

October 7, 2022

Ari Sky
Town Administrator
Town of Lakeville
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Lakeville, MA

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Proj: Lakeville Town Hall & Fire Station Study
Re: Follow Up Regarding Expansion at 346 Bedford Street
Job No. CB211560.1

As you are aware, SOCOTEC AE Consulting, LLC (SOCOTEC) recently completed a Feasibility Study for the Town of Lakeville (the Town). There have been some additional follow up questions regarding the feasibility of expansion of the current facility to serve as both Town Office and Fire Department services. We present the following information for your consideration.

Some of the identified long-term goals were department growth, consolidation of Town Departments from the Old Library and incorporation of a small meeting space to better serve staff and small boards and commissions. The Committee wanted to consider these factors to ensure that the final recommendation could continue to serve the needs of the Town for many years to come. With these goals in mind, during the initial programming phases, SOCOTEC met with department heads to understand the current and anticipated growth of the departments. These objectives, along with the physical building challenges that resulted from several previous additions led to the findings of the study.

While there was not one single factor that makes this option non-viable, the most influential, or limiting, factor is the location and capacity of the current septic system and the associated variances that were granted when it was installed. The current employee count in the building is 26 including Town Offices and Fire Department; this does not include the employees who are currently located at the Old Library, (Inspectional Services, Conservation Commission and Board of Health), or meeting space. Additionally, this does not take into account the "residential" functions of a modern fire station including showers, laundry and a functioning kitchen which would add to the daily demand on the septic system.

The next factor is the extent of renovation and addition that would be required to meet all the needs while maintaining the facility at the current site. As outlined in the study, the fire station portion of the building would require substantial renovation for continued use; the apparatus bays are undersized, have experienced impact damage because of being undersized and are not compliant with seismic and other code requirements. This option would essentially result in a new fire station, albeit on the same site, and would still require significant repairs to the existing apparatus bays. While the fire station's needs may be able to be met, the Town would not be able to consolidate Town Departments, accommodate the projected future growth and also have a meeting space.

The building and site design would also be restricted by the maximum lot area. Based on the zoning for this site, the maximum lot area is 50%; however, because it is municipal use, it is eligible for up to two additional 10% exemptions for Architectural and Landscape. This would require further analysis based on a final design but compliance may also result in additional costs to comply.

Based on the challenges of the existing site and facility, constructing a new fire station provides flexibility to design and construct based on the current and future needs of both the Fire Department and the Town Offices. For example, in the proposed layout, the living quarters were designed on the second floor (to

minimize the overall footprint) while keeping the public-access spaces on the first floor, making handicap accessibility more efficient.

The feasibility of constructing a second story, or partial second story, above the existing apparatus bays has also been raised. This option would require significant renovation to the apparatus bays which, as previously noted, have incurred structural damage as a result of vehicular strikes. This would likely require seismic upgrades to the entire building complying with the seismic requirements of a critical facility since the existing additions are connected and this is considered one building; (this option would also require additional investigation to determine if the existing footings, foundations and structural design, are adequate to support a second story compliant with current code requirements). Yet another addition would still be required to accommodate the larger apparatus and the second story would require compliance with accessibility laws if offices and public access areas were to be included on the second floor. This could result in the need to add an elevator for the Fire Station as well as one for the Town Offices buildings.

Significant renovation and/or addition of the Fire Station side of the building will trigger other code-required upgrades including accessibility, fire protection and fire separation. Full accessibility would be required for the Town Offices building (including between the level changes), a new NFPA-13 compliant fire protection system and rated fire separation between the apparatus area and the Town Offices (2-hour fire separation is required to the underside of the roof deck with fire rated doors between apparatus areas and office use areas).

Another factor for consideration is the logistics of coordinating the construction of what essentially amounts to a new fire station on the site while maintaining the operation of both facilities. Construction of the building addition is something that can be done with minimal impact; however, very close coordination would be required for the sitework, utility work and cutovers of the building systems. By constructing a new fire station on a new site, the Town would be able to minimize impacts to the current occupants. A new station could be constructed, then the fire department could relocate and then the Town Offices building could be renovated in a phased manner. Since this is the only fire station in the town, there is not an opportunity for the station to temporarily consolidate with another. This becomes a significant challenge for a 24/7 critical response facility. Similarly, major construction could cause disruption to the Town Office functions as well. In order to maintain the operations during construction, purchase or rental of swing space would likely be required, which also adds cost to a project. This is not an insurmountable obstacle, but it does add cost to a project which also offsets potential savings.

The space needs analysis showed that the total area required to accommodate the combined Town Offices and Fire Department is approximately 25,000 net square feet. It is unlikely that an addition could accommodate the space requirements as well as the ability to install drive-through bays which are standard in modern fire station design for efficient operation and response.

There are an infinite number of possibilities that could be considered. However, based on the stated goals and objectives for this study, the option of expanding the building on the current site poses a significant number of costly challenges and may not best support the long term goals for the Town.

Best Regards,

SOCOTEC AE CONSULTING, LLC



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