation	\$ 264,000	Printing & Mailing	\$ 1,000	
Estimating Contingency	\$ 495,000	New Furnishings	\$ 50,000	
GC General Conditions	\$ 330,000	Phone System	\$ 15,000	
P&P Bonds	\$ 39,600	Technology	\$ 30,000	
Insurance	\$ 52,800	Security System	\$ 15,000	
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS	\$ 7,981,400	Builder's Risk	\$ 17,820	
		Moving	\$ 10,000	
		Legal	\$ 5,000	
Total Construction Costs	\$ 7,981,400	State Permit	\$ 1,235	
Total Soft Costs	\$ 1,146,055	Commissioning	\$ 15,000	
TOTAL COST OF NEW CONSTRUCTION (Rounded)	\$ 9,200,000	Contingency	\$ 330,000	
		TOTAL SOFT COSTS	\$ 1,146,055	

Money Saving Adaptations: 2 Separate Connected Buildings

- Maintains fire code without the need for sprinklers, which the water pressure in Coventry cannot support.
- Allows Library to remain open during construction
 - No need to rent a temporary space
 - No need to store collection off site, all of collection available to patrons for duration of construction

Saved: \$ 455,000



Money Saving Adaptations, Continued

- Reuse existing elevator.
 - Requires the elevator to remain in the location, limiting floorplan options, but saves money in building and purchasing of new elevator. An ADA requirement.
- Wood frame construction
 - Does not match cinderblocks, but is more aesthetically pleasing and cheaper.
 - Can be tinted to match the cinderblock color for continuity
 - Covered with low maintenance siding.

Saved: \$ 500,000



Money Saving Adaptations, Continued

- No need to acquire new land.
 - Possible footprints 1 & 2 required additional land for parking
- Minimal site work needed
 - Can use parts of existing parking lot to build expanded lot.
 - By putting the driveway on the opposite side, less building construction into the steep slope will be required.

Project Savings Determined During Concept Design Process

Savings Item	Cost Savings
Reduce Addition from 12,000 S.F. to 8,000 S.F.	\$ 1,200,000
Make Addition Separate Building	
Fire Suppression	\$ 400,000
Retain Elevator in Present Location	\$ 100,000
Use of Siding on the Addition to the Structure	\$ 100,000
Wood Frame Construction	\$ 300,000
Build Addition Separate & Adjacent – Keep Library Open	
Move Books and Furnishings	\$ 10,000
Storage Rental	\$ 5,000
Temporary Library Rental	\$ 40,000
PROJECT DESIGN SAVINGS	\$ 2,155,000

Incorporation of Existing Capital Improvement Requests

- The planned facility will resolve outstanding CIP requests, which will need to be addressed regardless of expansion.



Project Savings by Incorporating Existing CIP Projects

Savings Item	Cost Savings
Replace Chiller	\$ 75,000
Replace Boiler	\$ 83,900
In Ground Oil Tank	\$ 20,000
Chimney Liner Replacement	\$ 14,000
Carpeting & Painting	\$ 35,000
Elevator Upgrades	\$ 24,500
Roof	\$ 50,000
Windows	\$ 46,000
Efficient Lighting	\$ 29,200
Expanding Parking	\$ 50,000
CIP SAVINGS	\$ 427,600

Design Project Savings

Savings Item	Cost Savings
Project Design Savings	\$ 2,155,000
CIP Projects	\$ 427,600
PROJECT DESIGN SAVINGS	\$ 2,582,600

Preliminary Cost Estimate - Construction Costs

	DPA Estimate 11/11/15	Committee Revision 4/21/16	Rational
CONSTRUCTION COSTS	\$ 4,750,950	\$ 3,978,450	
Demolition	\$ 78,450	\$ 78,450	
Site Work	\$ 927,500	\$ 400,000	Reduced retaining wall & parking lot unit cost
Building Construction	\$ 3,745,000	\$ 3,500,000	Reduced renovation unit cost
Escalation	\$ 187,250	\$ 159,138	
Estimating Contingency	\$ 356,321	\$ 298,384	
GC General Conditions	\$ 237,458	\$ 198,923	Reductions based on percentage of construction costs
P&P Bonds	\$ 28,506	\$ 23,870	
Insurance	\$ 38,008	\$ 31,827	
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS	\$ 5,598,583	\$ 4,690,592	

Preliminary Cost Estimate - Soft Costs

	DPA Estimate 11/11/15	Committee Revision 4/21/16	Rational
Misc. Admin Costs	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	
Architectural Team Fees	\$ 427,586	\$ 200,000	Design Build
Reimbursable	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	
Geotech & Survey	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	
Testing	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	
Printing & Mailing	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
New Furnishings	\$ 160,000	\$ 50,000	
Phone System	\$ 15,000	----	VOIP Project 2015
Technology	\$ 75,000	\$ 30,000	Capital Spending
Security System	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	
Builder's Risk	\$ 12,828	\$ 12,828	
Moving	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	
Legal	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	
State Permit	\$ 1,235	\$ 1,235	
Commissioning	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	
Contingency	\$ 237,548	\$ 198,923	Reduction based on percentage of construction costs
TOTAL SOFT COSTS	\$ 1,027,192	\$ 590,986	

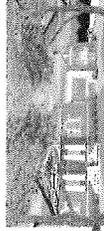
Preliminary Cost Estimate

	DRA Estimate 11/11/15	Committee Revision 4/21/16
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Total Construction Costs	\$ 5,598,583	\$ 4,690,592
Total Soft Costs	\$ 1,027,192	\$ 590,986

TOTAL PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE **\$ 6,625,780** **\$ 5,281,578**

Rounded Cost Estimate **\$ 6,700,000** **\$ 5,300,000**



Funding Sources

- Awarded Grants
 - \$1,000,000 Connecticut State Library
- Grants Under Consideration for Application
 - \$500,000 STEAP
 - \$50,000 State Historic Preservation Office
 - \$15,000 1772 Foundation
- Fundraising

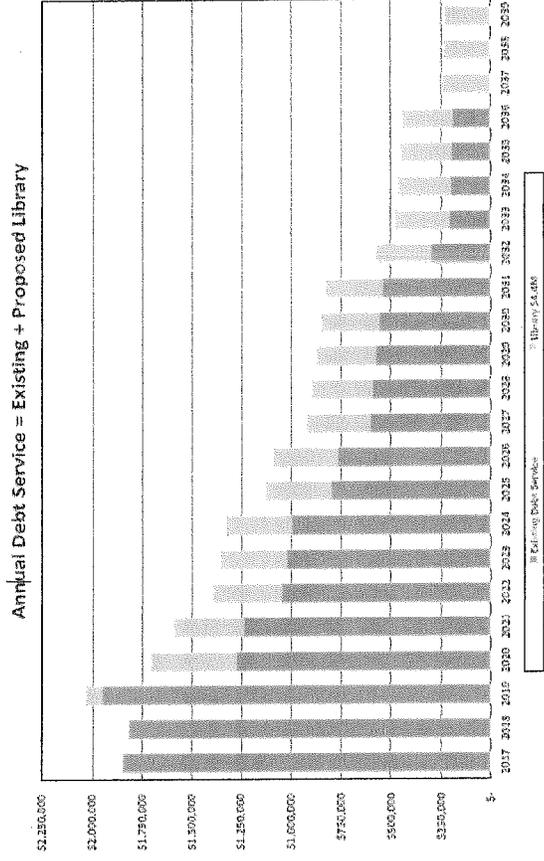


Preliminary Cost Estimate

Rounded Cost Estimate	\$ 5,300,000
Grant from Connecticut State Library	(\$ 1,000,000)
Estimated Financing Costs	\$ 100,000
Preliminary Cost Estimate	\$ 4,400,000
CIP Cost Avoidance	(\$ 427,600)



Debt Impact Chart – Library Renovations



Mill Rate/Tax Impact Table

Fiscal Year	Debt Service		Mill Rate		Tax Impact from Library Project		Fiscal Year
	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	Mill Rate	Household	
2017	\$ 1,943,078	\$ 1,943,078	1.96	1.96	\$0.00	\$0.00	2017
2018	1,913,803	1,913,803	1.95	1.95	\$0.00	\$0.00	2018
2019	1,948,857	1,948,857	1.95	1.95	\$1.45	\$1.04	2019
2020	1,972,459	1,972,459	1.97	1.97	\$9.03	\$8.59	2020
2021	1,952,109	1,952,109	1.93	1.93	\$54.80	\$45.7	2021
2022	1,926,096	1,926,096	1.92	1.92	\$53.89	\$44.7	2022
2023	1,917,346	1,917,346	1.89	1.89	\$51.57	\$43.8	2023
2024	992,671	992,671	1.87	1.87	\$41.46	\$42.0	2024
2025	789,271	789,271	1.82	1.82	\$50.35	\$40.2	2025
2026	767,571	767,571	1.82	1.82	\$49.24	\$41.0	2026
2027	800,571	800,571	1.82	1.82	\$49.12	\$40.1	2027
2028	888,071	888,071	1.82	1.82	\$47.01	\$38.2	2028
2029	972,571	972,571	1.82	1.82	\$45.90	\$38.1	2029
2030	972,571	972,571	1.82	1.82	\$44.79	\$37.1	2030
2031	541,496	541,496	1.82	1.82	\$43.68	\$36.4	2031
2032	299,684	299,684	1.82	1.82	\$42.56	\$35.5	2032
2033	207,200	207,200	1.82	1.82	\$41.45	\$34.6	2033
2034	201,650	201,650	1.82	1.82	\$40.34	\$33.8	2034
2035	198,100	198,100	1.82	1.82	\$39.23	\$32.9	2035
2036	195,550	195,550	1.82	1.82	\$38.11	\$32.0	2036
2037	192,500	192,500	1.82	1.82	\$37.00	\$31.0	2037
2038	189,450	189,450	1.82	1.82	\$35.89	\$29.9	2038
2039	186,400	186,400	1.82	1.82	\$34.78	\$28.8	2039
Total	\$56,696,710	\$ 228,578	0.24	0.24	\$34.78	\$28.0	Total

Prepared by IBFC LLC

Council Concern – Parking

- Referred to and resolved by the Coventry Planning & Zoning Commission on March 14, 2016

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

Parking Requirements
Booth and Dimock Memorial Library

Coventry Zoning
Proposed Library Expansion

Public Access Area (S.F./PPA)	Assembly (Seats)	Spaces Required (PPA)	Total
12,688	42	52	94
12,688	42	26	68
12,688	42	34	76

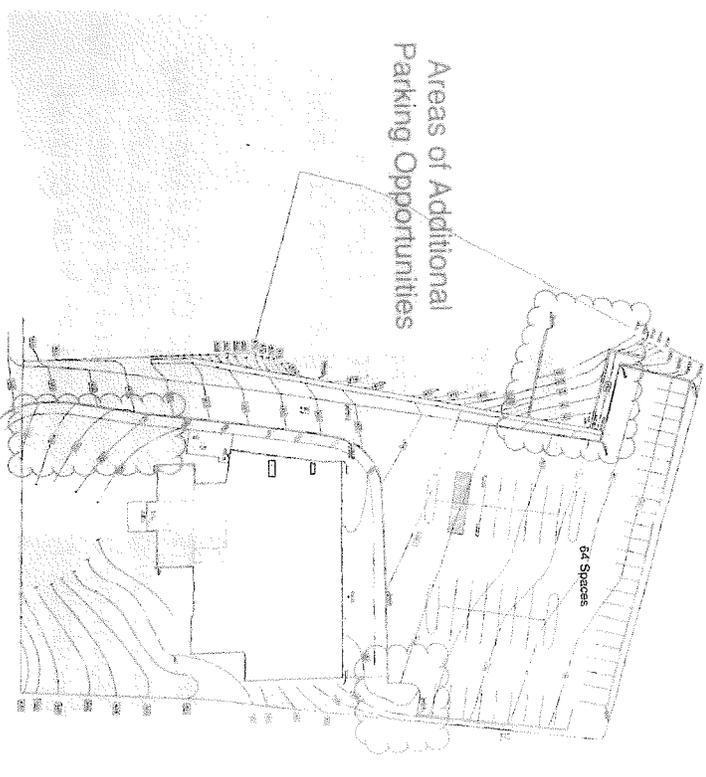
Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)
 Spaces/1,000 S.F.
 2.61
 3.5
 70
 57

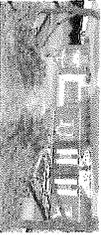
Connecticut Zoning from American Planning Association (APA)
 Spaces for 20,000 S.F.
 72
 72
 40

Town	Population	Library GA	Assembly (Seats)	Spaces Provided	Spaces/1,000 S.F. GA	One Space/ S.F.
Bozrah	11,308	29,509	83	56	2.9	946.4
Wilmington	5,806	22,600	120	60	4.8	210.5
Windsorbury	7,591	21,428	126	48	2.1	485.8
Coventry	12,428	20,000	125	78	3.8	283.2

Booth and Dimock Library Proposed Renovation

Gross Area (S.F.) (PPA)	Assembly (Seats)	Spaces Required (PPA)	Spaces Provided (PPA - Assembly area)	Spaces Provided On Site
20,000	125	125	42	76
Proposed Library (minus Assembly Area)	125	125	42	17
Total Parking Available				





Council Concern – Sewer Usage

- Referred to and resolved by the Coventry Water Pollution Control Authority 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.”



Council Concern –

Building & Land Ownership, Continued

- Based upon comments at the Steering Committee on June 27, 2016, a revised Letter of Intent was subsequently submitted to the Town Council on June 29, 2016.
- The Board of Trustees accepts 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.



Council Concern – Building & Land Ownership

- A Letter of Intent was presented to the Town Council on May 25, 2016. The letter was then sent to the Steering Committee to review and discuss with the Board of Trustees.

A Library for Coventry



Summer Reading Kick Off, June 2016

The days of a one-room library with nothing but bookshelves are long gone. Libraries nowadays are a hub of learning and creativity, enabling toddlers, high school students, seniors and any age in between to enjoy and benefit from the many opportunities at the library.



Our Recommended Next Step

- We respectfully request the Council consider our concept plan and decide if we can proceed to town meeting and referendum, allowing the Coventry voters a chance to have their voice heard on this project.

Request of Town Council

- We believe we have succeeded in providing the answers to all questions thus far risen by members of the Town Council.
- We are at your pleasure for our next steps and look forward to your advice on how to proceed.



