

EXPLANATION OF INFORMATIONAL DOCUMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND MUNICIPAL COMPLEX COMMITTEE [PSMCC] FOR OUR PAST TOWN MEETINGS

Attached you will find several documents prepared by various Committee members with the intent to help you understand the details behind the vote we are asking you to take on June 15 and July 14, 2009 regarding the proposed new Public Safety Complex and the rehabilitation of the Department of Public Works building.

The materials in this document will follow the order of our presentation to you to make it easier for you to follow along. Please take this home and read it all so as to be able to make an informed decision and responsible vote!

- A Brief History of the Tolland Public Safety and Municipal Complex Committee and its Objectives
- Frequently Asked Questions [and Answers]
- Reasons We Have Outgrown the Current Tolland Town Hall
- Proposed Renovation and Addition to the Department of Public Works Garage [Floor plan and elevations diagrams]
- Proposed Public Safety Complex [Floor plan and elevation diagrams]
- Explanation of the Tax Implications for Construction of the Public Safety Complex and Rehabilitation of the Department of Public Works building

Various Public meeting dates:

- May 27 at 7pm [Wednesday] at the Town Hall- a PSMC Committee Informational Meeting
- May 30 at 10am [Saturday] at the Department of Public Works building on Colebrook River Road [right next to the Town dump] – a PSMC Committee Informational Meeting.
- June 15 at 7pm [Monday] at the Town Hall for a Special Town Meeting/Public Hearing to vote on putting the PSMCC proposal on a town ballot.
- July 14 - with the polls open from 4pm to 8pm [Tuesday] at the Town Hall for an Election Ballot Meeting to vote on the \$2 million dollar request for the combined Department of Public Works building repairs/renovations and the new Public Safety Complex building assuming the June 15 vote is favorable.

Our whole Committee urges you to come to all our meetings, read all the materials we have provided and make an intelligent long run decision on our proposal!

Robert Gery – Committee Chairperson

Revised June 5, 2009

Brief History of the Tolland Public Safety and Municipal Complex Committee And its Objectives

OVERVIEW

In October 2007 the Tolland selectmen invited several individuals to join a committee to look at both the Department of Public Works [DPW] building and to consider the needs of Tolland 15-20 years hence as to the town hall needs. The committee met for the first time in November 2007 and official minutes were taken beginning at that meeting.

Prior to the November 2007 meeting an informal group met 4-5 times beginning in October 2006. The group consisted of the police chief, fire chief, Department of Public Works head, a representative from Huntley Associates [an engineering firm] and various selectmen. As this was an informal group no minutes were taken.

In November 2007 the Committee consisted of voting members Robert Gery [elected chairperson of the group at that first meeting], Steve DellaGiustina [appointed as secretary], Eric Munson III, Bruce Faucher and Jim Richard. A few months later Robert Maselek [attorney] and Nick Urbinati [building inspector] were added as voting members at the chairman's request. Non-voting members include Robert Littlefield [fire chief], Wayne Carr [DPW], Mike Sullivan and Phillip Grannan [appointed by the selectmen as a consultant to the committee]. Faucher has since resigned from the committee and Maselek has become the new secretary. Grannan was appointed a full voting member.

The committee has had monthly meetings each month since November 2007. In an effort to inform town folks of what the committee discussed on their behalf the official minutes are on file at the town hall, have been published on the town website and in the Tattler.

To access the minutes, the newsletters, committee objectives or a list of committee members go to http://www.tolland-ma.gov/Public_Documents/TollandMA_Safety/index and then click on the minutes or any of the three other links for further information.

The committee also developed a Communications and Marketing subcommittee which has published three newsletters to further inform town voters. The newsletters are both on the website and can also be found in the November 2008 Tattler. In addition a Building Users subcommittee was formed as well as a Building Details subcommittee to help accomplish the committee's objectives.

OBJECTIVES

The Public Safety & Municipal Complex Committee was established by the Tolland Board of Selectmen to:

1. Determine facility requirements for the Tolland Police Department, Department of Public Works, Fire Department and other town organizations. Requirements include equipment storage and maintenance, training, meeting/office space, space for filing of town records etc. Input from Town of Tolland department professionals, engineering and architectural professionals and state personnel and the community shall be solicited.
2. Define health, safety, building code and other legal requirements as established by State Law, Building Codes, Federal and State Environmental Protection Agencies and other relevant agencies.
3. Inform tax payers of the structural status of the present building with documentation of its current deficiencies and document annual maintenance costs/considerations.
4. Develop recommendations and requirements for a Tolland Public Safety and Municipal Complex that meets town needs now and over the next 20 years, conforms with appropriate laws and requirements, is built in an environmentally friendly manner if at all possible.
5. Develop a budget for facility improvement or entirely new construction if needed.
6. Consider financial grants that could assist with building expenses [e.g. use of alternative energy – building “green”]. Consider all methods of financing toward a cost effective goal.
7. Develop materials to explain building design requirements and alternatives for the Finance Committee and the community.

Frequently Asked Questions (and Answers)

1) How many buildings are included in this project?

Two. This includes repairs to the current DPW facility, a new Public Safety building for the Fire Department and the Police Department which will include a new town meeting facility and reconfiguring the current Town Hall Office Building for anticipated expansion using the current meeting room.

2) What is the time frame the Committee is looking at regarding planned usage of the building?

At the direction of the Selectmen, the Committee is looking at a time horizon of twenty years. Looking at historical growth patterns of Tolland it seems likely that in twenty years Tolland will grow from approximately 450 full-time and part-time residents to approximately 600. This represents a percentage increase of 33%.

3) What growth in town staffing will be necessary in the next twenty years?

Today multiple people perform a number of town functions. For example Sue Voudren is the head of the Board of Assessors (Jessica Kelmelis is the Assessor Clerk as well as the Librarian) and Sue is also the Town Clerk; Margaret McClellan is the Town Treasurer and the Tax Collector as well as Assistant to the Board of Selectmen. The police force is composed of three individuals including the chief. Other appointive offices require shared office space and private filing space. This includes the agent of the Boards of Health and Conservation (Valerie Nickerson-Bird performs both roles) as well as the Building Inspector. In the future, other trade inspectors such as Electrical and Plumbing may need "floating space"

Taking into account that many of the properties in Tolland are owned by non full-time residents, it is necessary to estimate which town functions will need to be increased not only by resident growth but also by non-resident property growth. They also feel that the size of the Fire Department and its equipment (given necessary replacements due to age and technological advances) will be adequate for the future.

4) What data do we have on square feet of storage space required for current/new files?

There are two types of storage that is needed, one is storage for consumables such as paper supplies, and the other is permanent record storage. In 1976 a fire destroyed many vital town records that were in the library/soon to be the town hall. Currently records not stored in the current town Office are stored at the DPW complex in metal storage containers with other equipment. It is estimated that a fireproof vault of roughly 240 square feet is required for document storage.

5) Why might we need a new building?

Tolland needs to plan for the future. A new Safety complex and repairing the DPW complex will provide for both present expansion needs and our future growth needs. It will also provide weather protection, potentially extending the service life, to our Fire and DPW equipment. Think 20 years forward and also think how much more expensive it will be if we wait to build at a later date.

6) Can't we repair or rebuild the current DPW building?

We are actually proposing to both "fix" and expand by one bay the present Department of Public Works [DPW] building. The repair aspect of this effort is very necessary and not optional as both the septic system and the electrical wiring are in extremely poor condition.

7) Who is going to pay for it?

The property taxpayers of Tolland, many of whom are not voters, will pay. Also, any new full or part-time residents will pick up a portion of the cost as they purchase property in town.

8) How much will it cost the taxpayer?

Until we determine what the actual needs will be for the future and develop a plan approved by the voters it is not possible to provide a perfect estimate. At this time a good rough estimate of the cost for both buildings is a total of 2 million dollars. When the Committee receives town voter approval an architect will be hired to complete all plan details for submission to contractors to bid on the construction job. We did not wish to spend \$100,000-\$150,000 on an initial architectural plan only to have it turned down by the voter [thus wasting the architectural fees].

9) How is it going to be paid for?

The Selectmen will probably authorize the Town Treasurer to issue a municipal bond for the cost of the project. Using the bond authority is similar to a 20-year home mortgage and will spread the cost over 20 years. The present Town Office was paid for in this manner; that bond is almost completely retired at this point.

Also while initial examinations have not been able to find grants for buildings, it might be possible to obtain grants for some of the new equipment needed for the new Safety and Municipal Complex building.

10) What is the purpose of the new Public Safety and Municipal Complex building?

We will propose that the new Safety complex contain the Police Office, Fire Department office and all fire and police vehicles and other related equipment and a community center room. This will free up space in the DPW building and finally allow us to get all important DPW equipment under one roof to protect it from the elements/weather!

11) Will the Public Safety complex be used for anything else other than the fire/police departments?

Yes ...see above. Besides being used by every official Tolland committee/Board and recognized groups such as the Council on Aging, it will also be available for private functions/meetings.

12) What has to be done to the current DPW building to make it suitable?

All the electrical circuitry has to be redone, the present leaking ceiling will need to be replaced and insulated [it is not now insulated] and the metal walls need to be replaced. Also the DPW office, bathroom and storage area needs to be entirely redone. The rear wooden portion of the building will be torn down and replaced with a steel substructure. Finally repairs will be made to the septic, well, leech field, plumbing as needed to meet the requirements of the health inspector and all Massachusetts laws pertaining to this.

13) What other buildings and towns have the committee visited and what have they learned?

The Committee has visited 10 locations to include Sandisfield, North Canton, Pleasant Valley, Kent, Granby, Cummington, Barkhamsted, Riverton, Granville and Plainfield, MA a town of about 600 that approximates the size of the Town we believe Tolland will grow to in twenty years. Things learned relate to positive building design, heating ,electrical and other critical issues, roof issues, what problems to avoid, materials to use, how to secure cost discounts all of which will be applied as best as possible to both the new Public Safety complex as well as the necessary repair of the DPW building.

14) What are the risks if we don't move ahead with this project?

Keeping our police, fire and DPW equipment in an appropriate garage may extend its useful life by years and hundreds of thousands of miles. Equipment can be damaged by exposure to the elements. Water in the Fire tanker can freeze rendering useless for fighting fires in winter. Replacing this equipment is extremely costly; these costs will fall directly on the taxpayer. Also replacement often takes months or years depriving the Town of valuable use and service.

Providing our key fire, police and DPW employees a safer, warmer environment can result in longer tenures as public servants thus avoiding recruiting and retraining costs.

If an emergency vehicle is unable to respond quickly to a call, it can result in the loss of lives and increased property damage.

To conduct proper training for our volunteer firefighters, it is important that equipment training be conducted near the fire vehicles and equipment. Conducting this training in an unheated or open area diminishes the value of the training.

The police are currently sandwiched into a closet-like space in the existing Town Hall . This is a potentially dangerous situation especially when a situation involving interviewing or booking an individual arises. This puts the police and anyone else in the vicinity in danger.

Increased population means new taxable properties, if our current staffing is unable to keep up with our growth, lost tax revenues could be a result.

15) What are the benefits of moving ahead with this project?

There are numerous financial benefits:

1. DPW, fire and police equipment will be in service longer and not need replacement as frequently.
2. Emergency vehicles will be protected and easier to start in emergencies. This can save lives and property.
3. The high annual cost of heating the uninsulated portion of our current fire/DPW garage will be lowered.

Revised: May 15, 2009

Reasons We Have Outgrown the Current Tolland Town Hall

The current Tolland Town Hall building is seriously over crowded. As Tolland residents know, there are three public buildings in Tolland. They are the current Fire/DPW building, the Library and Town Hall.

The current Fire/DPW building is in serious condition and in fact, **has been officially condemned by the Board of Health**. Furthermore, the electrical inspector has indicated there is a significant need for major electrical repair work. Our DPW and Fire Department personnel continue to use the building as they simply have no other choice. Fire and DPW equipment should not be left outdoors but by necessity some equipment faces this fate. Tolland has no other building usable for this purpose. The DPW building needs a significant renovation and an additional bay for equipment. It has a bad mold problem caused by many roof leaks. Most of the ceiling insulation had to be removed due to its wet condition and mold. This caused a significant increase in the annual cost of electricity and fuel oil for the building.

If approved by Tolland voters, the Fire Department personnel and equipment will be relocated to a new facility to be built on Route 57 and the current building will be renovated and used solely as the DPW garage. This will allow for the indoor storage of all major equipment/trucks.

The current Tolland Library is stuffed with books and records of the Town. These records are stored mostly in the Library basement. The Library has no extra room for town record storage.

The current Town Hall was built in 1988 to replace the Town Hall destroyed by Fire. **It is now at its maximum capacity**. There are 3 main purposes for the Town Hall:

- 1) To house the office staff, which today consists of the Town Treasurer (1), Tax collector(1), the Town tax assessor(1), and the Town Clerk (1). In addition the Police Department is housed here in a cramped 7 foot by 10 foot room.
- 2) To be the meeting place for the Town Selectmen.
- 3) To be the meeting place for other Town Committees and organizations. These include:

Elected Groups: The Board of Assessors (3), Planning Board (6), School Committee (1), Library Trustees (3), Town Moderator (1) and Town Constable (1)

Appointed Groups: Below are listed appointed positions and groups associated with the Town of Tolland that meet at Town Hall at various times during the year. Note that some of the people associated with the positions below use Town Hall as their office location. These groups may use Town Hall daily, weekly or in some cases monthly. Many Committees and people listed below meet frequently at formal planned times (usually weekly or monthly) and others meet only when required.

This varying scheduling arrangement, overlap in meeting dates and times, and informal meeting schedules of different committees sometimes result in actual meeting conflicts at our Town Hall.

American with Disabilities Act Coordinator (1)	Highland Valley Board Directors (1)
Animal Control Officer (1)	Historical Commission (3)
Animal Inspector (1)	Keeper of the Sign (1)
Asst. Town Clerk (1)	Pioneer Valley Joint Plan Commission (3)
Asst. Treasurer (1)	Plumbing Inspector (1)
Bicentennial Committee (10)	Asst. Plumbing Inspector(1)
Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer	Police Chief (1)
Alternate Building Inspector (1)	Police Officers (2)
Alternate Building Inspector(1)	Special Police Officers(2)
Board of Appeals (4)	Procurement Officer(1)
Board of Appeals Alternate (1)	Public Safety Complex Committee (7)

Burial Agent (1)	Radio Officer (1)
Cemetery Committee (5)	Recreation Committee (3)
Compactor/Recycling (1)	Southwick/Tolland School Committee (1)
Conservation Commission (3)	Emergency Management Director (1)
Constable (1)	Superintendent Public Works (1)
Council on Aging (4)	Tattler Editor (1)
Cultural Council(5)	Town Counsel (1)
Dog Officers (1)	Transfer Station Administrator (1)
e-Government Official(1)	Tree Warden & Pest Control Agent (1)
Hazardous Waste Coordinator (2)	Unemployment Insurance Agent (1)
Health Agent(1)	Veterans' Agent (1)
Health Agent Asst.(1)	Website Director (1)
Finance Committee [4]	Workers' Compensation Agent (1)

In addition, Town Hall is routinely used for large community citizen meetings including Council on Aging meetings (20) and Flu Clinics (45) as well as town meetings to vote on various items which can include 50-75 attendees. This is a total of 185 positions of people [excluding Town meetings] who use Town Hall [some people have more than one position so 185 is not the actual number of people].

Town Hall is also importantly the official repository for Town records; however it does not have adequate space for this, so some records are stored at the Town Library, some are stored at the Fire/DPW garage in a container truck and some are stored in resident's basements. This is a bad circumstance that is only made necessary by lack of space at Town Hall. The state mandates that such records be stored in a much more professional way. The way records are currently stored may result in a major and serious loss of records should an unforeseen disaster occur such as flooding/water damage or fire. The records should be stored in a manner that is much more safe and in accordance with state professional standards.

Further, as recently demonstrated by the December 2008 ice storm, Tolland Town Hall is the designated Emergency Management Center for the Town. In the event of a large Town wide emergency, all the people necessary to handle the emergency meet at Town Hall. This includes the Fire, Police, Selectmen, Emergency Coordinator, DPW crew and all the other agencies brought in to help with the emergency. During the recent ice storm the Town required the help of hired tree crews and the National Guard. In total the number of people in Town Hall at one point was well over 60 people. The Town hall facility cannot safely handle that many people but the Town has no other suitable facility to use.

Given these circumstances and the unsafe condition of the Fire/DPW garage, the Town of Tolland desperately needs a new Public Safety Complex to house our Police and Fire Departments and to serve as an emergency operations center and a community center! This new facility will relieve the current storage and overcrowding situation at Town Hall and allow Tolland to use the current Town Hall in a more professional and efficient manner. We also need to add to and rebuild the DPW building to meet the electrical code, health inspections and normal growth requirements.

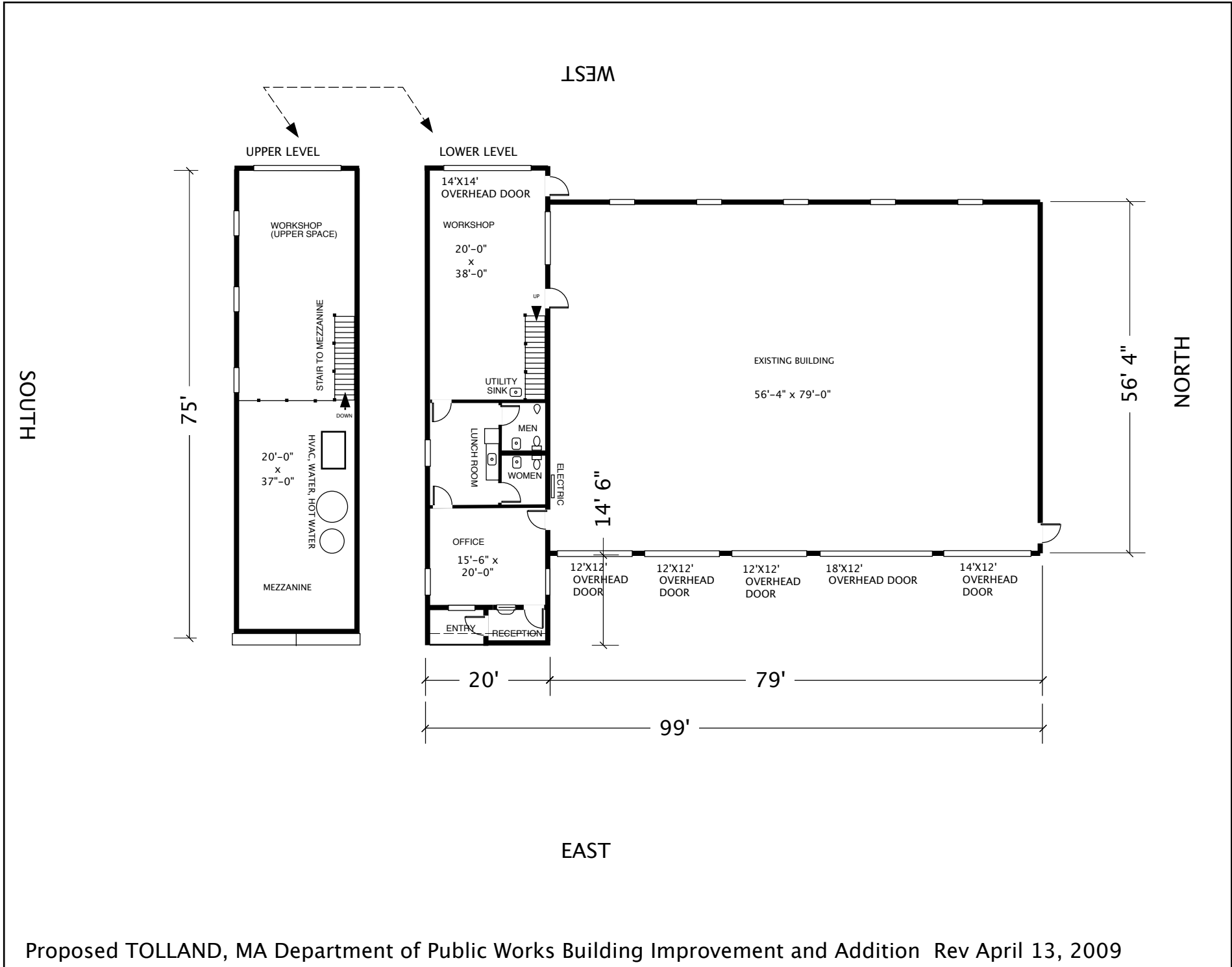
Should the residents of Tolland proceed with the new Public Safety/DPW garage plans, then the plan is to increase the existing office space area (with desks, phones and computer hook-ups) in the Town Hall to accommodate the actual number of users of the office space and, in addition, we will create a safe storage area for official town files (Massachusetts has protective standards for the storage of official town records). The additional office space area, file storage area and a smaller conference room will be constructed in the present public meeting room area of Town Hall. The new public meeting room will be in the proposed new Public Safety municipal building.

Revised June 5, 2009

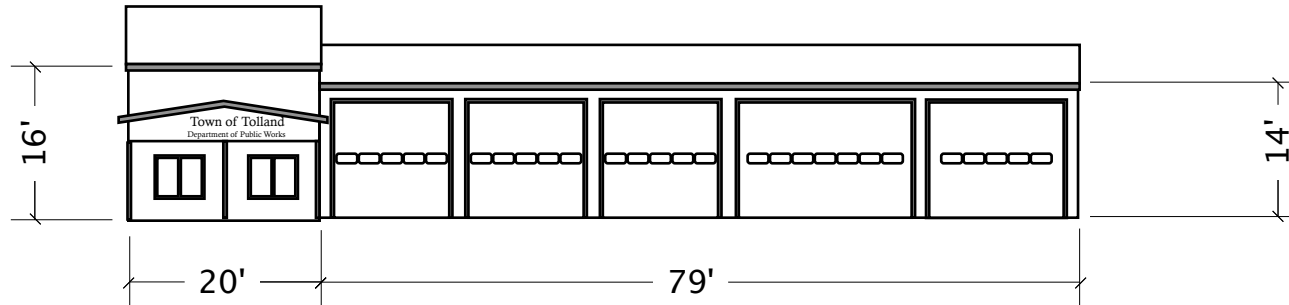
PROPOSED RENOVATION AND ADDITION TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS GARAGE

TOLLAND, MASSACHUSETTS

April 13, 2009



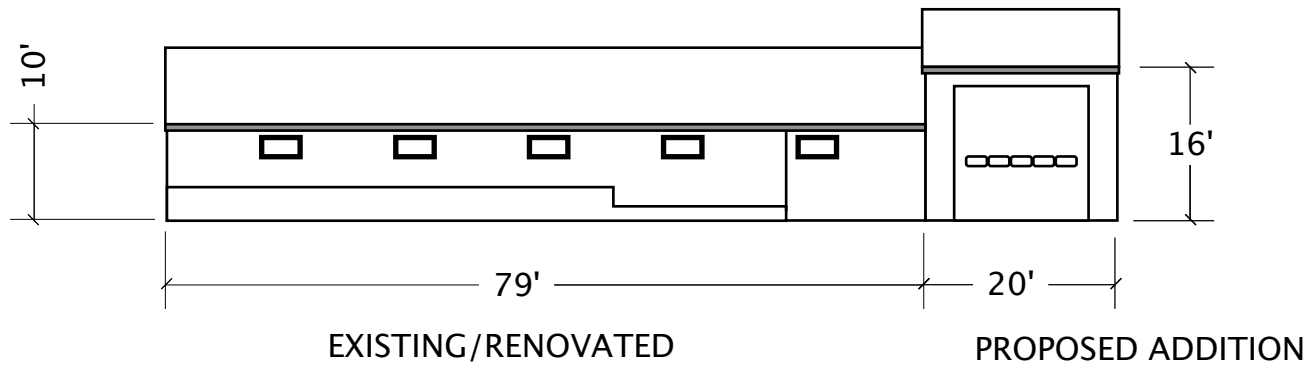
Proposed TOLLAND, MA Department of Public Works Building Improvement and Addition Rev April 13, 2009



PROPOSED ADDITION

EXISTING/RENOVATED

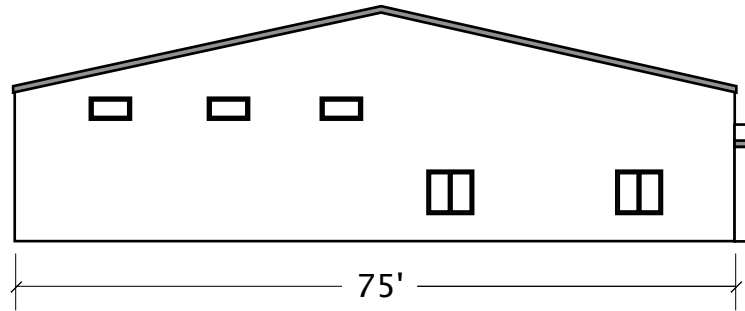
FRONT(EAST) VIEW



EXISTING/RENOVATED

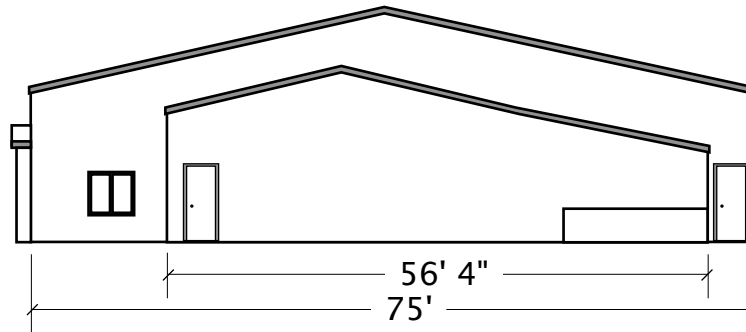
PROPOSED ADDITION

REAR(WEST) VIEW



ADDITION

SOUTH VIEW



ADDITION

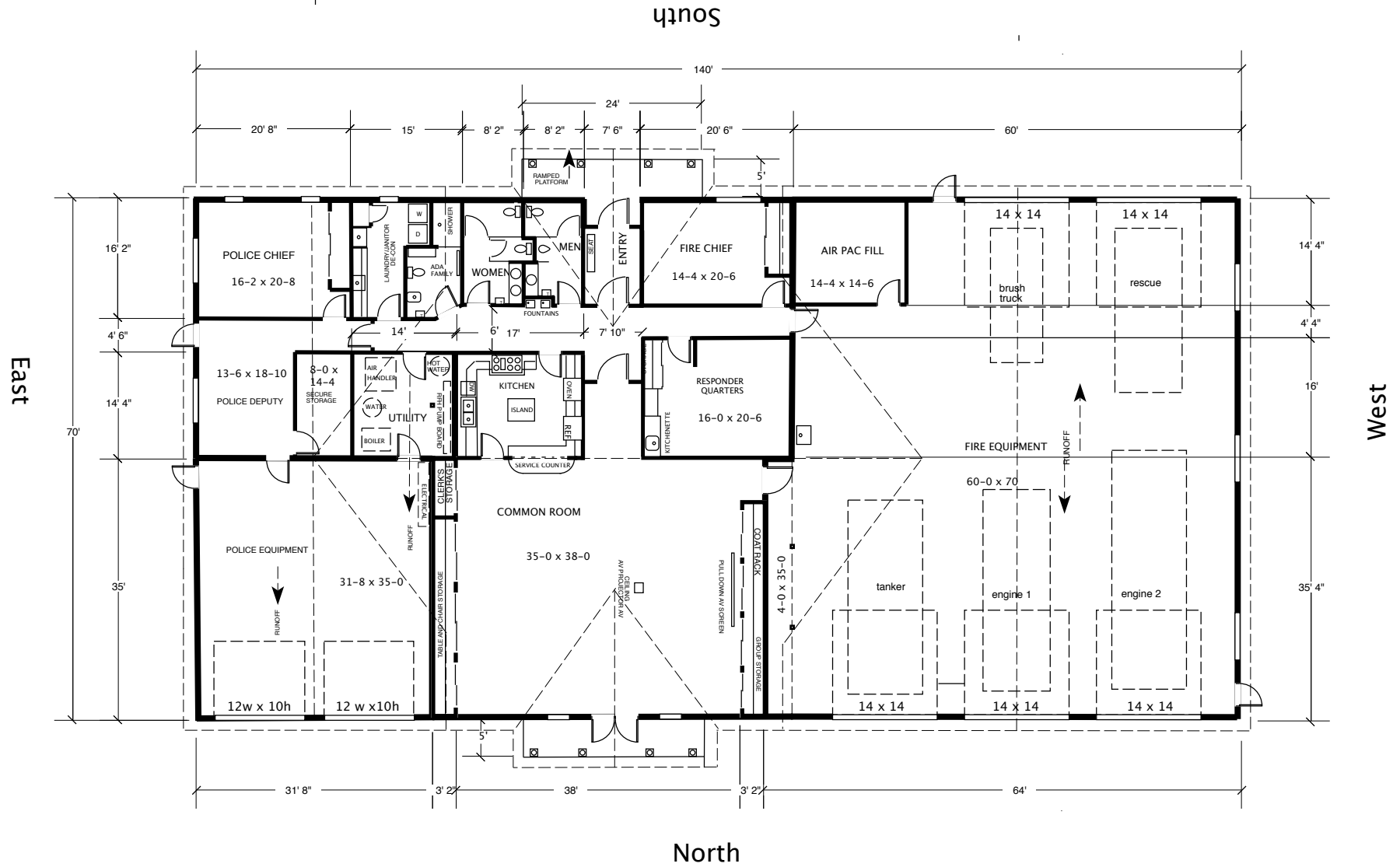
EXISTING/RENOVATED

NORTH VIEW

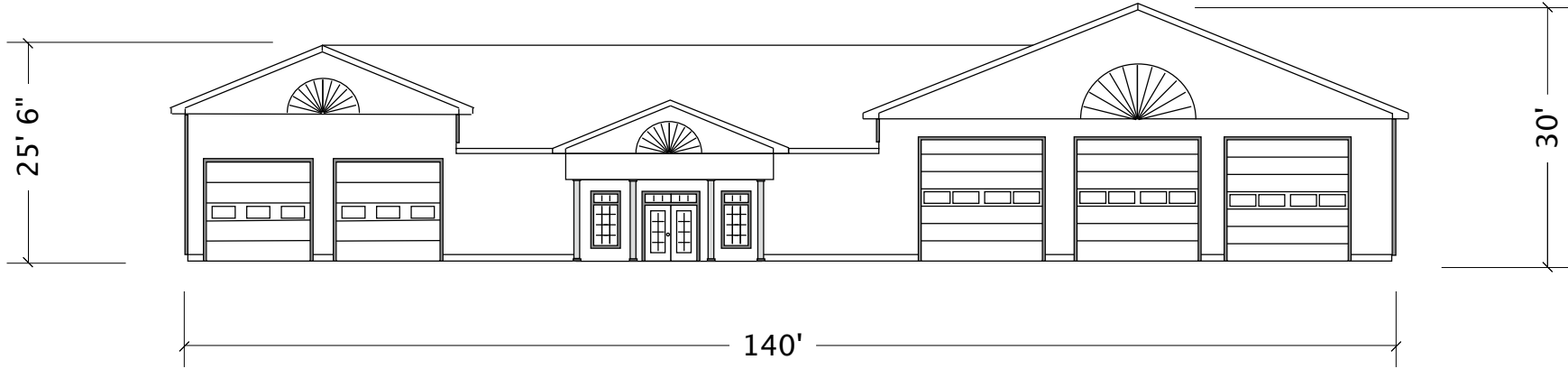
PROPOSED FIRE DEPARTMENT, POLICE DEPARTMENT
AND COMMUNITY CENTER

TOLLAND, MASSACHUSETTS

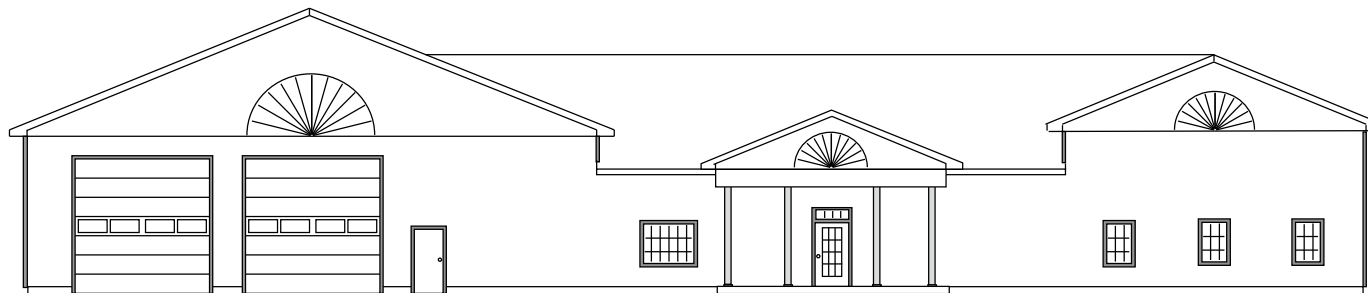
APRIL 13, 2009



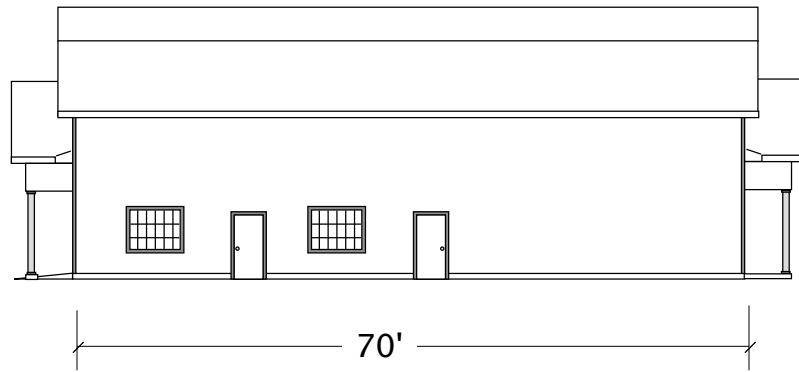
FLOOR PLAN



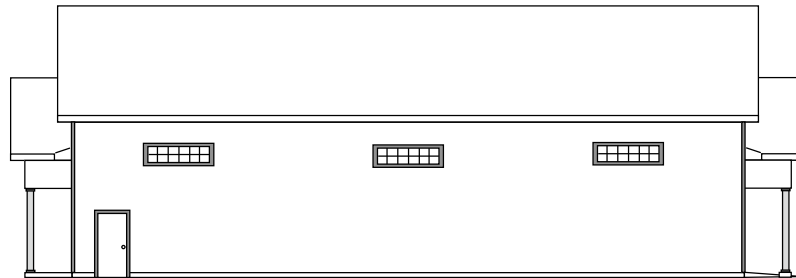
NORTH VIEW



SOUTH VIEW



EAST VIEW



WEST VIEW

Proposed TOLLAND, MA Fire Department, Police Department , and Community Center APRIL 13, 2009

BY J. RICHARD

**EXPLANATION OF THE TAX IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE
PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX AND REHABILITATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING AS PROPOSED BY THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX COMMITTEE**

- The explanation below assumes that both buildings will cost \$2 million dollars.
- It further assumes that we will secure a 40 year municipal bond [similar to a home mortgage] at 4.5% interest.
- Finally we are showing the annual tax increase to you based on a number of different assessed values. For your information **\$250,000** comes close to the **average tax assessment** for Tolland residents.

Originally we had thought we might be able to authorize a 20 year bond but in discussion with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue [they determine what we can do financially based on our past budgets, ability to pay, number of tax payers, defaults by tax payers and overall financial strength] they feel we would need to ask for a 40 year bond. This means we would lower what was annually paid by a taxpayer compared to the 20 year bond but it also means over the entire time of the loan we'd pay totally more interest unless we chose to pay off some of this loan principal ahead of schedule.

The following further comments/observations can be made:

- If you had a home/land assessed at \$250,000 and we used .72 [72 cents is the required addition to our mill rate as per the DOR] per \$1,000 you would pay an extra \$180.00 in annual taxes for the first year for both buildings or about 50 cents a day!
- If your home was assessed at \$300,000 you would pay \$216 more annually in the first year or 59 cents a day.
- If your home was assessed at \$400,000 you'd pay \$288 and if it was assessed at \$500,000 you'd pay \$360 more a year.
- **If you want to figure out what you would pay based on the actual assessment of your property** just look at your recent town property tax bill and find the assessed value. Divide that amount by 1000 and then multiple that result by .72 for your first year annual tax addition due to the proposed building project.
- As the mortgage is paid off and more principal is retired we will all pay less per year in taxes for future years.
- Should we receive any grant monies to help with the planning/construction or some monies from the Obama administration stimulus proposal then, of course, the bond [mortgage] would be less than the 2 million and we would all pay less annual taxes for the both buildings. We did apply in January for two State of Massachusetts building grants but we have not heard anything yet. We will also apply for a Department of Homeland Security grant.
- Should the interest rate be less when we secure the loan we will also all have a smaller tax to pay. At this time interest rates are at a historic low point so it would be a good time to act.

Revised June 5, 2009