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TOWN OF SUFFIELD

MEETING MINUTES
PERMANENT BUILDING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
November 19, 2026
6:00 p.m.

Locations: Town Hall
83 Mountain Road
Suffield, CT

Meeting Name: Permanent Building Commission Regular Meeting

By: Kristen Lambert - Recording Secretary

Type of Meeting: Regular Meeting

Permanent Building Commission Members Present: Kevin Goff – Chairman, Billy Gozzo, Joe Sangiovanni, Marty Page, Cathie Ellithorpe and Henry Miga

Permanent Building Commission Members Absent: Glenn Neilson - Vice Chairman and Brian Baril

Also Present: Colin Moll – First Selectman (Via Zoom), Larry Plano – Facilities Director, Scott Pellman – Colliers Project Leaders (Via Zoom), Tony DeLuzio – Colliers Project Leaders (Via Zoom), Jeff McElravy – Tecton Architects (Via Zoom) and Rebecca Hopkins – Tecton Architects

Chairman Goff called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., thanked the Commission members for their time and commitment to the Town's capital projects, and offered early Thanksgiving wishes. He asked those in attendance to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Minutes:

a) Minutes of the Special Joint PBC and BOE Meeting held on August 13, 2026
b) Minutes of the Special Joint PBC and BOFC Meeting held on August 20, 2026
c) Minutes of the Special Joint PBC and BOE Meeting held on September 17, 2026
d) Minutes of the Special Joint PBC, Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance Meeting held on October 15, 2026

The Commission considered four sets of minutes from August 13, August 20, September 17, and October 15. Chairman Goff noted that the Commission had not held regular meetings during the intervening period because of special meetings involving the Board of Education, Board of Selectmen, and Board of Finance.

Commissioner Miga MOTIONED and Commissioner Gozzo seconded to accept the four sets of minutes collectively. Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Ellithorpe MOTIONED and Commissioner Gozzo seconded to accept the four sets of minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

PBC Chairman Update

Chairman Goff provided an update on discussions concerning the proposed Middle School and Fire House No. 1 projects, High School HVAC work, and commissioning of school equipment. He explained that following discussions with the Board of Finance, the Town had been evaluating ways to address its capital needs while avoiding tax increases that could become unaffordable for residents. Several scenarios had been considered, including proceeding with the school project alone, the firehouse project alone, or both projects.

Chairman Goff reported that the Town had also explored opportunities to reduce project costs and improve anticipated state reimbursement. Discussions had included separating the existing Middle School gymnasium from the school project and reconsidering the location of the Board of Education Central Office. The proposed Central Office renovation within the existing gymnasium and adjacent locker room area had been estimated at approximately $4.4 million.

A potential property at 200 Mountain Road, located near McAlister School, offered an alternative. The building included existing office space that could be occupied relatively quickly, along with additional unfinished space that could be configured for the Town's needs. The property was listed for approximately $1.5 million, with the seller offering $150,000 toward the fit-out. Chairman Goff indicated that the project could qualify for state reimbursement and that the property appeared to provide adequate space.

Public Works Update

Chairman Goff reported that DPW Director Lee Corbert was unable to attend the meeting, however, he had advised that construction and repairs to the bridge between Bruce Park and the High School were expected to begin in approximately one month.

School Facilities Projects Update

Larry Plano – Facilities Director, provided updates on the High School roof replacement, Spaulding School improvements, and High School HVAC project.

For the High School roof, Silver Petrucelli and Gold Seal were obtaining shingle samples to match the existing roof and coordinate with the planned solar panels. Members discussed color options and requested additional samples. Work remains dependent on final color selection, the solar panel schedule, and material delivery.

Spaulding School door and brick repointing bids are scheduled to open December 1 after additional time was provided for supplier pricing. The work will be issued as separate coordinated packages, with repointing expected to begin in late February or early March, weather permitting. Bathroom renovation documents are being revised, with bidding planned for late February or early March and construction during the summer. Mr. Plano attributed delays to hazardous materials testing, abatement requirements, and coordination with the Building Department.

At the High School, one replacement compressor has been installed and a second remains on back order for Unit 5, which serves the auditorium. Delivery is expected in December, with no anticipated effect on winter heating. Software issues have delayed startup and commissioning, now expected to finish in early to mid-December. Staff training is being arranged, and the Commission discussed recording the sessions. Salas O'Brien's downstream report has been received; the Town will review and prioritize recommendations, obtain cost estimates, and consider phasing the work or including it in a future capital budget. Members also discussed establishing a maintenance program for the new equipment.

Mr. Plano noted that McAlister School bathrooms were the next anticipated facilities project after Spaulding, and that the Town has sufficient staffing to manage the work.

Colliers Update

a. Central Office at 200 Mountain Road

Scott Pellman of Colliers provided an update on the Middle School and Central Office projects. He reported that the current target remained a March 2027 referendum, subject to further direction from the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance.

Mr. Pellman reported that a preliminary review and concept sketch for the 200 Mountain Road property had been completed and the building appeared well suited to the intended Central Office use. The property could potentially be renovated more quickly than the existing school space and could be completed through a general trades contract rather than the full construction management process required for the Middle School project. This approach could provide additional savings.

The Commission discussed whether the Middle School's space standards would affect reimbursement for the Central Office. Mr. Pellman said the projects would have separate grant applications and that the standards would not affect the Central Office reimbursement. The existing Central Office occupies approximately 4,100 square feet, compared with about 4,200 square feet on the proposed building's first floor, with additional second-floor space potentially available for IT. Members discussed whether the layout would adequately serve staff and provide more efficient use of space.

b. Middle School Project Budget and Reimbursement

Mr. Pellman reviewed the current Middle School project budget and potential reimbursement scenarios. He explained that the estimated Town share could decrease significantly if the Town received an additional 5% affordable housing credit and a space waiver through the State legislature. The Commission discussed the additional 10% reimbursement previously granted to the Town and the need to submit the grant application by June 30, 2027, to preserve the additional reimbursement. Members acknowledged that the Town could not control the outcome of legislative requests and that the referendum question would need to account for uncertainty surrounding the additional credits.

The Commission discussed the possibility of delaying the referendum until April or May to obtain greater certainty regarding state reimbursement. Mr. Pellman advised that a later referendum could require a revised schedule and potentially result in a 2031 school opening. He cautioned that attempting to maintain the 2030 opening after a delay could result in an overly compressed design and construction schedule, increasing the risk of change orders, cost increases, and reduced construction quality.

Members also discussed whether a January opening could be feasible. Pellman stated that a mid-year move was possible but would require careful coordination with the Board of Education and school staff.

Chairman Goff indicated that the Commission should continue preparing for a March referendum while awaiting further direction from the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance. She emphasized that the Town needed to continue moving forward with the necessary steps to avoid delays caused by inaction.

Colliers/Tecton Presentation of Firehouse 1 Budget Update

Tony DiLuzio of Colliers and Rebecca Hopkins of Tecton reviewed the final feasibility study and updated the cost estimate prepared by Tecton for the proposed Fire House No. 1.

The Commission had previously recommended a project budget of approximately $17.92 million. The updated estimate demonstrated that the project could be completed within that amount, with potential reductions available through adjustments to the apparatus bays, training room, and building materials. Mr. DiLuzio and Ms. Hopkins explained that the Town had been provided with a range of alternatives to assist with determining an appropriate project budget.

The Commission discussed retaining four apparatus bays or reducing the project to three. Ms. Hopkins noted that although removing the fourth bay would save approximately $600,000, adding it later could cost about $1.2 million before escalation. Members favored retaining the training room, which would be difficult to add later, and considering the fourth bay as a bid alternate.

Mr. DiLuzio reported that the estimate included approximately $1 million in construction and owner contingency, separate from design contingency, and recommended retaining it to cover unforeseen costs. Potential savings included evaluating standing-seam roofing, which would add about $250,000, and wood framing, which could save approximately $200,000 to $250,000. The Commission discussed using add and deduct alternates and agreed to continue advancing the project at the previously recommended budget pending direction from the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen. Members noted that the project had already been reduced from approximately 22,000 square feet to 13,000–14,000 square feet.

Mr. DiLuzio explained that the final feasibility report would document the project's development, including the alternatives reviewed and the associated costs. The Commission thanked the project team for its work and indicated that the report would provide useful information for future decisions.

Discussion – Financial Planning

The Commission discussed the need for coordination with the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen regarding the financial models being developed for the Middle School and Fire House No. 1 projects. First Selectman Moll indicated that the Board of Selectmen was seeking additional potential savings and that the financial models had not yet been approved by the full Board of Finance.

Chairman Goff reiterated that the Commission had reviewed the projects from several perspectives and that no final financial model had been selected. He emphasized the importance of continuing to provide the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance with information needed to determine the appropriate project scope and referendum approach.

New Business

The Commission discussed how to address public questions as project information becomes more widely available. Members favored directing residents to a consistent, accurate source, while limiting Commission responses to technical matters and referring financial or tax questions to appropriate Town officials.

Members supported updating the Town's project webpage with FAQs and current documents. Consultants could help prepare technical information, with Town staff responsible for reviewing and publishing it. Chairman Goff noted that the Town Attorney should clarify restrictions on Town communications before a referendum, including whether existing information could remain online. The Commission also discussed holding public information sessions where residents could hear from the Commission and consultants and ask questions.

Public Comment

Victoria Copes, 223 Hickory Street

Next Meeting

The next Regular meeting of the Permanent Building Commission will be held on December 17, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. A special meeting will be scheduled if further direction or action is required by the Board of Selectmen or Board of Finance.

Commissioner Miga MOTIONED and Commissioner Ellithorpe seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Lambert
Recording Secretary