



**ACME TOWNSHIP
STUDY TEAM
Wednesday, August 27, 2014, 4:00 pm
Acme Township Hall
6042 Acme Road, Williamsburg MI 49690**

Question: Should Acme Township join forces with Metro Fire and construct a joint township Hall/fire station to save taxpayers dollars??

- A. Ken Crawford's study team update to Acme Board at its July meeting**
- B. The question: Quantify the potential savings: Jean Aukerman's independent research (during July/August) per this question posed by Metro Fire Board's Chair, Beth Friend**
- C. Jean's report to Metro Fire Board on Tuesday, August 26, 2014**
- D. Metro Fire Board's response**
- E. Discussion and next steps for Acme Township**

Public Comment/Any other business

Adjourn

DRAFT

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Question: Should Acme Township join forces with Metro Fire and construct a joint Township Hall/Fire Station to save taxpayer dollars?

Meeting was called to order at 4:01 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance

Study Team members present: J. Aukerman, R. Challender, C. Walter

Members excused: Ken Crawford

Staff present: None

Limited Public Comment: None

A. Study Team update to Acme Township Board at its July 1, 2014, meeting

Aukerman re-distributed the "DRAFT Progress Report" dated June 18, 2014, which Ken Crawford read to the Acme Board at its July 1 meeting. She provided copies to the Study Team and members of the public in attendance at today's meeting. (The document was first distributed in the July 1 Board packet and published on township's web site for the public to read.) Additionally, Aukerman walked everyone through certain points on this Progress Report and explained that Chief Pat Parker had wanted a decision from Acme Township by July 1 if Acme had interest in pursuing one building. The document cited that the Study Team felt it had received enough input to believe that one joint building would not generate enough internal infrastructure savings. Rather, the Study Team felt that, if the fire station and township offices were built separately and placed together on one parcel, they could share in external infrastructure savings.

B. Independent research to quantify the potential savings

Aukerman explained that, in mid-July, she had received a request from the Chair of the Metro Fire Board, Beth Friend, to try and quantify the internal infrastructure savings that might exist on a joint building.

At today's meeting, Aukerman distributed a one-page matrix to the Study Team members and public in attendance. She explained how she worked independently to quantify the savings, per Beth Friend's request, by conducting on-line research and identifying and contacting 3 architects who specialize in fire station design.

- Michael McKeon; 25 years experience; focuses on public safety buildings in CT, MA, NH
- Robert Mitchell; 30 years; focuses on public safety bldgs in CT, MD, NJ, NY, PA, TX, VA

- Don Collins; >33 years; Prof Emeritus, Clemson University; Captain, Clemson Fire Dept; nationally-known consultant on fire station design and identifying problems before building

The one-page matrix summarized each architect's responses in five subject areas. Input received in June from Traverse City architect, Jack Knol, was also included in the matrix.

C. Aukerman's report to Metro Fire Board on Tuesday, August 26, 2014

Aukerman explained that she had been invited by Beth Friend to discuss her research on the savings quantification with the Metro Fire Board at its August 26 meeting.

Jean discussed her findings with the Study Team and public in attendance. These points, among others, were covered:

- A combined Fire Station and Police building could save up to 17% on internal infrastructure costs due to shared services and amenities.
- The experts estimated that roughly half of the 17% -- or 8% -- might possibly be saved when a fire station is combined with a township hall.
- If you consider a \$2.0M fire station and a \$1.2M township hall for a \$3.2M building, the 8% savings would be \$256k.
- Not all savings is seen in construction; savings is split between construction and operations.
- Jean highlighted portions of her discussion with Alan Martel, Supervisor for Torch Lake Township, regarding their new, combined fire station / township hall. Alan says it works well because they are one entity.
- A combined building in Acme Township would house 3 entities: Metro Fire; North Flight; Acme Township administration. Alan says this can be done, but it's more difficult. How do you divide the savings?

D. Metro Fire Board's response to Aukerman's research

Metro Fire Board did not feel it cost-effective to conduct a feasibility study to further quantify any potential savings. They want Chief Pat Parker to select the best site for Acme's new Station #8 – and then further discussion may occur based on that decision.

Aukerman explained that Metro Fire Chief Pat Parker is considering two parcels located at the Grand Traverse Town Center. His preference is one facing M72 located next to the Williamsburg Dinner Theater. It is not large enough to also include a new township hall. The second parcel is located within the development and is large enough to include two buildings. Before Chief Parker can make his decision, he must have a discussion with MDOT regarding left-hand turns out of a new fire station and on to M72 – if located at that site.

E. Discussion and next steps for Acme Township

The Study Team and public in attendance discussed questions and ideas. Some thoughts raised were:

- Brian Kelley asked what the time line is for a decision; how the \$1.2M was arrived at; said it's [building a new township hall] not a matter of *if* but *when*; said there are compelling arguments to do it now [due to increases in building costs out-pacing ability to save/earn interest]; suggested designing a building with room for expansion.
- Marcie Timmins asked if borings were taken from each of the two parcels Chief Pat is investigating.

- Rachel Babcock addressed saving money before building and gaining input/speaking with architects who specialize in green building.
- Jay Zollinger and Chuck Walter discussed that no one wants a millage increase for a new township hall.
- Jay Zollinger discussed possible funding for a new building which includes using proceeds from sale of current building, grants, and bonding. He also addressed the questions he and Chief Parker have for MDOT.
- Roy Challenger commented internal infrastructure savings might be 2 – 3% on a joint building; Jay and Roy discussed how, even with separate buildings, internal infrastructure savings can still be found (one sewer lateral to site – not two; etc).
- Chuck Walter stated that “an old building is always an old building” – referring to our current township offices and extent of necessary rehabilitation/investment to make it serviceable.
- Jean Aukerman asked the public how they’d use a community room.
- Charlene Abernethy suggested using a community room for classes – pilates, art, extended education.
- Rachelle Babcock suggested possibly having a mobile library.
- Chuck Walter, Marcie Timmins, and Jean Aukerman all emphasized that they prefer two buildings on one site – if that becomes an option to possibly pursue.

We will wait to hear which parcel Chief Parker selects.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

**Should the New Metro Fire Station 8 and Acme Township Offices Be Combined Into One Public Services Building?
Would this save money on internal / external infrastructure costs and long-term operations?**

Subjects addressed by architects	Jack Knol	Michael McKeon	Bob Mitchell	Don Collins
Thoughts re savings... would one building be less expensive than building two separate buildings...	<p>Trying to decide whether combined facilities would be more economical than doing them in separate facilities or phases should take more time.</p> <p>Cannot predict without more specific information on design parameters.</p> <p>Combining complicates flexible planning for future growth on a defined site size. Most important factor is to determine realistic budget for <i>entire</i> Project Cost. Remember that new buildings typically require larger operational costs.</p>	<p>When Police and Fire are combined, savings can be up to 17% in construction and operations. For Township Hall and Fire, savings would be much less due to fewer shared services and amenities. No direct experience.</p>	<p>Would absolutely save.</p>	<p>Yes – but hard to say [savings] without a cost estimator [specialist] studying the plan.</p> <p>It's not uncommon for a fire station and township hall to share one building. When the fire station needs more space, and there isn't the land to expand, it can move and I use the apparatus floor to expand the office space if the building's structure and location hold value. Separating the two uses with a common entry or community room have also been outstanding designs that work well.</p>
RE savings – what specific areas...	<p>Mixed "Use Groups" as defined in building code typically complicate technical aspects for economies. Since 9/11, seems security and control of Fire and Rescue does not lend itself to public meeting areas/offices/ assembly halls for community events.</p> <p>I would like to know if Torch Lake has had any problems mixing uses.</p>	<p>With Police and Fire, it can be up to 17% savings. Am thinking it might be half that-- about 8% -- for township hall and Fire due to less shared services and amenities.</p> <p>8% would include mechanical, electrical, shared community / meeting room, site savings, and long-term operations.</p>	<p>Can share components... One water lateral, one sewer lateral, curb cuts, mechanicals, (electrical, boiler room), mobilized trades also give you economies of scale. Internal and external infrastructure costs.</p>	<p>2 exterior walls are eliminated. There's one sewer line, one gas line, generator for fire station which can also be designed to run the township hall. You can manipulate HVAC systems in many ways. Fire stations are my specialty and I was a fireman. I can look at a fire station plan and see a problem. I can also identify ways to save just by setting up the public toilets in a smart way. I've seen a lot.</p>
What municipalities have done this...	<p>Torch Lake Township.</p> <p>Their Construction Manager would be a good source to discover if their project saved money by sharing facility or site expenses.</p>	<p>Uncertain – but it's all about regionalization out East. Referred to Bob Mitchell.</p>	<p>Uncertain. Referred to Don Collins.</p>	<p>Several. I can send you some examples when I return to my office in a week.</p>
Is "free land" a good choice... input about the site	<p>Free land is a start only as land must be analyzed to see if it suits the facility. Vehicle circulation and parking requirements, Building Pad preparations, soil bearing capacity, water table, utility availability, storm water control, slight slopes or flat sites are all sometimes more important than the FREE aspect when it comes time to developing the site economically.</p>	<p>Ideal land situation is always flat land. A location in a shopping center can be a concern if circulation/ separation of traffic is not figured accurately. A seasoned architect/planner can make this work.</p>	<p>Be very careful how you organize the site.</p>	<p>"Free" land can cost a lot due to poor soils, need for pilings, extra structural engineering. So many variables must be looked at. Much better to put dollars into fire station needs than into [excessive] engineering.</p> <p>RE size of land, I designed a fire station in Canada with 6 bays, and 50 parking spaces on 1.5 acres of land.</p>
How do municipalities quantify how many actual dollars can be saved?	<p>Need discussion where I can glean appropriate facts. Recommend retainer for any further input.</p>	<p>Work with local resources to get list of services, draft plan, etc.</p>	<p>Conduct a Feasibility Study for \$20 - 35k. Programming, CAD floorplans, elevations, site plan, estimator, etc. Then you'll know.</p>	<p>You could save 8% or more – get a plan and have a cost estimator involved. In Athens Park, GA, we studied Leeds v. non-Leeds. Turns out St # 9 with Leeds standards saves them 15% per year over non-Leeds St #8.. Look downstream. You can use Leeds standards without costs of certification.</p>

June 18, 2014

**Acme Study Team
DRAFT Progress Report**

- As we've heard at previous Acme Township Board meetings, Chief Pat Parker is moving forward with plans to build a new Fire Station 8 – a much-needed, to-code update for Acme
 - Location and total costs have not been confirmed as yet
 - Acme's township offices are housed in this 1950s building lacking adequate office space, privacy for resident and business meetings, and requiring sizable investment for updates
 - Question arose a few months ago: Does it make sense for Acme to consider adding square footage on to a new Station 8 to house improved township offices? Does it save money (rather than building a separate structure) to do so?
 - In May, Jay Zollinger formed a Study Team to investigate this question
 - Chief Pat Parker said he needed a yes/no decision from the Township by July 1
 - Team members were: Gordie LaPointe (team leader) and Jean Aukerman from the Board; Roy Challenger and Chuck Walter – both with construction experience; and Ken Crawford – with banking experience
 - The team has met four times including a tour of the Torch Lake Township building which is a combined fire station and township offices constructed in 2007/2008
 - Gordie Lapointe stepped off the team in mid-June to focus on Special Assessment District regarding Acme's roads; Jean Aukerman assumed team leadership
 - In recent weeks, the team has solicited and obtained input from Chief Parker; Metro Fire's architect of record, Jack Knol; Acme's Planner, John Iacoangeli; and local commercial realtor
 - The following information has been gathered and the Study Team is requesting that the Acme Board agree for us to investigate further; here are relevant points for your consideration
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- New Fire Stations must meet strict codes for safety and performance
 - Combining these emergency utilities services with public offices – very different occupancies – may only enable minimal internal savings; hard to predict now
 - Chief Pat, as mentioned, is considering land now but has not yet made a final decision
 - Steve Smith, one of the developers at Grand Traverse Town Center, has offered land to both Metro Fire and Acme Township for offices – at no cost to either
 - Study Team believes that taxes should not be increased to afford a new township office, and price of land is a major contributor to cost
 - Therefore, Study Team feels “free” land at the Grand Traverse Town Center is a leading contender *if* the township builds new offices
 - Study Team has received enough input to believe that a joint building is not going to generate enough savings on internal infrastructure
 - Rather, the Team feels that, if the fire station and township offices were placed together on one adequately-sized parcel at the Grand Traverse Town Center, the two entities could share external infrastructure costs associated with parking, lighting, landscaping, snow removal, and maintenance fees
 - Solution would enable a “separate but together” public services center – with each maintaining its own identity while affording “community” feel and spaces for meetings and social gatherings
 - Chief Pat likes this possible solution – but, again, Metro Fire has not made a commitment to land as yet
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- The Study Team is requesting that the Board agree for us to investigate further and return with possible options and finance models for your consideration.
 - Please know that the Study Team makes no decisions; we are focused solely on soliciting information from experts and fact-finding so the Board can make final yes/no decisions

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