

# **FAQ's - Public Works Garage Renovation and Addition Project**

## **Project Description**

### **What is the Public Works Garage?**

The garage is located at 126 Ledge Road on a 16.7+ acre parcel of land.

The existing two-level structure includes 28,800+ SF of floor area.

Three departments occupy the garage: the Department of Public Works (14,000 SF), the Board of Education (9,000 SF) and the Parks & Recreation Department (5,800 SF). (The square footage is based on the architect's plans dated December, 2016.)

Other functions included at this site are fueling of all town vehicles (including police and fire), storage of road salt, operations of the Swap Shop and Transfer Station (the dump), training facility for Fireman and mulch manufacturing.

The original building was constructed in 1956, with renovations/additions in 1971 and 1977.

### **What is the Recent History?**

In 1993, the building underwent a significant expansion in order to accommodate the vehicles and equipment of both the BOE and P&R. Prior to this consolidation the BOE and P&R vehicles and equipment had been parked and/or stored at various locations in town (schools, beaches, remote sheds, etc.).

Another renovation occurred in 2013, which created the BOE offices, bathroom and kitchen. A staircase was installed to connect the upper and lower levels of the BOE area. The BOE's woodworking shop which had been displaced from what is now the Mather Center was to be located in this space. However, there was insufficient space to do so. Currently, the BOE has not been provided the square footage (950 sq. ft.) required by the relocation specifications.

In June 2013, a structural engineering firm issued the following report concerning the 5 upper level garage bay floors (facing Ledge Road):

**“The results of the inspection and testing indicate that the floor slab is in serious condition and in need of immediate rehabilitation based on the extent of concrete deterioration, extent of chloride contamination and deteriorated condition of exposed reinforcing steel. Further, based on the minimal exploration conducted; it does not appear that the quantity of reinforcing steel found in the existing slab is structurally adequate to support the truck loads currently using the garage.”**

This report was the genesis for the project we are discussing today, four years later.

### **What “Functions” emanate from the Public Works Garage?**

- Vehicle & Equipment Maintenance for DPW, BOE and P&R
- Building/Facility Maintenance – Town, Schools and Parks

- Town Wide Emergency Storm Response
- Town Wide Snow Removal including Railroad Station Parking Lots and Platforms
- Flood Prevention and Storm Drainage Maintenance
- Roadway Maintenance, Paving and Striping
- Sewer Maintenance
- Management of the Transfer Station and Scale House
- Maintenance (including cleaning) of Beaches and Parklands
- Maintenance of School Fields, Grounds, Parking Lots and Driveways
- BOE Trades (carpenters, plumbers, electricians, etc.)
- Maintenance of Town and Railroad Station Parking Lots, Railroad Stations and Platforms
- Traffic Signal and Signs Maintenance
- Town Wide Vehicle Fuel Supply (including Police, Post 53, Fire Departments)

**What is the scope of the equipment currently at the garage?**

The garage houses over 60 pieces of large to moderate sized vehicles and equipment between the DPW, BOE and P&R. In addition, there are numerous pieces of small mechanical equipment that are not included in this number.

The total replacement value of the vehicles and equipment exceeds \$3 million, and approximately \$850,000 of this amount remains outside, unprotected, due to the lack of available storage space. Storage of equipment indoors increases the useful life substantially.

**What are the Primary Drivers of this project?**

The first driver is the need to replace the garage floor in the 5 bays facing Ledge Road. The cost for this portion of the project has been estimated at \$375,000.

The second driver is the State requirement to remove and replace the two existing underground storage tanks (2,000 gallons each) that supply gasoline and diesel fuel within the next two years. These tanks, which are electronically monitored but still require monthly monitoring by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), are nearing their maximum permitted age. The Town has chosen to replace them with an above ground dual compartment tank with a 10,000 gallon capacity (6,000 for gasoline and 4,000 for diesel) for several reasons. The primary reason for above ground tanks is a reduction in risk to the environment. The larger capacity will ensure that fuel is available at critical storm emergency times. It should be noted that annual consumption for all town vehicles is approximately 70,000 gallons of gasoline and 20,000 gallons of diesel fuel. The estimated cost of this replacement is \$340,000.

The third driver is the requirement by DEEP that waste water used to wash vehicles and other equipment be captured by an oil/water separator before being sent to the sanitary sewer. This waste water capture can only be achieved by constructing a wash bay with a connected floor drain. Washing vehicles, especially salt trucks in the winter, is critical to extending their useful life, and year round washing requires an enclosed wash bay. The estimated cost for this driver is \$345,000.

The fourth driver is the need to replace the flat roof which is in poor condition over the original building and leaking over the 1993 additions. Secondary drains are also required by the building code to ensure that there is no standing water on the roof. The estimated cost for this replacement is \$240,000.

These four “driver” projects are estimated to cost \$1,290,000. The significance of this sum will be explained below.

**What are the “triggers” requiring additional changes/upgrades and what is the estimated cost of these mandated items?**

The first trigger is FEMA flood zone regulations since the site has been designated within the Zone “AE” floodplain limits (100 Year Zone). The lower level of the garage is below the base flood elevation as determined by FEMA in 2014. While the site is not located in a high hazard flood area, once the cost of building improvements exceed 50% of the building’s current value (\$1,381,000 per the Tax Assessor), FEMA regulations require the following changes to relocate utilities above the flood hazard elevation:

- Removal of the oil fired boilers (4) that provide heating for the facility and replace with new and highly efficient natural gas fired heaters.
- Removal of the four (4) oil tanks that served the boilers.
- Relocate and rewire a number of electrical panels and junction boxes.
- Replace and relocate the existing diesel powered generator with a larger, natural gas-fired model and replace and relocate the generator transfer switch.
- Removal of the electric hot water heater, replace and install gas hot water heater above the flood hazard elevation.
- Removal and relocation of the air compressor unit

The second trigger is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In general, the Town was required to have all of its buildings in compliance with ADA by the mid-1990s. The current State of Connecticut Building Code can require that up to 20% of the project value be spent to address accessibility. The scope of this project requires compliance today mandating the following upgrades.

- Handicap accessibility for entrances and internal hallways
- Constructing an additional bathroom and updating existing bathrooms
- Removal of the interior steps (3 risers) on the first floor
- Installation of a ramp and rails system to the new addition

The third trigger is the State Building Code that requires the building’s mechanical systems be brought up to current code when changes are being made to them. Improvements to meet code are:

- Upgrade the fire suppression system
- Increase air handling capacity in the garage bay areas
- Installation of a vehicle exhaust system for the mechanics’ bay
- Update the office HVAC to meet fresh air requirements

The incremental cost associated with these changes mandated by FEMA, ADA and Building Code is estimated at \$4,100,000. Therefore the cost of the four project drivers plus regulatory mandated upgrades is estimated at \$5,390,000.

**Is the building being expanded and what are the associated benefits?**

The project includes the addition of approximately 7,700 SF of space on two levels. The mandated wash bay and a high ceiling mechanics' bay require a little over 1,200 SF each, about 3,200 SF will be for BOE garage bays on two levels and the balance will be for offices, storage, meeting room, and a small bunk room

- The increased garage space will allow all vehicles to be stored inside, materially increasing their useful lives.
- The high ceiling mechanics' bay will permit servicing of all Town vehicles indoors. This will enable the Town to service fire trucks at the DPW Garage in the future as well, should that be desired.
- Additional space allocated to BOE will allow for some of their activities to be relocated leading to improved efficiencies as well as provide the added square footage that was committed to during the recent relocation.
- The small bunk room will provide resting space for personnel during extended emergency/storm events. The Town is contractually obligated to provide rest periods for safety reasons and there currently is little room to rest other than the cabs of their trucks.

All of the departments that use the garage participated in the planning process with the goal to identify current issues and needs as well as to consider needs as far out as 20 years. The current plan is responsive to those objectives with two caveats: technological advances could cause unforeseen but major changes in maintenance functions and the State which could eventually require the Town to maintain State roads.

**What is the cost of this project, how will it be financed and what is the tax impact?**

The estimated Capital Cost (overall budget) of the project is approximately \$6,315,000.

The operating cost of the garage is expected to remain stable since the new facility will not require hiring additional staff to manage the facility. Savings from the investment in new, high efficient space and hot water heaters, coupled with the conversion to natural gas is expected to offset the added cost of maintaining the newly added space

The Town plans to bond the project along with other projects/purchases.

The project financing should increase the tax rate approximately 0.01 mills for the fiscal year ending 6/30/2018 and 0.05 mills for the fiscal year ending 6/30/2019. The projected impact on the following fiscal years is 0.07mills per year. For a home with a \$1.6 million fair market value, this translates to a cost of \$11 in FY 18, \$56 in FY 19 and \$67 each of the following fiscal years. These estimates are based on the FY 18 mill rate (16.16) and issuance of 20 year bonds at current market conditions.

## **Project Management Details:**

### **What is the schedule for this project?**

Construction is expected to begin July, 2017 and be completed within 12 to 15 months.

### **Will there be any impact on daily functions during the project?**

There will be no noticeable impact to residents. Services will be provided seamlessly to taxpayers.

### **Who will manage the construction project and how were they selected?**

AP Construction has been chosen as the construction manager. A Request for Proposals was issued. Six firms responded, and the Building Committee interviewed three of them. AP Construction was selected as a result of that process.

### **What assurances do we have that the construction work will be on time and on budget?**

The construction manager's contract is specific to that question. Their fee is based on work being completed within 12 months. Therefore, they have a vested interest in finishing on time. The contract with AP Construction would provide a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) which stipulates that, absent any change orders or unforeseen conditions, the GMP is the maximum budget.

### **Will we be able to use the Town's employees to perform some of the work where appropriate?**

Yes, Town employees will do work when and where appropriate to provide savings on this project. This was considered when the bid documents for the construction phase were distributed.

## **Additional Questions:**

### **Is there another place in Town we can put this?**

The Town owns no other properties that would be appropriate.

### **Why are Town and BOE functions segregated? Why are there redundancies in the type of spaces we have – such as two lunchrooms, two mechanics' bays?**

This is a result of how the building use evolved over the years. The time to consider consolidating certain areas that could be shared, such as the lunchroom, was decades ago (1993) when the use was first expanded. The DPW lunchroom cannot handle all the employees that work at the garage without being expanded. Expansion, in this instance, is more costly than maintaining two spaces. We do have two mechanics' bays in the garage. We need two mechanics' bays whether they are side by side or separated, as they are in the plan.

### **Have the building and site been tested for environmental issues?**

Yes. The site has been tested previously as part of the property's General Permit from DEEP. In addition, prior to completion of the final design for the project, the building was inspected.

### **Have you considered installing solar panels as part of the project?**

Yes, it is under consideration. We are evaluating the benefits of an installation.

### **What are the costs if we delay the project?**

The floor in the 5 garage bays facing Ledge Road could collapse, the Town could be fined by DEEP for improper handling of waste water, and unexpected repairs to the facility could waste funds while waiting for the more complete solution. There is also the potential for increased construction and financing costs.

**How can I learn more about the project?**

A tour will be held on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> at 9 am. If you cannot make that, the original tour can be found on TV 79 at <https://vimeo.com/169373298>. The Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance, as well as several committees of the RTM will be meeting on Thursday, May 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss the project. Building Committee meetings are held the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of every month at 6:30 pm in Room 206 of Town Hall. Meetings can be viewed on TV 79. A request for funding will be presented to the RTM at its regular meeting on June 12, 2017.