

TOWN OF CLARKSON
TOWN BOARD WORKSHOP
March 22, 2023

The Town Board of the Town of Clarkson held a Town Board Workshop on Wednesday, March 22, 2023 at the Clarkson Town Hall, 3710 Lake Road, Clarkson, NY at 6:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Christa Filipowicz	Supervisor
Nick D'Amuro	Councilperson
John Culhane	Councilperson
Tom Guarino	Councilperson
Leslie Zink	Councilperson
Susan Henshaw	Town Clerk
Robert Viscardi	Highway Superintendent
Mike Farrell	Highway Foreman
Keith O'Toole	Attorney
Kevin Moore	Building Inspector
Dave Strabel	Architect/Sweden Commercial Bldg Inspector

Supervisor Filipowicz opened the workshop. She led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was observed for our service men and women, first responders and veterans, particularly those who have paid the ultimate price.

The purpose of this Town Board workshop is to discuss Town Hall Renovations. Supervisor Filipowicz began by advising us why we are here and what we are trying to accomplish. She discussed a 2001 rendition of possible renovations to the Town Hall that were discussed back years ago. In recent years prior to COVID there were concerns about heating and cooling, lack of office space and proper drinking water, counter space, bathrooms, parking issues and general basement dampness. Since that time we hired SWBR to provide renditions of how the Town Hall may be modified to accommodate all these concerns. Over the years, the question of the extent to fix Town Hall has been consistent. Do we stay within the footprint or do an expansion of the building? Do we swap town hall with the Courthouse and offer the same services just in a new location? Do we build an addition to the current Courthouse to accommodate all the departments of the current town hall. Do we build a new town hall elsewhere and sell the current building? Do we knock down existing building and re-build with the same look? Do we invest in a master plan within Hafner Park? Do we move the Highway Department and place the new town hall building on that site in front of that property, facing the main road? Do we purchase other buildings in town, such as the old police barracks? Should we explore the idea of purchasing outright the Seymour Library from Towns of Sweden and Village of Brockport? Do we table this to the new town board arriving in January 2024? Funding has been the biggest obstacle. A realtor has come to give an estimate on town hall in case the decision to sell is discussed. Due to this being an historic building, there are limitations. It was difficult to put a number on the value of the building. Adding to the indecisiveness of the project with the new town board (2022 D'Amuro, Culhane) regarding council seats so it has led to different ideas on the town hall renovations.

Supervisor Filipowicz discussed that at this time, the majority town board is leaning towards a new town hall building near Hafner Park. Councilperson D'Amuro has an idea to preserve the building and use it as an historic westside center for history for the town. He has been trying to work on different grants and funding for this project. He envisions minimal staffing that would work with kids for field trips and the general public. The intent is to have the building as a central hub and a place of destination for history in the area where several neighboring towns would be a part of.

Over the course of the last five years, funding is no longer a problem. Over \$1 million has been raised for this purpose through Community Host Agreements-Solar. Much discussion ensued.

3-22-2023

Councilperson Guarino feels a town hall move to a campus area at Hafner Park would be a sound choice. He likes the idea of the current town hall becoming an historic center.

Councilperson Zink would like to keep the Town Hall building as a historic place, which is keeping with the request of the residents. She does not feel she has enough information to decide to stay or to move town hall at this time. Supervisor Filipowicz discussed the budget on the project and prevailing wage along with input from Dave Strabel, Town of Sweden architect. They discussed previous renovation sketches that were shared with the town board at the time. Also mentioned the minimum renovation concerns on the town hall including the bathrooms, drinking water, parking lot, windows and painting or siding outside all at no cost to the taxpayers. So many options have been presented to the different town board members with difficult decisions at hand. Councilperson Culhane does not see the current building being a long-term solution. More space is needed with a growing town. He feels a new complex is the way of the future and will be less expensive overall. Superintendent Viscardi mentioned how the town hall building will always be a part of the town. We own the building and owe it to the residents to take care of it. Let's work on those items at a minimal cost. He would love to see a campus down at Hafner Park area. He feels we could utilize our professional services and create a campus or a master plan with the town hall front and center. Councilperson D'Amuro advised he will be applying for grants to assist us in this mission. Supervisor Filipowicz mentioned she likes the idea of a master plan. She further discussed items that need to be fixed including the parking lot, the roof, the vault rooms etc.

OPEN FORUM

Mike Farrell wanted to mention that he agrees 100% with Superintendent Viscardi. Finances are the caveat. Electric charging stations were discussed. Placement and room were considered. We would like to work with professional services on this to prepare a few different options for a campus. Money that the town receives from large town projects, such as Borrego, Clarkson Renewables and Brookfield, can be used towards this type of benefit for the town and the residents. Sharon Mattison, 55 East Avenue, mentioned that she likes the idea of a future campus at Hafner Park. Martha Clasquin, 34 Sherwood Drive, wanted to mention security when discussing the master plan. Evan Wexler, 664 Gilmore Road, wanted to know plans for a smooth transition from the existing town hall into a new campus, as well as the building becoming a history center. Councilperson D'Amuro discussed that it would take approximate 6-8 months once implemented. He believes the building would only be vacant for a minimal time frame. He discussed other towns being involved in this history center and felt confident all would be equally funding an employee. He discussed his desire and the need to keep history alive. The need to involve the residents and form a committee is the direction the board would like to go.

Supervisor Filipowicz advised the immediate plan would be to put steps in place to do basic needs to current town hall. Those steps include the roof, siding, bathrooms, windows, water, front porch/steps, and closing off those two rooms on first floor. Hiring consultants to create a plan with a campus at Hafner Park working towards a future larger scale plan to build on year to year. Discussion on safety and crosswalks with the apartment buildings and the day care across the street. Ursula Liotta, 61 Hideaway Lane, discussed the monetary amounts the town has received from projects that will be applied towards the potential new campus. Discussions on how much grant funding the current town hall may receive. The community funding project was discussed regarding the quick turn-around timelines. Some of the funding towards the town hall could potentially come from this grant if awarded. Supervisor Filipowicz also mentioned a park in Utica that has many concepts we could mirror. How she would like to work closely with Lifetime Assistance and how the two could possibly work together regarding grants.

3-22-2023

Mike Farrell passed out his concept for Town Hall/Court House and Hafner Park. He advised that this presentation culminated while working with the town for 20 years and gathering his ideas and thoughts, along with discussions with Superintendent Viscardi and other employees over the years. He discussed each page in detail and what the highway would be able to complete versus portions that would need a contractor. He advised that the idea of having the option to work on this project, over time, while the employees have the ability to continue to work at the current town hall, is a huge benefit. He reviewed access to the park from three locations in the future plans as well as the potential of selling Kimball Park. He answered all questions regarding his presentation.

The town board decided to move on with the pursuit of a planning grant via MRB.

RESOLUTION #115
MOTION TO ADJOURN

Introduced by Councilperson Zink

Seconded by Councilperson Culhane

Motion to adjourn at 7:10 PM.

VOTE OF THE BOARD

AYES: Supervisor Filipowicz, Councilpersons Culhane, D'Amuro, Guarino and Zink

NAYES: None

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Henshaw

Town Clerk

Approved 9-12-2023