

# Memo

**To:** Board of Selectmen  
**From:** Ken Knowlton, Chairman  
**CC:** Don McLelland, Linda Frawley, Jeff Marden, Ron Mitchell, David Morse, Norma Patten, Niki Wheeler  
**Date:** 3/2/2004  
**Re:** Town Hall Study Committee Information

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On behalf of the group, please accept our appreciation for your interest in committee progress.

Mr. McLelland's recent memo reference to information and reports is incomplete. I hope a few comments / points will clarify our efforts since being appointed less than a year ago.

1. All Belmont residents, including the Selectmen, were provided a THSC update in the Fall 2003 via the Belmont Better Times, including anticipated timetable for our study report. That goal was, and still is, spring 2004.
2. The Selectmen were apprised at several of their meetings, of THSC progress by members in attendance. They specifically responded to questions from Chairman Harper and Selectman Caldwell. A very abbreviated summary appears in the September 10, 2003 BOS minutes, as well as other earlier direct reports, including one where I advised on a comparative space questionnaire, and a helpful meeting we had with Jeff Taylor (former Director NH Office Of State Planning.)
3. A September 2003 meeting, including discussion, questions and a decision that the committee was unwilling to endorse the plan to purchase the 147 Main Street property. This decision was conveyed to Mr. McLelland verbally and by E-mail. As that information was provided by "Town spokesmen" to the media, it would appear that there has been a fairly steady flow of information to you, both formally and informally, in addition to the attendance of your representative, as her schedule allowed.

Formal meetings, as a study group, have quite honestly been supplanted by labor and research conducted by individual and group members. This approach is in keeping with the original intent to provide facts-rather than opinions. As Chairman, I am fully confident our research, beginning analysis and other findings helpful. The facts should fill the gap from nearly a decade without a long range Town Space Needs Committee, or the old Building Needs Subcommittee that was part of the Budget Committee at one time. Our fact-finding efforts are especially important, considering the fast track schedule announced to update Belmont's 2001-2006 CIP.

Among needed facts and support committed by the Town last summer, was a structural assessment of the current Town Hall offices, specifically the second floor and roof. Additionally, Mr. McLelland advised us on May 1, 2003, that he would approach the Shaker School District regarding the possibility of combining projected Town staff space needs with the SAU. We still await information on both of those requests by us.

A group subcommittee prepared information for inclusion in the Town Report; however, no deadline information or request was received in time to have it included. I have attached that report FYI with the hope that it might be made available at the March Town Meeting.

As volunteers with varied expertise, we hope that our forthcoming report will be of use, and look forward to your comments. If there has been any oversights-regarding information-I take full responsibility as Chairman. Since we are an ad hoc committee, and the predecessor group only provided a final report (without minutes or publicly advised meetings,) we believe our efforts, energy and time to keep you informed have been fair and reasonable.

Please advise me with any questions.

Kindly supply Chairman Harper with a printed copy.