



**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – 7:00 PM**  
**Town of Hanover**

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The following minutes are from the Sylvester School Redevelopment Committee meeting held on Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in Hanover Town Hall.

**Sylvester School Redevelopment Committee Meeting Attendees:**

Present: Joseph Rull, Heidi Cho, Doug Thompson, Christopher Martin and John Galluzzo and Dave Delaney

Absent: Louise Sironi

Staff: Peter Matchak

Joseph Rull, Chairman of the Sylvester School Redevelopment Committee, called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The Sylvester School Redevelopment Committee members who were presented in the meeting introduced themselves to the audience. Heidi Cho, the associate planner presented the social media outreach effort to the audience. The Board was opened to public for any questions and discussion.

Jack Thompson, Circuit Street, asked if the committee has looked into the previous studies regarding Sylvester School. Doug Thompson, who was the chairman of the Sylvester School Future Use Committee, responded that they have done the study twelve years ago and the new committee has been simultaneously going back to those studies. The previous committee stopped with the study because they did not know when the Sylvester School will be available for use. Now that the expansion of the Center School has been approved by the town meeting and the Sylvester School's student will be moved to Center School the study is important to figure out the future use of the building. Doug Thompson, the member of the committee, mentioned that he has been talking to Keen Development and their take away was 30,000sf is bit small for independent senior housing. Mr. Thompson stated there are also tons of information online which is different from twelve years ago.

Cathy Harder-Bernier, the town clerk, asked the committee about assessed value of the school building and potential lease value. She also raised question regarding School Committee's report on ten million dollar estimate for the building to be up to today's building code. Joseph Rull, Chairman of the Sylvester School Redevelopment Committee, answered that the 10 million dollars include the complete renovation of accessibility, electrical, HVAC and ADA to comply for school use. The committee presented the report done in 2012 by McGuire Group INC. the estimate for ADA compliance for Sylvester School building is 1.1 million for any building use. Noting that 4% escalation of construction cost, today's estimate comes out to be 1.4 million. The town planner, Peter Matchak explained that town hall property including town hall, library and fire station is assessed at 4.5 million. He estimates the Sylvester School's property value to be about 1.2 million. The planning office staff will check with the assessor regarding the assessed value of the property. In regards to lease, Mr. Martin responded that the land lease would be appropriate to keep the control of the lot but

further study is needed. Mr. Martin stated that the vote has been passed to expand Center School; the committee will come up with potential options looking at fiscal responsibility and reducing the burden of continued taxation.

Sydney Elliott, 977 Broadway has asked if the property has been commercially assessed and that this will be a key element. The committee responded that there has not been any funding source for the committee. The committee recognized that the next step is to find the funding source such as Community Preservation Fund (CPF) to do further studies.

Joan Port, 139 Pine Street Drive, asked if the committee looked at moving the school administrator building, which is also known as Salmond School, to Sylvester School and selling the Salmond School property to generate revenue. Ms. Port also asked if the Sylvester School is eligible for CPF. The committee responded that the town has previously used CPF to renovate and preserve Sylvester School Building. The committee understands it could be appropriate funding source noting that the building is old and has historic elements.

The committee mentioned that the Sylvester School Redevelopment Committee is not in charge of assessing the use of Sylvester School and of Salmond School. However, Mr. Thompson agreed that looking at the relative value of the both school is a possible option for redevelopment and agreed that the Salmond School would be much more sellable property than the Sylvester School.

Mr. Delaney, the member of the Sylvester School Redevelopment Committee, added the committee discussed about how much Salmond School has been used in terms of number of the people working in the building and maintenance fee. Ms. Port felt that the building is oversized for the school's administrator building and need evaluation. Mr. Martin expressed he would want the school administrator going into expanded Center School rather than using the 30,000 sf building for the school administrator's building,

Maureen Elliott, 977 Broadway, spoke that the Sylvester School renovation will be a work well beyond 13 million dollars including the handicap accessibility, computer system, electronic and heating system. Mrs. Elliot suggested putting the restriction on the exterior of the building and the property to preserve the historical look is appropriate as many of the towns did such as Milton and Hingham. Some of the old school has been used for small one person office such as chiropractor or dentist. She believed that this approach of promoting small businesses aligns with the goals of South Shore Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Martin responded that everyone in this committee want the best financial option for Hanover. The committee recognized that the major concern is increased tax and some people cannot afford to live in Hanover with increased taxes. The committee recognized the other underutilized municipal building is not the committee's charter; however the committee recognized these buildings such as the fire station and Salmond building should be sold and release some of the tax burden in town

Kenton Green, 595 Circuit Street, spoke about the Salmond School's building maintenance expenditure which was \$90,000. Mr. Kenton believed this was a problematic and need another committee to oversee the maintenance expenditure of the town. Mr. Kenton noted that there was a mistake on the Sylvester School's website and need update. Mr. Kenton thinks the Sylvester School Redevelopment project should be revenue neutral if not revenue producing and preserve the historic look of the building. He added that the committee needs to study the impact of the traffic and nose of the redevelopment

Steve Louko, 43 King Hill Road, commented that the Sylvester School can be leased to small businesses. Mr. Louko thinks that the downtown is beautiful and bucolic however the downtown needs more activity to bring more life.

Jack Thompson, Circuit Street, asked the committee to look at the Cushing Hall in Lowell to figure out how the property is managed and lease revenue for the building.

Cathy Harder-Bernier, the town clerk, agreed with Mr. Green that the Sylvester School should be revenue neutral if not revenue producing and the historic look should be preserved. Cathy HB explained to the town's potential need for town's document storage as these documents are molding away in the town hall's basement. Cathy HB saw that the portion of climate controlled space in the Sylvester School might be a good place to store these documents. Cathy informed the committee that the facility department, Bob Murray is finding out inventory of the document and has capital to restore these documents. John Galluzzo, member of the Sylvester School Committee, replied that Scituate Historic Society has been storing town's document in the basement of the Little Red School House. John Galluzzo added that this case could be a good template to start from.

Maureen Elliott, 977 Broadway, mentioned as you go forward with your study traffic study is needed. The Broadway crossing is a major problem in town and caused lot of accidents. Mr. Galluzzo answered we have discussed about the traffic issues. The committee understood that the area has many amenities including library, the school, town hall and fire station. Therefore putting a use that generates lot of traffic such as the market place is a problem. The committee is putting in consideration about the use that does not generate more traffic as it current has.

Ms. Harder-Bernier asked if the committee has talked with the developer of the Kennedy Building. Mr. Martin responded that the committee had two meetings with David Aiken from POAU, who is the developer of the Kennedy Building. Mr. Matchak noted with the size of the Sylvester School Building the redevelopment needs to be economically feasible for both parties, town and the developer. The committee recognized that the redevelopment will need to meet current ADA requirement and building code. The currently the Sylvester School is due on their life expectancy of their electric and HVAC. Mr. Rull noted the opportunity for tax credit to redevelop historic buildings.

Jack Thompson, Circuit Street, supports the idea of selling the Salmond School and stop thinking about Sylvester School as housing but an office and commercial space. Jack believed it is easier to covert to office use then housing. Mr. Thompson noted next step is to talk with commercial developer. Mr. Green asked if we have enough septic system for housing. Mr. Martin noted the school will have a standard septic system.

Sydney Elliott, 977 Broadway spoke, regardless of the use it boils down to who maintains and keep the building. Mr. Elliot thought the best way is to sell the property with restrictions so the residents do not have to burden 11 million dollars of tax burden. Mr. Martin assured the committee was formed not to burden the residents with additional tax

Mr. Green asked if the area needs to be rezoned. Mr. Thompson replied decision of selling and keeping the property as town's property is town meeting decision and not the committee's jurisdiction. The committee explained that our committee report to Board of Selectmen and it is Board of Selectmen's decision regarding the school's maintenance and ownership.

Sydney Elliot, 977 Broadway, explained Salmond School should be sold and leased out to school committee instead of charging the resident with \$90,000 tax from the Salmond's School's maintenance fee. The committee explained that the Salmond School is not under the jurisdiction of the Sylvester School Committee. The Committee recognized importance of the Salmond School and may ask the Board of Selectmen to add Salmond School to their charter. Mr. Martin pointed out that the committee is timelined to provide Board of Selectmen with solid plan for Sylvester School after the school is decommissioned.

The open public forum was closed and the committee members met with Troy Clarkson, to discuss the way forward. The committee agreed that the next step for our committee is to reach out to commercial developers. The committee discussed to meet with commercial developer one per member and schedule meeting to have discussion with the committee. Mr. Rull agreed to reach out to David Traggorth, real estate developer who is also town's resident. The committee agreed to look at Welsh Assisted Living project. Heidi Cho, the associate planner agreed to talk with the school committee and get realistic timeline for Center School expansion project.

Troy Clarkson, town manager, spoke about possibility of moving the school administrator building next to the Center School, possibly for Center School addition. Troy Clarkson agreed that the Sylvester School and Salmond School area should be studies together and rezoning the potential areas might be more marketable to developers. Doug Thompson made a motion to make a former request to the Board of Selectmen to add Salmond School study to the committee's charter. Chris Martin seconded the motion. All others voted in favor.

The next Sylvester School Redevelopment meeting is scheduled for Thursday November 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. John Galluzo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dave Delaney seconded the motion. All others voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted by:**

Heidi Cho  
Associate Planner