

***Coolidge School Working Group***  
**Meeting Minutes, 4 pm Thursday, Jan. 24, 2019**  
**Finance Meeting Room, Town Hall, Maynard, MA**

**Committee Members Present:**

Linde Ghere

Vicki Brown Stevens

Donna Dodson

Aaron Miklosko

Sarah Donnelly

**Also Present:** Ellen Duggan, Linda Thayer

**1. Minutes** – We will vote on the Jan. 9, 2019, minutes at our next meeting.

**2. Updates from Team Members**

- **Donna and Vicki – Talk with Eve Schluter** – Eve, a Maynard resident who worked on the development of the Coolidge playground, feels strongly that the town should retain the Coolidge school for a future use. Once the building is sold, it's gone and what if Maynard needs another building in the future? She is also concerned about drainage should the sledding hill be expanded since there were many drainage issues after the playground and ball field were improved. She also wondered if the grounds are big enough to hold a snack shack/public bathroom. Would it take up too much valuable land?

Our group is very aware of Maynard's financial pressures – new fire station, reconstruction of Green Meadow School, and a sewage treatment plant replacement are all upcoming, necessary capital projects. The Coolidge isn't currently needed by the town and there are no current funds (a few million at least) to renovate it so it could be used. There is also no community focus or cohesive group willing to fund raise for the Coolidge as there was for the library. Our committee talked about all these points and we don't think our task includes finding a group to save the Coolidge for public use. However, as Ellen Duggan pointed out, the town's Master Plan places a priority on preserving the town's historic buildings, such as the Coolidge. The Coolidge, of course, could be preserved in private hands. Anyway, we press forward.

**Donna – Talk with Sally Bubier** – Sally, who was a member of the Coolidge Re-use Task Force, suggested that our group consider having the Maynard Affordable Housing Trust take over the responsibility of finding a developer of the Coolidge for affordable housing. Donna will talk with Rick Lefferts and the AFT about this.

**Linde** – She has talked to Armand Diarbekirian, a member of the Board of Selectmen, and to Town Planner Bill Nemser about our group’s progress. Both felt we are on target in what we are doing. Bill mentioned that rental units are more of a new norm in these times rather than ownership. She also talked to Town Administrator Greg Johnson who agreed that she should share our progress with the Board of Selectmen (BOS).

- **RFP** – Linde said that Greg Johnson is supportive of us drafting an RFP, then passing it on to town staff for finalization (letterhead, town planner edits, legal edits). We also thought our group could review proposals and rank them to give to the BOS and to Town Meeting. Linde said she will ask the BOS to expand our charter so we can do those tasks.
- **BOS** - She will present to the BOS at their Feb. 5 meeting.
- **Public Meeting and Survey** – Linde said we should probably soon have a public meeting to explain our cost/benefit analysis to all interested, maybe in the Roosevelt Room in the library. Also, we’d like to notify at least the abutters to the Coolidge of what is happening. We can do that with a notice sent by mail In addition, Sarah noted, perhaps we should have a digital survey, something that gets input on residents’ priorities based on what we have already developed while leaving room for them to express their own ideas and concerns.

**3. Cost/Benefit Analysis** – We briefly talked over the known options for Coolidge before voting on our top five picks. Aaron said he definitely doesn’t feel public ownership of Coolidge is feasible, with all the other financial needs in town. He is also against holding it until a future use appears since an empty building deteriorates quickly. Donna also said mothballing Coolidge is too risky. And Linde said she is eager to put out the RFP and see what proposals we get.

**We all agreed that we would love to keep Coolidge in public hands if we felt it was possible.**

We each chose our top five options from a list of 15. Each group member’s top pick received 5 points, second choice 4 points, and so on to the fifth choice which got 1 point. Here are the results:

**Ranking/**

<b>Option #</b>	<b>Option</b>	<b>Total Points</b>
1 – 1C	Affordable Family Housing built by for-profit developer – up to 7 condominiums – 5 sold at market rate, 2 at affordable rate	22
2 – 1A	Up to 5 multi-family condominiums sold at market rate	13
3 – 1B	Affordable family housing (similar to Habitat for Humanity model or other nonprofit)	11
4 – 3A	Rental Units (8 or so) within current school footprint with example of potential tenants to include seniors, veterans, families, artist live/work space, teachers and town employees	10

**4. Adjournment/Next Meeting** – Adjourned at about 5:30. Next meeting: Feb. 6, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vicki Brown Stevens