

21 Highland Future Use Committee

Background:

The South Union School is currently being used to house the Recreation Department and Youth and Family Services. The building is in fair condition, and is energy inefficient. It is likely that in 4-5 years the building will become surplus to the anticipated needs of the municipal side of Town Government, provided that a different building becomes available to the town in the form of either a school or other building.

The Select Board would like to develop alternative uses of the building to, if practical, preserve it.

Charge:

There shall be an Ad Hoc Committee established to make recommendations related to the future use of the South Union School. The committee's charge shall expire on June 30 2024. The committee shall be guided as follows:

1. The committee may make recommendations related to the town owned property at the site provided that:
 - a. The playground must be maintained. If necessary, it may be moved.
 - b. The sledding hill must be maintained.
2. Parking for the playground and any future use must be provided.
3. The committee may consider uses that would require faster conversion than the 4-5 year timeframe envisions. If considered a plan should be developed for the rehousing of the existing occupants.
4. Any future use of the building that requires regular occupancy must bring the building up to modern energy efficiency standards and building codes.
5. The committee may make use of the technical resources of the town in its deliberations provided that the provision of said resources are approved by either the Town Administrator or the Select Board.
6. The committee should attempt to find alternative sources of funding for any proposed use. The committee should be mindful that any request for taxpayer funding must be judged against other competing priorities. The committee is reminded that other neighborhoods in our town have far fewer public amenities (playgrounds, parks, open space) than exist in this neighborhood.

The committee shall make an interim report to the Select Board no later than Jan 1, 2024 and an interim recommendation no later than May 15, 2024. Said reports shall cover alternative uses that will enjoy broad community support. The committee shall hold at least one public forum related to its recommendations.

Composition:

The Committee shall be appointed by the Select Board it shall have 7 members as follows:

- The Open Space Preservation Commission shall nominate 1 member
- The Historical Commission shall nominate 1 member.

- The Recreation Commission shall nominate 1 member.
- There shall be 2 members who live within ½ mile of the property.
- There shall be 2 at large members.

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