

TOWN OF DELHI
JOINT MEETING OF THE TOWN OF DELHI AND THE VILLAGE OF DELHI
Town Hall
May 14, 2025
5:30PM

Present:

Supervisor:	Maya Boukai
Councilmembers:	Christina Viafore, Margaret Baldwin, Matt Krzyston
Trustees:	Barbara Sturdevant, Ian Lamont, Jeremy Fitch
Absent:	Councilmember Josh Morgan, Trustee Janet Tweed
Via Phone:	Mayor Jeffrey Gearhart

Town Supervisor Boukai called the Joint Meeting of the Town of Delhi Town Council and Village of Delhi Board of Trustees to order at 5:30 pm for the purpose of a meeting/workshop for discussions of a joint municipal facility.

Boukai stated where we are now is not much further than we were six months ago, although the grant has been submitted. But the feedback she's been getting is that, instead of looking at this as three phases, we need to just pick one thing and go with that, and this will be the most likely to get funded. Eliminating the highway, garage, joint facility, and eliminating anything that has to do with next steps, once the land is available, becomes available.

She has been told the next round of funding will be in the fall. Boukai stated she will work with County Planning to see if we can make our submissions stronger. This will be again the local government efficiency grant.

Trustee Sturdevant asked what the grant that Boukai put forward was. Boukai answered the grant that we had originally put forward was the planning grant, like a feasibility planning grant, but the feedback she received was to stop using the word "feasibility", because they don't like that wording when they're funding things, because it implies that maybe it's not feasible. She felt the feedback she received from Shelley, at County Planning, was to do a design build. Picking a location that we own is the most streamlined path. Boukai added she is hearing that there's talk about the Legion, she heard that today when she was at County Planning, and there's been some movement with that. She hasn't been made aware of what exactly what that is, and they didn't want to speak to it, since they weren't in the loop on it, but had just heard about it. She believes there were also other properties, but believes consolidating what our ideas are, and making it a lot more specific and concise, along with doing a design build and seeking funding for something that's more than just a plan.

Trustee Fitch stated he felt we needed to take the Legion out of the idea, because they have come up every so often, and as soon as you start talking to them about it, it, it dies. He doesn't think the Legion is a feasible place and they have other plans too. He went on to say they're always going to want a part so they can still have their meetings. Even if the village and town took it over it still could be kept for the community, but it seems like they get this idea, and then you talk a couple times, and then you don't hear anything about it again. Boukai added she felt we should just keep it on the back burner until they approach us.

She then stated she is still thinking this (town hall) is the best property, but she understands the Flood Commission weren't able to meet earlier, but she has learned that the project with the stream, as she had met with Soil and Water, they had said they wanted to go 11 feet in both directions, along the river, in order to make it less flood prone. She assumes the house across from

town hall is already so close to the river they'd be coming towards town hall the entire way. Doing so would definitely impact the potential here. Although she doesn't know the timeline was for that or is for that project. Sturdevant stated the project that we were supposed to have done this summer, they put off and she didn't know what the timeline was for that or is for that project. As we're the one doing the berm and all that, next summer is going to be the early is that that will be done. She has been told it would be 14 feet. Boukai said that would be almost the whole parking lot, where the cars are now. Sturdevant added that's what they are talking about, the river; maybe this isn't as wide because it's just a brook. Trustee Lamont asked if that buffer was just for the construction phase; Boukai that doing that should take almost everything out of the floodplain. Adding she thought that was the goal. It would take all these houses that are affected when this river or when the stream overflows, that buffer will prevent it.

Trustee Lamont wanted to clarify when Boukai says that instead of moving, instead of applying for that same grant as a feasibility study, she is saying we propose a location and a design. Boukai stated propose funding for a design and a build. Lamont added we would need funding to do the design, so it's design build. Sturdevant added that the one that she's working on, they don't let you use the money to buy the property. So that might be something we have to keep in mind too, that money would have to come from someplace else. Boukai said she thought the USDA grant does, as long as it's a community building. It allows you to use funding to purchase it, but that's a good grant for actual construction, although they want to be the supplier of the last resort kind of thing. Same with the ARC grant, they're there if we can't get funding anywhere else for building or designing.

Councilmember Krzyston asked if we can't just apply for a grant to just buy a building that would make sense for us. Boukai stated she didn't think with the government efficiency grant we buy property with it but can look into it. Krzyston asked what everyone thought was if a building that made sense came up on the market or was available that worked for us as it could be cheaper than building from scratch. Boukai said that would make sense. Trustee Fitch said as long as it didn't need a lot of work, it's going to be cheaper instead of having to build from the ground up. Boukai said buying something and knowing we will have to put money into it is probably cheaper than building from the ground up. Sturdevant asked if there was money available to do that, Boukai stated she wasn't sure as she has been focusing on things we own. Boukai further stated we have our reserve fund between that and financing and we could use that as a down payment along with selling this building. That's a significant chunk of money. Trustee Fitch stated finding a place large enough for the court and police also. Boukai added she thought the USDA grant was less about the design and more about the construction aspect. So maybe they are open to an actual purchase, so she can reach out to them and ask. This would be a much easier path.

Trustee Lamont stated since the idea is not just government operations, but also sort of community engagement, and possibly multi use; it does seem to be worth reaching out to some of the private foundations to see what kind of money they might be willing to contribute to this kind of project. They then discussed foundations which could possibly contribute.

Councilmember Krzyston questioned the "community" aspect of a new building. Lamont said like Boukai was saying spaces are configured so that you could have events there that aren't just limited to board meetings, where we need a small room or what have you with court. It's available for the community. Boukai added even if it's community rental for whatever, kind of like, what the Chamber does, like how SUNY rents out the main conference room at the chamber to do some of their food service classes. They discussed other community gathering ideas. Lamont added this may open up other funding sources that may be available.

Mayor Gearhart said these are all good ideas, he felt, though, that from the discussion that I'm hearing, maybe the first priority would be to put together a wish list instead of just speculating, clearly define what it is that we're looking for and what we wanted it to be.

The council and trustees discussed buildings that would accommodate all entities, and design issues with the court room and meeting spaces.

They discussed already owned properties and Boukai stated some of them are in the flood plain, which will potentially come out of the flood plain with the proposed flood plain project.

Councilmember Krzyston questioned renting/leasing property, if that was feasible for a municipality. Mayor Gearhart stated their attorney advised against it. The county will be auctioning a piece of property on Page/Gallant Avenues. They discussed the area and the potential.

Gearhart went back to the Legion property and stated if they decide they no longer want that, it automatically reverts to the state legion offices and a sale would have to go through them. Krzyston added there is not much developable property in our community. Gearhart stated he keeps going back to the same property (former Wickhams) and the corner property (former car wash), he can make a proposal, amazing things can be done with that property. They discussed the building and property, and the multiple uses it could be used for. Boukai questioned Gearhart as to presenting a proposal to the county. Gearhart stated we would have multiple options for it; we would need to have a strong appeal on our part to make it work. Sturdevant said we would need to go in with a very specific plan showing what we could do with the property and its benefits. Boukai discussed contracting with Sean Leddy as he has already done plans for both municipalities which were beautiful for an actual design for the property. Sturdevant agreed, showing the appeal of the potential. All parties agreed it was a good idea.

Boukai said she can research purchasing a property and noted Gearhart should initiate the contacting with the county as it is a village property. They discussed the design, Boukai will approach Jim Smart who is on the Village Planning Board asking him to do a schematic design of the former Wickhams property. Boukai added she has her list figuring out financing whether new purchases or buildings and contacting Smart. She asked Gearhart to figure out the approach to the county, Gearhart stated he felt it would behoove them to have a few of them go to the county.

Councilmember Baldwin asked if Krzyston should put his idea on the back burner, Boukai answered at this point we should "throw everything at the wall." They discussed other sites of possible interest.

Gearhart also discussed projects in the works for housing issues in the village.

The next joint meeting will be held on September 23rd at 5:30 PM at the Village Hall. A motion was made by Councilmember Krzyston at 6:30pm to adjourn the meeting with Councilmember Viafore seconding. Also, a motion was made by Councilmember's Krzyston and Viafore to have the clerk advertise the meeting for two weeks.

Respectfully submitted,

Elsa Schmitz

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Town Clerk, Town of Delhi