

# **Final Report**

## **Sudbury Police Station Blue Ribbon Committee**

**Submitted to: Sudbury Board of Selectmen**

### **Executive Summary**

The Police Station Blue Ribbon Committee was established to examine the failed 2007 proposal for a new Sudbury police station and to recommend alternatives to the Board of Selectmen (BoS). Membership included a range of backgrounds and predispositions regarding Sudbury's requirements in a police facility.

The Committee evaluated the existing facility and confirmed the deficiencies reported previously; reviewed the rationale for the proposed design; visited recently-built facilities and interviewed the police personnel using them. Findings were used as benchmarks to define the functional elements, configuration and size appropriate for a Sudbury facility. The Committee developed an iterative set of options leading to a final recommendation for a facility deemed to meet current codes and standards, at a minimum size and cost. Consideration of sites was confined to the existing facility site and the proposed site adjacent to the main fire station on Hudson Road.

The Committee unanimously recommends approximately a 14,540 square foot new facility at an estimated 2008 cost of \$6,843,000 to be built on the proposed site adjacent to the main fire station on Hudson Road. The Committee further recommends that this concept be referred to the Permanent Building Committee for refinement and definitive cost analysis, including review of both hard and soft costs, including those entailed in desired energy efficiency measures.

### **1) Introduction:**

The Police Station Blue Ribbon Committee (PSBRC) was established by the Board of Selectmen to conduct an independent review of the planning behind the proposal for a new 18,500 square foot police station to be built adjacent to the main fire station on Hudson Road, and to recommend alternatives for addressing Sudbury's need for a police facility to the Board for possible presentation to voters.

Criteria established by the BoS for any recommended alternative were;

- Capacity for future additions
- Compliance with applicable codes and minimum standards for police facilities
- Facility for combined dispatch with Sudbury Fire department
- Building security, and employee and public safety
- Energy efficiency

## 2) Committee Composition:

The PSBRC was comprised of thirteen members with diverse backgrounds and attitudes regarding Sudbury's police facility needs, including two *ex officio* members, as follows:

William G. Braun, Chairman	Philip Connors
Anne L. Hollows	Michael E. Melnick
Matthew Murphy	Derek O. Oram
Nicholas Palermo, Esq.	John L. Reutlinger
Thomas A. Scarlata	Robert G. Stein
Joseph J. Sziabowski	
Town Manager Valente, <i>ex officio</i>	Police Chief Fadgen, <i>ex officio</i>

## 3) Committee Approach, Activities and Findings

To approach its task objectively and systematically, the Committee posed the following questions, to be addressed in view of codes, current standards, conventional police procedure and Sudbury's present and foreseeable needs for a 20-year period:

- a) What are the deficiencies in structure, infrastructure and function of Sudbury's existing police facility?
- b) What considerations led to the previously-proposed 18,500 sq. ft. facility?
- c) In view of Items 1 and 2 above, at a minimum, what elements of space, at what size and in what configuration are appropriate for a Sudbury police station?
- d) What are the options, and what is the most cost-effective and operationally efficient approach to meeting Sudbury's defined needs?

At the outset of its investigation, the Committee interviewed and reviewed the work of the Carell Group of Hopkinton, the architectural firm previously engaged by the Sudbury Permanent Building Committee. The Committee found the firm to be well-qualified and with substantial experience in design of public safety facilities, and highly responsive to Sudbury's inputs and cost concerns. In view of these findings, the Committee enlisted the Carell group to provide background, data and assistance in developing design options in response to Committee inputs and feedback.

The Committee conducted its review between November 26, 2007 and February 12, 2008. During that period, members of the Committee revisited the existing facility, toured and analyzed the features of recently constructed facilities in Hopkinton, Hansen and Acton, interviewed personnel from these facilities at length, conducted and contributed research by individual members, and conducted a series of meetings to define Sudbury's needs in a police facility and develop the best approach to address those needs.

### **a) Structure and Function of Present Facility**

Assessment of the deficiencies in the existing Sudbury police facility was accomplished by inspection of the facility, interviews of police personnel from Sudbury as well as other communities, review of designs and physical inspection of other relevant police facilities (Acton, Hanson, Hopkinton), and consultation with the architect.

The Committee confirmed the structural and functional deficits identified in the January 25, 2007 report by the Carell Group and presented to the 2007 Annual Town Meeting. The Committee found that the building is in generally sound physical condition, but lacks adequate space for its present-day function, and is in need of major repairs, design upgrades and infrastructure revisions to meet current standards and demands, including handicapped accessibility. Some of the conditions at the existing facility are illustrated in **Exhibit 1**.

Structural and functional deficiencies of the existing facility include:

- Overlapping circulation: public, staff and detainees share common routes through building, including stairs between front and back sections
- Booking, interrogation and detention areas that do not meet current standards; improper crossover between public and police activities
- No holding cell
- Single room for interrogation, staff and public meetings
- Absence of space for entire department to meet
- Single-bay sallyport used as garage and storage
- Evidence storage scattered throughout building
- Under-size locker rooms and lockers
- Dispatch area too small
- Single-desk sergeants' station in alcove
- Inadequate office and conference space
- Inadequate space for required computer and telecommunications equipment
- Leaky and/or inoperable windows
- Widely uneven temperature distribution due to multiple space reconfigurations
- No central cooling
- Inadequate electrical distribution
- UPOS, E911 and Technology hardware located in water service room
- Main computers in public-business office space
- Rear of building 30 inches higher than front portion
- No handicapped accessibility in significant portion of building
- Difficulty in combining police and fire dispatch

The Committee also confirmed that the 0.6 acre site of the existing facility is severely constrained, limiting the potential for enlargement.

### **b) Considerations Leading to Previously-proposed Design**

The previously-proposed 18,500 sq. ft. facility, with program and cost, is provided as **Exhibit 2**. The considerations leading to this proposal were assessed through review of the documents, and interviews with the architect, police personnel and Sudbury Permanent Building Committee members engaged in its development. Review of police facilities in other communities provided further background.

Floor plans of the existing and proposed facilities were presented side-by-side and the Committee examined the rationale for each of the functional elements and spaces assigned. These include:

- Public interface areas
  - Conference room
  - Firearms licensing & permitting
  - Juvenile officer
  - Public meeting room
  - Dispatch
- Officer-in-charge office
- Technology space (computer, phone e-911, etc.)
- Evidence storage
- File and records storage
- General storage
- Interview rooms
- Booking area
- Holding area
- Separate male, female and juvenile detention areas
- Police Matron's station in female detention area
- Evidence processing
- Prisoner washing facilities
- Firearms storage
- Report writing area
- Squad/roll-call room
- Toilet facilities
- Kitchen/break room areas
- Staff office space (chief, lieutenant, sergeants, detectives)
- Administrative space (including office machines, etc.)
- Staff conference space
- Male and female locker rooms
- Sallyport and garage

Questions were repeatedly posed regarding the need for each element of space, the amount of space allocated and the potential for combining or out-placing functions to conserve space. Particular attention was paid to the dispatch area (to insure the potential for combined fire and police dispatch functions), the number and type of cells, office spaces, locker rooms, the proposed meeting, training and emergency command room, technology space, garage and sallyport areas, the proposed fitness area, conference rooms and expansion space.

It was noted that police stations are generally designed around zones of activity, with differing types and amounts of security required. For example, areas where public business is conducted require ready access by the public to police personnel, but isolation from areas where suspects or detainees are processed. These areas, in turn, require a high degree of physical security. Dispatch areas require failure-safety measures. The Committee determined that the proposed building design was developed around these several security zones with attention to their simultaneous needs for isolation and communication.

The Committee noted several significant changes in the nature of police work and in regulations governing police facilities since the existing facility was constructed. Changes in the nature of police

work include increased focus on community policing versus law enforcement with emphasis on crime prevention through community outreach, the rapidly growing prevalence of cyber crime, increased need for family and other social interventions, rapid expansion of the role of technology in communication, information processing and documentation, and additional responsibilities and duties related to homeland security. Changes in regulations include requirements for separate detention facilities for male, female and juvenile detainees, a matron to oversee female detainees, and special provisions for juvenile detainees. These factors create a rapidly growing need for ongoing training and intradepartmental communication.

The Committee found that much of the space requirement in police facilities, including areas for dispatch, booking, holding, evidence processing, evidence storage, computer and communication technology, firearms licensing, officer-in-charge, juvenile officer, etc. is largely independent of the size of the community or its police force. Other spaces such as locker rooms, squad room, offices, toilet facilities, conference rooms, etc. depend more directly on community and police force size. The Committee also noted that because of the types of space and security measures required, police facilities are appreciably more expensive to build than other municipal or commercial facilities. This limits the utility of common cost benchmarks or comparisons to other non-police facilities.

After review, it became apparent to the Committee that the intent of the proposed facility was to resolve the deficiencies of the current facility, and incorporate all the functional elements, spaces and flow patterns that are conventional in current police station design. This design therefore served as one of the benchmarks for determining the appropriate elements, size and configuration for a Sudbury police facility.

### **c) Minimum Requirement and Right Size for Sudbury**

The assessment of Sudbury's requirements for a police facility was based on the identified deficiencies of the existing facility, consideration of police station size vs. demographic features in several other communities, inputs by the architect and police personnel from Sudbury and other communities, comparison to actual facilities in other communities, and the general knowledge and perspective of Committee members.

The Committee used three benchmarks in seeking to determine the correct size and configuration for a Sudbury Police facility:

- The existing facility which, notwithstanding its deficiencies, remains functional.
- The previously-proposed structure.
- Recently-constructed facilities in other Towns of Sudbury's approximate size.

The Committee decided not to engage in attempts to fit the needed functional elements within a set facility size limit or to establish a fixed budget. The approach used was to consider each of the functional elements with respect to its role in Sudbury's police effort, its appropriate workable size and its required relationship to other elements of space.

#### **d) Options**

The Committee considered all comments and suggestions made by its members or heard from others, and conducted its own brain-storming sessions. A broad range of options considered included:

- (1) making limited repairs and upgrades to the existing facility;
- (2) expansion and remodeling of the existing facility
- (3) new construction

After investigation and deliberation, the Committee focused on new construction versus reworking of the existing facility because of site constraints, the extent of reconfiguration and rehabilitation required, the amount of additional space needed to meet present demands, and the difficulty and cost of maintaining operations in swing space during construction. A rough cost analysis for this option is included as **Exhibit 3**.

A series of five design schemes were developed in response to the Committee's iterative review and questioning process. Each design was evaluated with respect to the importance, size and location of each space. The goal of the process was to incorporate the necessary functional elements and associated spaces at a minimum facility size and cost. Key considerations were providing appropriate public access without compromising public safety or police activities, the value vs. cost of the a combined training/meeting room and emergency command center, the merits of a sallyport and/or garage, the appropriate type and amount of office space, adequate space for technology expansion, space for combined police and fire dispatch with effective facility monitoring, flow patterns for personnel and work, and overall space efficiency.

In view of the analysis previously performed, and the limited number of options available, only two possible locations for a new facility were considered: the existing facility site on Route 20, and the proposed site adjacent to the main fire station on Hudson Road.

The design options developed with associated costs are presented in **Exhibits 4 - 8**, and are summarized as follows:

	<b>Original Proposal</b>	<b>Schemes A&amp;B*</b>	<b>Scheme C</b>	<b>Scheme D</b>	<b>Scheme E</b>
Report Exhibit	2	4&5	6	7	8
Stories	2	1	2	2	2
Floor area (ft. <sup>2</sup> )	18,500	14,880	16,409	15,549	14,540
Footprint (ft. <sup>2</sup> )		14,880	13,609	12,749	8,328
Estimated Cost (\$000)	\$7,967	\$6,984	\$7,415	\$7,064	\$6,843
Dispatch	450	470	470	470	450
Meeting	1500	1080	1080	0	1070
Detention	1530 6 Cells	1330 5 Cells	1370 5 Cells	1780 6 Cells	1300 6 Cells
Detectives	680	690	690	730	520
Sergeants	420	360	340	340	320
Chief	460 w/bathroom	430 no bath	430 no bath	430 no bath	320 w/ bathroom
Lieutenant	430	290	290	290	200
Shared Office	380	370	340	340	320
Squad Room	450	370	550	550	480
Evidence	450	350	350	320	330
M. Lockers, #	36	39	66	66	38
F. Lockers, #	13	12	23	23	12
Garage and Sallyport	1650 3 cars	1720 3 cars	1720 3 cars	1630 3 cars	1070 2 cars
Future	1000	0	1900	1900	780

\*Schemes A & B differ only in only in floor plan

The one-story schemes (A&B) were disqualified because the footprint required for the needed spaces was too large for either of the prospective sites.

Schemes C & D both include a partial second story containing the locker room, a fitness area and significant expansion space. Key differences in Scheme D versus Scheme C are the elimination of the combined meeting, training and emergency command space contained in the previous schemes, the reincorporation of the sixth cell eliminated in Schemes A, B & C, a small increase in the size of the detectives area, and a small decrease in the size of the garage and sallyport. Both partial two-story schemes were judged to be less efficient than desired.

Scheme E includes six cells as well as the meeting, training and command facility, reduces the capacity of the garage/sallyport from three cars to two, decreases the total number of lockers to 50 from the 89 contained in the two prior schemes, and reduces the sizes of offices and the squad room versus all of the prior schemes. This scheme was regarded as the most space efficient of the options developed.

There was considerable deliberation regarding the appropriate site for a new facility. Given the work previously done to identify potential sites, discussion was limited to the present site on Route 20 and the proposed site adjacent to the main fire station on Hudson Road. The main argument in favor of the Route 20 site was its visible location in the commercial and traffic center of Town. This was thought to provide

a deterrent to crime and minimize response time. There was also concern about viable other uses for the facility, and the prospect of a vacant structure on Route 20, if the building could not be used by the Town or sold. Arguments against the Route 20 site were its small size and grade constraints, and the need to relocate police functions to temporary quarters during construction. The potential to purchase the adjacent site was explored with no clear outcome.

The Committee noted that response time generally depends more on the location of a cruiser in full-time radio contact, than location of the station. Similarly, it was generally agreed that the visibility of cruisers or police officers posed a greater deterrent to crime than a nearby building.

The Hudson Road site has the strong advantage of adjacency to the main fire station, and is more geographically centered in Town. The potential impact of the new station on the adjacent Musketahquid Village complex, due to either traffic or noise, was thought to be inconsequential. A further key advantage noted for the Hudson Road site was the lower difficulty and cost of construction on a site not occupied by the current police headquarters.

#### **4) Recommendation and Rationale:**

##### **a) Building**

The Committee unanimously agrees that Sudbury should pursue a newly-constructed police facility and unanimously recommends Scheme E as the lowest-cost option that conforms to present codes and standards, addresses the deficiencies of the existing facility, and provides all the functional elements required while affording efficient use of space. This scheme also meets all of the requirements of the Board of Selectmen. As shown in **Exhibit 9**, the overall size, square feet per employee and projected construction cost for this option compare favorably with other recently-built police stations in similar-size Massachusetts municipalities.

Key differences from the original proposal are a reduction in the size of the meeting, training and command facility, decrease in detention space, while retaining the recommended six cells (3 male, 1 female, 1 holding), reduction of the capacity of the garage/sallyport from three cars to two, and reduction in the area of the chief's, lieutenant's, sergeants' and detective's offices.

There was much deliberation about the merits of the proposed meeting, training and command facility. After visits to other recently-constructed facilities and discussions with their personnel, the Committee reached the conclusion that the value and versatility of such a facility warrants the cost. The same conclusion was reached regarding the garage and sallyport. It is the consensus of the Committee that all of the elements included in the recommended design are necessary in a present-day police facility for Sudbury, and further, that the spaces provided for these functional elements are at or near the minimum required for functional effectiveness.



**b) Site**

The Committee recommended unanimously that the new facility be constructed on the proposed Hudson Road site. This recommendation is based on its location near the geographic center of Town, it's adjacency to the main fire station, and its known workability. These considerations were judged to outweigh any putative advantages of attempting to use the existing site for a new facility.

**c) Next Steps**

Because of the short timeline set for the Committee's task, designs and costs were developed at the concept level. The Committee strongly recommends that this project be referred to the Permanent Building Committee for further development and refinement, with particular attention to the energy considerations mentioned in the BoS criteria. In view of the understanding the Committee developed through its own investigation and education, the Committee further recommends that any future proposal for a new police facility be accompanied by an extensive public outreach, communication, and education effort.

1/27/10