



Town of Carlisle

MASSACHUSETTS 01741

FRANK E. HANNAFORD, Clerk
201 Prospect St.
CARLISLE, MASS. 01741

Office of
PLANNING BOARD

MEETING - OCTOBER 14, 1975

MEMBERS PRESENT: Hannaford, Kulmala, Pugmire, Santomena, Sauer, and Zielinski; Associate - Badger

The first business was the signing of bills.

Mr. Bridges requested through Mr. Hannaford that Dave Keast receive a copy of the minutes as the Finance Committee's representative to the Planning Board.

Mr. Hannaford reported that Mr. Bridges had talked to Mr. Benfield concerning conservation funds. Mr. Benfield felt it would not be possible to get funds for any of the Conant land as conservation land.

Also, Mr. Bridges received a letter from Mr. Melone regarding land on Carlisle Street. It seems that some lots are not buildable and some are.

The Town of Wellesley requested a copy of our By-Laws which will be sent, and Lexington asked for a copy of our Rules and Regulations also to be sent. Copies of the Architectural Advisory Board report were received.

Mr. Hannaford reported on the last Selectmens meeting with the Long Term Capital Requirements Committee and the Building Committee. The Building Committee will try to get the kinds, quality, and space requirements of all town services needed. They will report to the Selectmen the second Wednesday of each month.

The first concern is how to use the space on Sly Fox Farm, and the Conant land. Estimates on preliminary plans should be made ~~and~~ by a paid appraiser. The Planning Board should decide where what should go and if there are alternatives.

Mr. Pugmire would like to have inserted in the minutes of the 9/22/75 meeting that the architects were asked to do a time-phase plan. The minutes were approved with the correction.

Mr. Zielinski attended the architects last meeting. They feel the Building

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Committee getting involved is a good idea. They feel the Building Committee should get a plan from a professional architect after interviewing committee chairmen and seeing what is presently provided size-wise. They will not give an estimate but feel specific size of the buildings needed is important because the cost will be very close. A group of four architects will meet the week of 10/20 to make a "road map" or time-phase plan. Mr. Zielinski will attend their meeting. Copies of their plan will be distributed to Board members for review so that a recommendation can be made to the Building Committee. The plan will have two parts. One part being what can be done with Sly Fox Farm and the other what can be done with the Conant land.

All Board members would like to have DPW on Sly Fox Farm, and most members concur with the whole architects report.

Mr. Zielinski pointed out that the impression the general public may have is that the Planning Board is in favor of Sly Fox Farm and the Selectmen are for the Conant land. This is not necessarily true. It will come down to economics.

Mr. Zielinski will ask the architects to go ahead with Phase 1 of the time-phase plan, that being DPW, Fire, and vehicular maintenance. Phase 2 will be Police Station, and the ultimate phase Town Offices and permanent Police Station.

An invitation was sent to Dave Stewart of the Long Term Capital Requirements Committee to attend the next meeting to make a recommended plan of course of action regarding town facilities development. After that meeting, there then should be a subsequent meeting with the Selectmen to present this plan.

There was a motion made to be moved into Executive Session.

It was moved.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan Chisholm
Secretary

TO: The Board of Selectmen
The Planning Board
Carlisle, Massachusetts

FROM: The Architectural Advisory Board

RE: Town Facilities, the Conant Land
and related problems.

DATE: 17 September 1975

At the request of the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board, we, the Architectural Advisory Committee, present this report, relative to Town property, Town Facilities and the method of selection of designers for future development of necessary buildings.

The Architectural Advisory Committee was formed at the request of the Carlisle Planning Board initially to study the various methods of selecting architects to design new Town Facilities on the recently acquired Conant Land. The Committee members are Architects, Landscape Architects and Planners living in Carlisle, with Mr. Robert Zielinski the Planning Board's Representative.

The Committee met several times over the summer months to discuss the selection methods; however, as the meetings progressed it became apparent that there were more important issues to be resolved beyond the selection of an architect. These issues are the feasibility of using the Conant Land for all or part of the Town Facilities, a program for the design of these facilities and the town center itself in terms of relationship to the Conant Land and its existing structures and traffic patterns.

The Committee has studied all the available data and presents the following observations:

THE CONANT LAND

The Conant Land is a 57-acre parcel of land adjacent to the geographical center of town. There appears to be two parcels of land suitable for building; one parcel of eight acres and another of four acres. The remaining land consists mainly of wetlands and ledge, making them unbuildable.

It is our opinion that because of the location relative to the center of town, the eight (8) acre site is less suitable for town offices and other facilities and should be left for future housing needs and conservation uses, if required.

The remaining four (4) acres have enough disadvantages so that serious thought should be given before any designer selection is made.

The Conant Land was analyzed regarding the following:

Access: Entry to the Conant Land can be achieved through the land occupied by the present Fire Department on Lowell Street or directly off Westford Rd., adjacent to McAllister land. However, there is no sense of identity or sense of entry related to these access points. Further, as points of entry to well-travelled town facilities, increased traffic volumes and poor sight distances create safety and congestion problems.

Roads and Parking: Roads will be constructed over slopes averaging 7-11%, with cuts in the landform possibly reaching 50 feet in width. Roads and parking areas create an increased amount of impervious surface, obviously increasing the amount and intensity of storm water runoff and the potential for ground water (and possibly potable water) contamination due to road sands, automobile gas, oils and lead compounds.

Sub-Surface Conditions: The sensitivity of the land is readily apparent. Soil (and soil bearing capacity), geology (bedrock), hydrology (wetlands and high water table conditions) and vegetation are delicately interrelated and interdependent. This site simply cannot support a large amount of development or use and still maintain its integrity, unless elaborate and expensive engineering technologies are utilized. Site sewerage and domestic water pose immense problems.

Expansion: The physical size of the parcels create serious limitations for future expansion and future land use.

By-Pass Road: A by-pass from Lowell Road to Westford Road has been suggested in previous planning documents for access to the town facilities and to ease the flow of traffic through the center of town. It is our opinion that the construction of such a road would create more problems, environmental and traffic related, than the problems that presently exist.

Aesthetics: We feel, as a majority of townspeople, that it is most desirable to keep the rural feeling of Carlisle. This can be achieved by scale, material and cohesiveness. Scale could be achieved by not building the larger D.P.W. Buildings with all its inherent problems on this land. Proper use of

materials to insure compatibility with existing structures is most important. The sense of cohesiveness or "place" is not easily achieved. New roads and existing buildings would create a barrier between the Conant Land and the town center which would virtually eliminate any possibility of visual and aesthetic ties and create yet another segment to an already fragmented town center.

SLY FOX FARM

The possible acquisition of the Sly Fox Farm by the town would make available existing buildings for use by the D.P.W. and the Fire Department. The existing buildings, with modifications, lend themselves for storage of large scale equipment and salt. This would eliminate the necessity of storing contaminating material adjacent to the Conant wetland areas and would appease those people who find the storage of the D.P.W. equipment in the center of town unsightly.

Its proximity to the transfer station which is serviced by the D.P.W. is an added advantage, as is the possibility of parking the school buses on this site. This would free up the existing parking area for more productive use by the school and make the job of policing all the town-related vehicles an easier task.

THE EXISTING D.P.W. BUILDINGS AND THE EXISTING FIRE STATION

The central location of these two buildings make them ideal for a Police Station because of their high visibility. They are large enough to accommodate all police functions including a communication center and garaging of all vehicles. This location would also tend to control site access to the Conant Land. However, under the new State Building Code, the fire rating for a building with detention facilities would be 3 hours. This would then make the present wood structures unsuitable for the police. The use of a sprinkler system to build up the necessary fire rating is a possibility and should be investigated as a system which can be run through a well by use of collection tanks and pumps.

At the present time we are able to use the detention facilities at neighboring towns, but we would be remiss if we did not plan for all the future police needs, including the required detention facilities.

A further alternate for this land if a sprinkler system proved inadequate would be to use the existing garage for vehicles and to tear down the fire station and build a new police station.

EXISTING TOWN OFFICES

It appears that the present location of the town offices is sufficient, particularly if the police are relocated. However, if the town grows, as expected, it will become increasingly more difficult for all the town functions to be carried on from the homes of those involved. We should, therefore, look to alternatives: the Conant Land, the Banta Davis Land, the Fire Station, and the existing Congregational Church.

THE EXISTING CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

This building would lend itself to a staged remodeling for occupancy for town offices, meeting rooms and possibly the police. It is centrally located, has high visibility and would help define the town center (common). The problems regarding fire rating apply here, as does lack of parking which may be solved by using school parking areas. Certainly more time and studies should be undertaken to try and preserve this historic building.

THE TOWN CENTER

Although segmented, there is geographically and factually, a town center, and whether the town facilities are located on the Conant Land or on various other sites, it is our opinion that the town should direct its attention to the center which we feel needs definition and planned growth as well as visual upgrading.

This problem is as important as the location and design of town facilities, and we strongly urge an Architect be hired to make a comprehensive design to include landscaping, lighting, graphics, traffic flow and work on existing structures.

We also feel that, inasmuch as the town is faced with a very immediate post office problem, that serious thought should be given to the building of that structure on the land now owned by the town next to Daisy's Texaco Station. We feel this function belongs in the center, and that every effort should be made to have the postal service relax some of their arbitrary requirements.

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SUMMARY

In summary, it is the general feeling of this Committee that the Conant Land is not suitable for all the town facilities because of the many problems related to site preparation, accessibility, general buildability, and the extraordinary expenses involved.

We feel, if necessary, part of the town functions could be put there, but that we would prefer to see the land used for future housing and passive recreation and conservation uses. It is rare that a town still has the opportunity to maintain a green belt in its center, and we feel that under the circumstances this opportunity should be capitalized upon, particularly when other alternatives exist. We feel that the town should purchase the Sly Fox Farm for the purposes herein described, and that consideration be given to the purchase of the church and for the remodeling of the existing Fire Station and D.P.W. Buildings. Further, we strongly urge consideration of preserving our center by careful study of the existing conditions and implementation of more studies.

The Committee, in addressing itself to the original question of how to select an architect(s) for these projects, recommends the standard procedure of interviewing Architectural firms of merit interested in the work and that selection be based on experience and design capability.

The method of selection by an open or limited competition would be lengthy and costly, and we feel that the town does not have either the time or the proper monetary incentive necessary to have a worthwhile competition.

Respectfully submitted,

Gillian Beram, Planner
Michael Cohen, Architect
Gary Freiberg, Landscape Architect
Samuel Nuckols, Architect
Howard Rockstrom, Architect
Robert J. Soforenko, Architect
Arno Szegvari, Architect