TOWN OF DELHI
JOINT MEETING OF THE TOWN OF DELHI AND THE VILLAGE OF DELHI
Village Hall
July 21, 2026
5:00PM

Present:

Supervisor:	Maya Boukai
Councilmembers:	Josh Morgan, Christina Viafore, Dan Gashler
Town Justice:	Mathew Burkert
Mayor:	Jeffrey Gearhart
Trustees:	Barbara Sturdevant, Ian Lamont, Jermey Fitch, Janet Tweed
Absent;	Councilmember Simon Purdy
Residents:	Margaret Baldwin, Jean Krzyston

Town Supervisor Boukai opened the meeting at 5:05pm. Leading the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Boukai stated as everyone knows, we're calling this meeting to further narrow down our options for a joint facility. She'd given the town board an assignment to go check out Sheldon Park and let them know that she and Gearhart had two architecture firms whom they've had one visit on site and they toured Village Hall, Town Hall and the Sheldon Park site, and the other firm they met with a couple times on Zoom. That's the firm that has their preliminary proposal that she had sent to the town board.

Boukai added she had goals for this meeting; first narrow down the one location we move forward with to commit via a resolution at our August or September meetings at the latest. Secondly, the maximum amount we're willing to spend per entity to get renderings, estimates, that kind of things from an architecture firm, so that we are grant ready in September, October when the local government efficiency grant comes out. Basically, she and Gearhart both discussed with the architecture firms that our goal is to be able to kind of do like we did with the town pool and have drawings and let them know this is how far we've been able to take it as two separate municipalities working together. Now is where we need funding to come in and assist us. That was what her goals were for today's meeting.

Boukai informed those present we have Elm Street as a potential location and we have Sheldon as a potential location, and we can talk more about Sheldon as that's kind of a new location. Mayor Gearhart stated to be fair, he and Boukai had spent quite a bit of time trying to locate, find places and options to make as many potential places available as we can. Boukai added the E-Center is not going to work. Gearhart went on to say they had eliminated, narrowed things down to essentially what they feel are two feasible options to make this work for both municipalities. One is the current town hall renovating, expanding, working with that option, and the other is Sheldon Park. There is a section up there that affords us a place to build while maintaining perhaps an area for a park where the old pool was, where we could put picnic tables and benches and have a place for the community to gather if they needed to. We would be able to keep the pavilion and as well as keep the community gardens up there. We could potentially design and put in a walkable hiking path up to the back part of this. Gearhart went on to say the village owns 177 acres up there, and rather than fighting with everybody else in terms of where we would like to put this building, this affords us the opportunity to first of all put those acres to use, as well as not have to fight with anybody about it. He and Morgan had gone up and looked at it, as well as the engineers. When we looked up on Sheldon Park it presents a very feasible building site that may even allow us to adapt the topography of the land into a two-story building where

we wouldn't need an elevator and would allow for two parking spaces with a floor dedicated to police and court, so that those two entities have each other to work with on one floor, and all of the offices on a first floor. It would take a little bit of work, but we feel that it's probably the most feasible. In addition to that, Gearhart added he talked with Daren Evans and he assures him that if we're using Sheldon Park, as they went up and took a look at it, that we could do most of the site work, or at least the initial site work to prepare the property, which would be an additional cost saving. We would just have to rent some of the heavy equipment that he would need in order to be able to do that. Again, stating that would reduce the cost of this building, right, and present a match requirement on many of the grants that might be available to us. He believes it would present a very usable area for the community; it could in fact become more of a community center that our village and town residents both could use and could both enjoy. That's just a preliminary look. The engineers that looked at it thought about putting the building where the old pool was but they spoke to Jay Decker about that, because Gearhart wanted to know about the feasibility of the water and sewer to that particular piece of property, Jay assured me very quickly we don't want to touch that spot. Apparently, the pool was never taken out. It's still there, just filled with a lot of things, we don't want to disturb it. But there is a nice area in the back that Josh and he had taken a look at that still leaves plenty of room for a lot of things, a lot of potential things that could happen there. There might even be room for some basketball courts or tennis courts, whatever might be available. There is lots of parking potential there. It seems like almost too good a spot, but we also have the alternative with the town hall.

Boukai added we all know the limitations of town hall. The lot is what it is. It's a small lot. We can expand. We can make it what we need to now, but if we're going future focused, there's a severe limit to what we can do, especially with the left side. If you're facing the building from Elm Street, that whole left side being taken out when they expand the stream. She knows Sheldon Park is going to be a heavier lift in terms of pretty much everything, but she also thinks it's the future-focused place, and there's plenty of room up there. We can look at this as a phased project again, where we've done the garden, we've done the public space, we've done the volleyball court, call that phase one, and you know phase two is the joint facility. Maybe phase three somehow figures, they do know that we want the courtroom to be a multi-use space, adding community center aspects to it, which drastically increases the amount of financing available for it. Boukai then added both of these options are the costlier option than the E-Center, but she thinks realistically, that's those are our options.

Village Trustee Lamont stated if that spot is so developable, it sounds like a good spot for housing. Councilmember Morgan said you've got the terrain and everything there where we could utilize it, Boukai added but remember, we're also going to be putting Elm Street and Court Street back for housing as well. Lamont said in terms of attractiveness for housing, right across the street from the school and a wooded spot. Morgan said the terrain gets too steep in the back. It's just a small section, so you wouldn't really be able to develop too many homes there. Lamont responded no, but maybe some mixed use some like multi-unit. Gearhart then said in order to do that, we'd be getting probably be getting rid of the community gardens, the pavilion that's there, all the things currently there as well.

Boukai asked the members for feedback, Lamont said he was looking at things differently, Councilmember Viafore said we can get what we want, we could build something exactly the way we want it. Morgan agreed. Boukai added it's a future focused. The new construction is future focused. She does think renovating Elm Street is a great option, but she doesn't know how future focused it is. And in the end, if it's a half million seven hundred thousand more, we're probably going to regret that in 10 years if we didn't do something new and retrofitted what we have.

Councilmember Gashler questioned are we planning to have equipment at this new facility at Sheldon, would the village want to keep any of their trucks up there; Trustee Fitch said probably just the police cars. Gearhart added that's what we had envisioned. There's a piece of the property that we were looking at has where the land sort of elevates at one point. Morgan interjected one could literally

drive around and they could do a two-story, and then where the bathrooms are right there, basically over to the left, we can do a walk-in right there for offices there, and we might be able to develop a road that goes around out back, and then that would be a ground level from the backside too. So that way we get away from ADA, elevator requirements, and everything, and then we are able to keep everything separate as well too. Adding depending on what we wanted to utilize the first floor or second floor. Gashler's concern was if the equipment was going to be going up and down there the noise would annoy residents. Morgan added that that's not what the building's being proposed for, their shop down behind the bank would still stay there, and then the towns would also. There's no desire to put those together.

Gearhart said have we have discussed that potential. We've had discussions with Daren as far as what that might look like, where it would be best served. The village has a substantial amount of room where our garage currently is that would not house everything, but it could house a substantial portion of most of the equipment that we currently need to have on hand. Boukai added when we were discussing the E-Center, that it was nice that everything would be really cohesive. Viafore asked when will we know that the E-Center is 100% not; Boukai responded we are 99.9%, as she let the town board know she requested a leave of absence from the CDF specific to being able to advocate more forcefully for that facility as a joint town facility. She reiterated our interest in paying fair market value for the building, and at minimum requesting an invite to the table to discuss with them, just like the first email back in March, he leave of absence was accepted, and the next day she got an email informing her that they're moving forward with the IDA. However, the deal is now the CDF will pay off their existing loan, which is about $85,000 remaining on the building. That will leave them maybe $10 or $15,000 in the bank. And the IDA will take over the building and pay for any legal fees to dissolve the CDF. So, if everyone remembers, the original offer was that the IDA pays the $85,000 loan and gets the building, and that would have left the CDF with what they have in the bank plus no loan. They would have all of what was in the bank, which is around $100,000. She thought the timing was interesting because she asked for the leave of absence, and within 24 hours, it was like the deal was sweetened 10 times more to the IDA because legal fees to dissolve a nonprofit. Let's be generous $25,000 and thinking closer, $10,000 to $15,000. The main reason she wanted to step back from the CDF was so that she could advocate for the village and town because she does feel like that is the path of least resistance, the most economical, and it would be a quicker timeline. It's not without its challenges, obviously, but she means we're offering fair market value. We can't really offer much more than that in absence of even being brought to the table. That's why she's come to the conclusion that it's off the table. She then added if the members had any questions, they should ask the CDF because she's on a leave of absence and apparently a permanent one since there seems like they're dissolving. Boukai then added if someone can explain the logic to her, she would love to understand it. Viafore questioned the timing again, Boukai repeated she submitted her letter requesting to the leave absence Wednesday. It was granted Thursday, and the vote was Friday. Trustee Fitch apologized for showing up late, asked so the IDA can just walk in and do that. Boukai answered he was asking the wrong person, she is baffled. Fitch then said he would hope the town and village both fight against this. Gearhart all of the incubator businesses, at least, that's all going to be on the IDA. Fitch said that's not going to happen to where Boukai added the incubator model is not a relevant model in this day and age. Fitch said correct.

Fitch then said regarding building on Sheldon, upstairs was discussed as wanting to use the courtroom as a multi-use room. Boukai said potentially, that's where the funding is. Fitch then said it was said a while back that the court would be able to get funding for a courtroom if it was strictly a court, would there be enough room downstairs to have the boardroom as a multi-use room instead of using the courtroom as a multi? Boukai responded she thinks there's plenty of different options. Town Justice Burkert interjected the town of Middletown, if someone goes and checks out their town hall, they have the court that was funded through their JCAP grant, which is a beautiful setup, and in the

back they have a wall that's like on a slider that opens and closes. In the fact that they have a conference table, and when they do their board meetings, they open that wall. They have their conference tables. Many times they sit at the court's tables, but they have another whole section in the back that they can open up, and then they use that whole area as the town. But the court they designate as the court's facilities, and the court was able to be funded through their grant. But then, when they use it, they open those sliders, they have those other tables, and then they use that extra areas. Burkert added they were able to do it that way, which was a wonderful setup. Burkert remembers Judge George and Judge Rosa when he was there at the time, they funded the entire setup of that court through their grant. Okay. He thinks it's really in the way you design it, and we could always get, or Burkert could get with the judges there, and or you can just go talk with Judge Luza, ask them how they did it at the time. But the way he understood it, that's how they did it.

Gearhart said it's important to understand that at this juncture, he thinks what Boukai and he are mostly looking for is that the two boards, the town council and the village board are ready at this point to try and focus on one option rather than dividing our focus at this point. We don't have all of the answers. We don't have all of the details at this point. He won't speak for Boukai, but he'll speak for himself. At this point, he's spent a lot of time Boukai has spent a lot of time investigating these options. More than what they've even brought to the boards, they would like to be able to focus efforts at this point on a single possibility, knowing that that's going to bear some fruit at the end of all of this, but they don't have all of the answers at this point and the details. Boukai added that what we'll end up paying for when we come up with this preliminary, like step one, step two, is to get stuff down on paper. She'll interview or at least chat with police department and each department to see what their space needs are. They've taken pictures of the location, but Boukai thinks the thing, the main thing for her is she doesn't want to miss this late fall, early winter grant round, because it might take two or three times to get funding. But she thinks with the experience of the town pool, being able to demonstrate we have skin in the game financially, being able to demonstrate we're already working together through resolutions and that kind of stuff, it gives them a better chance of being committed.

Fitch added besides the town property, town hall, which doesn't sound like a long-term plan, this is really the only other piece of property that we own and have control. He personally would be in favor of investigating what we have further because we've been talking about this for years, and it'd be nice to just finally be done with it and start a new building. Viafore added there's no downtime because everyone can stay in their current places. We build a new one and then move in where if we're renovating the town hall, where do we do town business? Trustee Tweed added trailers, that is literally the what they'd get to do. She then said because of the location of the prior pool she is interested to see what the architects are able to come up with for real feasibility as well as a parking thing. Adding, simply that site does have some narrow pinch points, which have her a little concerned about everything being able to fit well and to have a good workflow, rather than only being able to sometimes do one thing at a time and with the pool there, she doesn't know how much that's going to complicate things. Boukai responded that little part is staying, and then basically anything that was bathrooms. That side is what could be developed. Gearhart said prior to that, it used to be the playground, that's usable part of the property that could be brought into the building area. The architects that were with them the other day seemed excited, but they seemed to be genuinely interested in this project that they thought that it held a great deal of potential. They went to both the town hall and the village hall to see what we currently have in terms of what needs to be incorporated into the new building and what can be eliminated. They seemed to be quite knowledgeable about public buildings of this type. Fitch added there is quite a bit of space available before you hit the area where the pool was.

Trustee Fitch said he is in favor of focusing on that area because it's already off tax rolls and it seems right now the only logical place, it stinks because it's up on a hill.

Gashler said is there any chance if we get an insanely high estimate that I guess the IDA now or the county might consider giving us that building again? Because he just loves the E-Center so much that was so logical that was centrally located. Tweed added she would love the Elm Street location, but it doesn't have the space. Gearhart said it was disappointing to say the least with the E-Center, but at this point, he thinks in the long run, it may be better for us to have a building that we start and design to fit our needs to start with. Whether it was town hall or the E-Center, they're going to have to be retrofitted to what we wanted. And anytime you start retrofitting things, you always make concessions here or there to the current structure of the building. Gashler asked if the village street garage was in the floodplain and is there anything developable there? Gearhart said it is in the floodplain there, but we also have, and he doesn't know how long it's going to take, but there is a. (we're in a process that is already funded, is already staffed, is already to go. They're only looking for a modeler to begin with that will reduce much of the properties, and he believes that's one of them out of the floodplain. It may be a while in the future, but it's hopeful that a lot of that will come out. And of course, it'll take FEMA a while to redraw the maps. Trustee Sturdevant said they may not do it till it all gets done, Morgan adding it takes a while for all that to happen.

When asked by Fitch what Gashler's thoughts where he said and if he was asking for this new building or highway departments. Boukai said she thinks the hard thing is that you're 100% going up, and you've now added half a million for elevator and fire stuff. She thinks the topography plays a big role in not needing that kind of accessibility. Gearhart added at Sheldon Park he thinks that if we need to keep it as a single level, there's still enough room to do that if we had to. Morgan then said we're kind of in a rush for all the work to get done in that floodplain. It's going to take a couple of years for it to actually be 100% once it's done, and if you start a construction there, you'd have to go by the standards needing to develop within a floodplain, which would be higher. And then in a couple of years, having it done, it's kind of wasted money. Plus, Gearhart said we don't know where we would put the village garage at that point.

Morgan said being up on that hill, it's a photographed area. Quite a bit because the school is beautiful and everything. So esthetically, the building is going to have to match. Tweed added it should be a pretty building and within reason it's worth the expense.

Boukai then said are there any hesitations beyond the normal initial project undertaking hesitations of Sheldon Park. Gashler said following up on like Lamonts point earlier, how many potential homes could be put up there. We will be putting two potential developable home sites back in the tax rolls (village hall and town hall). He is curious though, how like two, would it be about the same as what we're taking off the tax rolls here, or just putting back onto the tax rolls by giving up the village building and by giving up the town building, because he doesn't think there are many. I mean, even if you built an apartment complex up there, there's not much space. Morgan answered there's not space for a lot; it's just basically the only spot that's really usable is the bottom of that foothill right there. Gearhart added and plus, if we do turn it over to somebody to build on, we're still stuck trying to find a spot for the joint building. Gashler said they convinced him. Morgan then said there's other opportunities in the future for annexing other properties and such. Both Gashler and Morgan felt the village hall would be an ideal place for a developer to convert into housing.

Gearhart mentioned his first thought when they started this was it's not walkable, but at this juncture we have no perfect spot. As an alternative, there's going to be some negatives too no matter what we decide to go with. Adding, keep in mind as we go through this process. At the end of all of this, before anything can happen, this does have to go up for a vote, a public vote. Whatever they do, they have to keep in mind the clientele, the residents of both the village and the town. What's going to be acceptable and doable for them. They (the boards) don't have carte blanche to do whatever they wish to do and spend however much they wish to. But they need to keep that in mind and still accomplish

what they need to. Boukai added the comprehensive plans inform that preliminarily with all the questions that were asked, a joint facility and sharing services is a priority for the community.

Boukai stated her goal is a resolution by August for the town board, and that can include preliminarily the amount they're willing to spend to get these ideas on paper visually, so that they have something for a grant application. Gearhart added with the understanding that those resolutions will commit everyone to allocating the money investment in the planning and taking a look at it. It won't be cost-free, and again, it will occupy some time and some commitment. Boukai said she was proposing $25,000, $12,000 each municipality and we could go up to not to exceed $30,000 - $15,000 each. Ishe thinks that's a good demonstration of skin in the game and would show that we've committed to a location. A lot of the feedback she's gotten has been because when we did approach both architecture firms, as we've narrowed it down to these three locations, and realistically, now we're doing feasibility studies for all three, and we're adding all of this money into it, and it's really hard to go ask for funding when we're still narrowing it down. This is what their kind of advice was. She added as scary as it is to commit to something, she thinks based on what is available right now and what they can control and what we can put our effort into and not make it feel futile. This is a really future-forward proposal, and she thinks to the point that that hill is photographed often, and this could really be a place of pride for the community, along with the park being there and the building and a future community space. She likes that it's right across from the school, if you're doing recreation activities that need like a large space, kids are just walking over from school as opposed to a bit further. She thinks that's where she is $12,500 and $15,000 each entity. Morgan said for a site plan and concept drawings. Boukai said yes. Lamont questioned what's the local efficiency grant amount, because would that be a match or what? Boukai responded no, this would be predevelopment, and then what they could do, she'll have to look at the amounts because she didn't remember but she believed it was $250 each entity, maybe. But they can do construction. We were just doing a planning grant, so she needs to see what the construction aspects of it are. But the grant, this would be like this is what we have so far. This is our idea, now we need actual engineering plans. Now we need actual site plans, topography, all of that kind of things. We need the documents that are going to get them shovel ready. The grant would be for documents that get us shovel ready, and then the second phase of it would be now they go out to find construction funding. Lamont added his question is, for the planning grant side, how much of that as if they're both committing $12,500 for a total of $25,000, how much more are we expecting to get? Boukai answered that's a good point, Gearhart said to be, there's going to have to be some architectural plans created there and usually the architectural drawings prior to the actual implementation construction, right? Lamont said right if we raise $25,000 are they going to cover the rest, or then is there going to be another ask? Boukai said there's going to likely be another ask, and she wanted to say it was $2575 and we likely could not use what we've already done as part of the ask because it usually is grant execution date forward is when you can start incurring costs that are used as a match. Gearhart said at some point, he thinks that some of this he can put in for an O'Connor grant for some of their larger grants that they give out that would help us towards that end planning aspect of it, if need be. But those are always matching grants as well. Lamont then asked did we have a ballpark from the engineering firms as to like what the planning or the piece is going to cost. Boukai said Gearhart has a document. This is from JHA, she showed him hers. They've broken it down into components, but this proposal was almost two months ago, and this was when we hadn't narrowed it down to one location. So existing property and site evaluation $7,700 facilities assessment $14,700, but that was assessing town hall, village hall, and the highway garage area. So that would likely change feasibility and long term planning $8,200 and structural evaluation. That was only if we were going to use an existing structure and need to be renovated, so what they've done is kind of piece milled like a la carte services that they'd offered. We have a meeting with them on Thursday, and they don't know that we've narrowed it down. The other architect at 1o'clock, for a zoom. They don't know that we've narrowed it down. The

other architectural firm that we had met at Association of Towns knows that it was those two locations, so they were putting pricing together for us. They knew everyone was meeting today. They were going to try and have it by today, but they don't although we should definitely have something by the end of the month for people's August meetings. Boukai gave her quotes to Lamont, Gearhart will forward them to the other trustees.

Boukai told Gearhart and the trustees one thing we'll need sooner than later so she can start putting it together is what it costs them to run the village building so we can do estimates on what it costs without to which Gearhart interjected without salaries it's between $26,030 and $30,000. Boukai questioned just with utilities and everything as the town's was more, Gearhart said he's held back on the building, knowing that we're looking at these options rather than putting money it might be a little bit more than that, but that's if she went with $30,000 that would be a realistic. Boukai gave Gearhart the spreadsheet that she had done, because it breaks it down like, this is what we're doing using technology-wise. This is Delhi Telephone, this is NYSE&G. That way by having this footprint, it's going to reduce our kilowatt-hour usage by, she's sure there's formulas that they can use to estimate that kind of things, she'll just send that to him this way he can see how that's done. He will forward it to the board members.

Gearhart then asked the village trustees ultimately the question is: Is everyone on board with this? Are there any deep reservations at this point about this particular path? Sturdevant said she felt they had just looked at about every other option there was. Fitch agreed. Lamont brought up a picture of the proposed site and they discussed the location of the site and parking potentials. Lamont then said he was still thinking about housing for that site. To which Gearhart responded, even if we sell it, then we're going to turn around and have to use that money to buy another piece, somewhere, to put town/village hall on. Lamont said it would help fund one of the existing spaces or both existing spaces by selling that property. Gearhart said when he and Boukai went through town hall with the engineers, even though it's a choice, retrofitting that building would be to adequately address what was needed, it would be an expansion of that building and this building and a full gut renovation of the inside. She said the footprint was solid, but there are limitations to how far we can come out with setbacks and all that kind of stuff. Ideally, it would be like court, police there, and that's it, and you wouldn't have to do a bunch of renovations. But then we're still dealing with the same problem. And now we only have one back on the tax rolls, if we kept the court down there and just did town/village hall up on Sheldon, which, as we go through this, that may become a viable option that we, depending upon costs and et cetera, but you know that ideally we'd like to have it all in one building. But if we need to divide it up later on, Boukai interjected there's plenty of space with grading and site prep. She even thinks that there's space for the future in 10 years if they needed to expand or put some kind of recreation thing there or whatever, because you're only going into a hillside. It's not super steep on that flat level. Morgan told Lamont there are several lots that are vacant within the village too. Perhaps we should try to get something developed on those. Lamont said housing is the constant refrain. And if this is actually developable for housing, then is there a way to explore that, make that available? Because at this point, nobody's really thought about that. But he agreed 0there are a couple lots.

Gearhart added with the Sheldon lot we would still need to retain access to the rest of the acreage behind it, which was ours, and that's where we gain a fairly sizable revenue from the timber sales out of there, as well.

Councilmember Viafore questioned if we had someone knocking down our door for the housing thing. Gearhart responded at this juncture and Josh can probably speak to it better. Creating something new because of the costs of materials is just up there, to where Morgan said he didn't have a new construction home that's under half a million dollars right now. It's very expensive.

Audience member Margaret Baldwin requested to speak and asked if have read the deed for Sheldon, because it is always in the past and amongst mayors been that there's a covenant that says

it has to stay forever recreational, and she thinks if there's a possibility if you're offering some recreation, maybe a building is fine. She has never known it otherwise that that couldn't be developed because it had to be recreational park. She said maybe read the deed and see if there's anything covenant, if any covenant's added or something restricted when the estate was settled. The other thing is there is a number of lots in the community because we did a little bit of research back at the village board level when she was there, which was many years ago. But now that still exist as vacant. Adding, granted, they do belong to people, but what better way if you have combined village and town that they maybe would be interested in, and they are flat and accessible, and the location is quite ideal. The other thing is that mountain, having played up there and hiked it. They aren't boulders; they are cliff mud, they are cliff stone, we had that windstorm in 2006 or 2006, and it did clear a lot of that mountain. We made it very ideal, but it's a pretty cliff, rocky, ledge type area but the deed part concerns me that it that it's clear that you can build there, but your idea of incorporating the recreational part around it may satisfy it, and that may be a 50-year boomer. Gearhart said he would check the deep to see what restrictions were in there and clear it with the attorney. Boukai stated so we're going to double check the deed to make sure this is even viable, and then once we have that green light, she's assuming we'll have our orders for our August meeting.

Gashler asked if we were voting tonight, Boukai stated no, this was just to make sure everyone feels comfortable moving forward at our respective meetings next month. Gearhart said each, the council and the board would have to do their own resolution separately. Boukai said yes, and she'll look at the past grant that was just funded and let everyone know how that part could potentially be structured.

Councilmember Morgan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:00pm with Councilmember Viafore seconding. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Elsa Schmitz
Elsa Schmitz
Town Clerk, Town of Delhi