

PLANNING TIPS

Police leaders must gauge political and public perceptions relative to shared use facilities (police, fire, EMS, for example), before moving in that direction .

Recommended options must be framed within a persuasive cost-benefit analysis.

Shared use facility concepts may also have drawbacks. In particular, the chief of police should carefully consider citizen attitudes about public facilities. In some jurisdictions, voters are very likely to pass a bond issue to build a properly sized, practical and efficient police facility. But when the bond increases to larger proportions to include what the public may perceive as excessive space for jails or courts, the bond fails, leaving the police agency project stalled. Police leaders must be able to gauge the political and public perception issues relative to shared use before moving in that direction and must also frame the recommended option within a cost-benefit analysis that is persuasive.

Each organization needs to examine their situation and search for innovative approaches to component/agency inclusion, design and funding. Visit or contact other jurisdictions that have successfully designed and constructed joint use facilities. Contact some of the organizations listed in Appendix 1 to locate projects of this type.

Step 10: Conduct Site Evaluation

Careful consideration must be given to the size, location and flexibility of any existing or potential facility site. Site selection determines the maximum footprint or size of the facility and must, therefore, meet all space needs requirements. Site location determines accessibility of police facility to other government staff, the public and police officers.

Site evaluation and selection must be carefully considered whether exploring the possibility of renovation of an existing facility, acquisition of an adaptive re-use facility or new construction. According to real estate investors, a primary rule in selecting property is location. This is also true for police facilities. There are many essential components of site evaluation:

- ↓ Cost of land #1
- ↓ Cost of site development #2
- Size and shape of site
- Potential for multiple uses
- Public access to site (vehicular and pedestrian) #3
- ↓ Visibility and views #5
- Proximity to other governmental functions #4
- Response to citizens needs and concerns - a neighborhood context #4
- Travel and mileage issues
- Positioning of new facility on site
- Security
- Noise and traffic impact
- Expansion possibilities
- Former use of identified land
- Possible ground contamination

*Rank These
(Top 5)*

- Possibility of locating artifacts during site preparation & excavation
- Zoning
- Utilities/easements
- Topography/geotechnical/soils
- Waterbodies/wetlands/floodplain/stormwater control

#2

Several acquisition issues must be kept in mind. The first is cost. Are the sites being considered priced reasonably given jurisdictional budgetary constraints? Are the site owners willing to set up a reasonable timetable to acquire the site? Have EPA and other studies (for example, geotechnical) been completed and are reports available? Given the issues, it is always advisable to consider multiple sites for comparative purposes.

Site selection is occasionally imposed upon agencies when government organizations already own a new site they want to use. The site itself will dictate the maximum footprint of a facility. Occasionally, site selection will involve multiple sites until one is finally decided upon. All sites must be examined carefully for needed characteristics, functions and detractors. The planning team should remain flexible when viewing all sites as potential selections.

Site selection can also be difficult if other jurisdictional priorities intervene. Many American cities are now "built out." Buying land on the outskirts of town is no longer feasible. One faction may want to site the police facility centrally to buttress a declining downtown. Other factions similarly concerned with adaptive reuse may want to use the old junior high as a primary site consideration. In other areas of the country, decentralization and/or regionalization are strong themes and would impact and possibly limit the range of sites a department can consider. Police facility site selection in larger cities may have to begin with the completion of an organizational strategic plan to determine whether the correct long term solution is one single building or a number of strategically placed new buildings.

Expansion or extensive renovation of a current facility can necessitate the acquisition of adjoining land. Occasionally this may be difficult. Owners of adjacent property may not want to sell. Further, the expansion of the current site may not offer the optimum setting or security, etc. All of this needs to be considered if expansion or facility renovation is being considered as a viable option.

Political and executive project commitments to the community and police department, such as site and facility size, joint use, jail inclusion, security, building positioning and location, may be unachievable due to limitations of available sites or sufficient funding for site acquisition. Continued investigation of additional sites may be necessary, which can delay a project. Site selection delays can affect in turn project momentum and costs which increase with time.

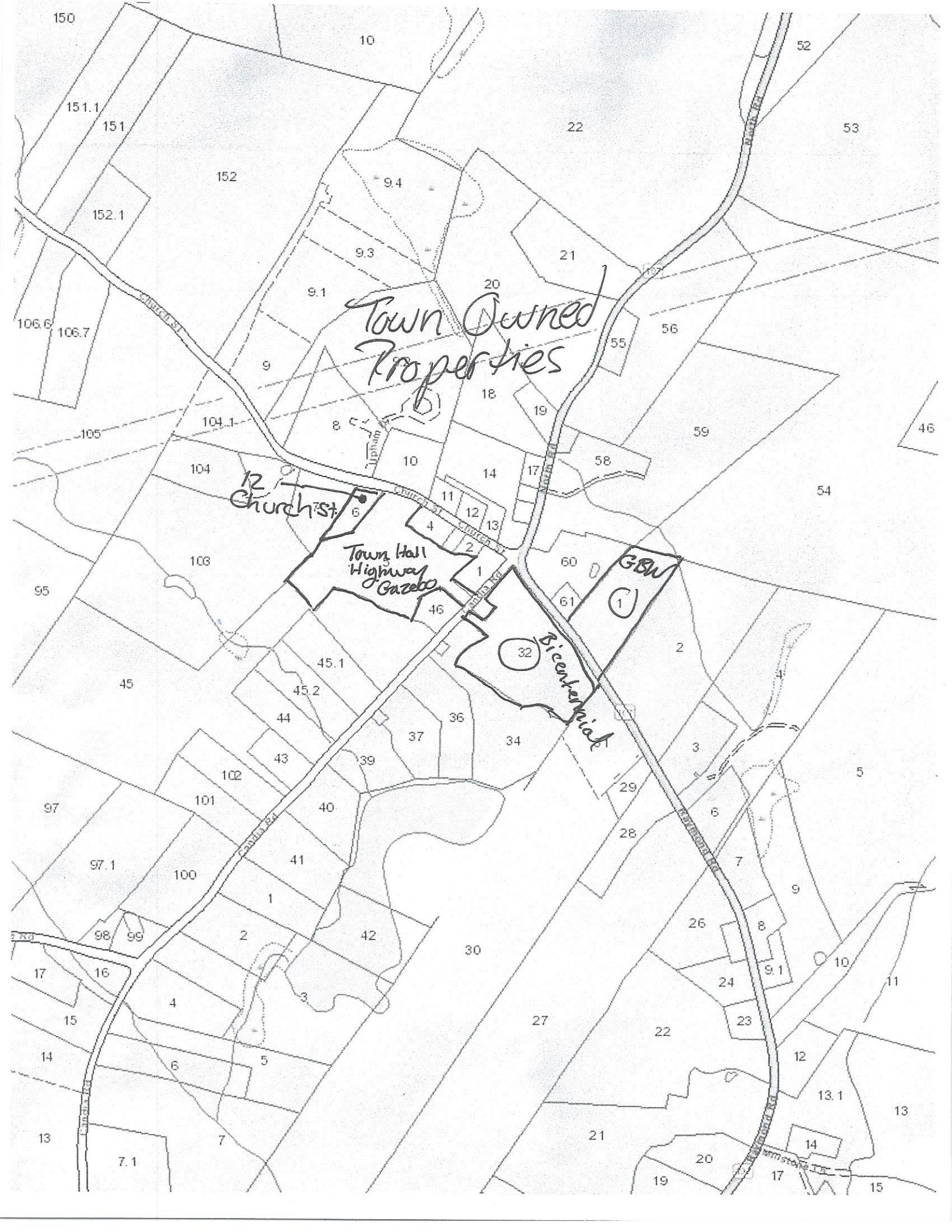
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Town Owned Properties

12 Church St

Town Hall Highway Gazebo

Bicentennial

GBW

