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To: Town of Brookline NH Facilities Committee 2011

On July 12th Brendan Denehy and I visited Brookline Town Hall with the intention of identifying facilities needs for general town government departments. We were joined part way through the visit by Dennis LaBombard

As a baseline reference we had summaries of interviews with various general town government personnel made for the 2008/2009 facilities study. These summaries have already been made available to the committee.

The departments or functions not represented in the 7/12/11 interviews included Selectmen, IT, Cable/Web, Checklist Supervisors and Welfare. Rena Duncklee, as Secretary to the Selectmen among other things, was interviewed a few days later.

With the exceptions listed above, all departments reported no change from, or greater facilities needs, from those needs reported in 2009.

This year, some issues that did not seem to be emphasized in 2009 emerged, including.

(a) A need for large working surfaces convenient to files and/or workstations so that maps and charts could be spread out.

(b) A need for confidential office space that could be reliably and conveniently found to deal with sensitive issues.

(c) Rena reported that the increase in 'right to know' requests warrants – in order to get routine work done - the need for an assistant, for whom there is no space.

(d) Valerie reported that, since the real estate market had calmed down, she was starting to get more routine planning work done, and had been able to address a backlog of unfinished work. The amount of work generated by real estate is

significant, and when the real estate market improves and/or development increases, there will be a need for assistance, for which there is no space.

(e) There was discussion about the degree to which volunteer board members kept town information at home, because of the lack of filing and storage in the town hall.

Storage is added as needed and is scattered. As a result, there is likely to be less than optimal organization of work. There has been public discussion relative to the eventual hiring of a Town Administrator. This would help these workflow issues, as well as other needs. Again, there is no space to accommodate such a position.

As mentioned above, IT is among those departments not interviewed. Their needs in particular are likely to increase significantly, especially if a comprehensive document handling system is implemented.

In summary, then, there are space needs for general government functions in excess of those expressed in 2009.

Finally, a short anecdote underscores the less than optimal work habits that have evolved because of storage issues:

When asked for plans showing the Town Hall layout, the Building Inspector did what he has to do to get any plans that are not for active cases. He closed his office, left the building, reentered by a different door, accessed the plans, retraced his steps and reopened his office.

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