

TOWN OF DELHI
JOINT MEETING OF THE TOWN OF DELHI AND THE VILLAGE OF DELHI
Village Hall
January 16, 2025
5:30PM

Present:

Supervisor: Maya Boukai
Councilmembers: Josh Morgan, Christina Viafore, Margaret Baldwin, Matt Krzyston
Mayor: Jeffrey Gearhart
Trustees: Barbara Sturdevant, Ian Lamont, Janet Tweed
Trustee Jeremy Fitch - Absent
Town Justice: Mat Burkert

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 presented to the town council Resolution No. 002 of 2025 – Resolution in Support of Obtaining Grant Funding for the Creation of a Joint Municipal Facility: she explained it will hold more weight when they are scoring for the grant. Our attorney drew up the resolution as a letter of commitment doesn't hold enough weight. Further stating we are seeking \$20,000; it is a fifty percent match; \$10,000 from the town and \$10,000 from the village. We can match that with other grants so it's not necessarily a cash commitment.

Resolution No. 002 of 2025
TOWN OF DELHI
RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF OBTAINING GRANT FUNDING FOR THE
CREATION OF A JOINT MUNICIPAL FACILITY

WHEREAS the Constitution and statutes of the State of New York authorize and encourage counties, cities, towns, villages, school districts, and fire districts to cooperate for purposes of pursuing common objectives and solving mutual problems; and

WHEREAS the Town and Village of Delhi share a community of interest in the health, safety, and welfare of the people residing in the area which they comprise; and

WHEREAS the said municipalities are committed to promoting the effective and economical provision of local government services and facilities within their respective jurisdictions, including by means of inter-community planning; and

WHEREAS Articles 12-C and 5-J of the General Municipal Law of the State of New York authorize cooperation among municipalities and comprehensive studies and reports to aid in the cooperative solution of local government problems and in the promotion of strong and effective local governments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town and Village of Delhi do hereby agree to seek a planning grant titled “Town and Village of Delhi Co-located Municipal Facilities Study” for grant funding relating to the proposed construction of a joint municipal facility; and it is further

RESOLVED that the Town of Delhi will serve as lead applicant, and the Village of Delhi as co-applicant; and it is further

RESOLVED that the Town and Village of Delhi are seeking a \$20,000 planning grant and are prepared to match at least 50% to be shared between municipalities with a total contribution of \$10,000 each; and it is further

RESOLVED that the costs and expenses incurred as part of this grant, exclusive of any state aid available therefor, shall be apportioned to the participating municipalities on a 50%/50% percent basis; and it is further

RESOLVED that this Resolution shall not bind the Town to any additional terms or requirements relating to the proposed joint municipal facility, including but not limited to, with regard to expenditures beyond those expressly provided for herein.

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED: That this resolution shall become effective on the 16th of January 2025.

Offered by: Councilmember Krzyston

Seconded by: Councilmember Baldwin

Roll Call as Follows:

	Aye	Nay	Absent
Supervisor Boukai	<u> X </u>	_____	_____
Councilmember Krzyston	<u> X </u>	_____	_____
Councilmember Morgan	<u> X </u>	_____	_____
Councilmember Viafore	<u> X </u>	_____	_____
Councilmember Baldwin	<u> X </u>	_____	_____

Supervisor Boukai stated everyone had a copy of the letter for the Board of Supervisors with the revisions. Councilmember Krzyston made the motion that the council accept it as written by all signing the letter and Supervisor Boukai delivering it at the next county board meeting. Councilmember Baldwin seconded the motion. Motion carried. A copy of the letter was given to Mayor Gearhart.

Mayor Gearhart opened the floor for discussion of a joint facility in which town and village residents had been talked to for their input. Boukai stated she could start; she said we had a discussion at our town council meeting as well. She reached out to a couple of people, and she was actually kind of surprised as she thought they would be like “no, preserve village hall.” But the

financial component of that really was what the barrier was that they were most concerned about the money involved in preserving something like this and it not being explicitly clear how everything would fit in one facility. So, everything from green building that's a lot more energy efficient that can house everything is what feedback she received.

Village Trustee Tweed stated she did receive the nostalgic piece that we all kind of discussed last time for village hall. She did not get that same hesitation with the finances because they were saying would the new building be just as expensive; and the other part they were concerned about was design cause we look at the most recent county buildings that are not pretty, and they wanted something that hit that charm. That might make a new building more expensive if we are paying for design and aesthetics rather than sometimes, we go to the lowest bidder then we lose out on that aspect; otherwise, people were really excited about having one building. That was unanimous Tweed added rather than jumping across town.

Councilmember Krzyston said from his perspective he is leaning more towards as he has considered everything from the last meeting and he feels like a new building is the way to go. He loves the idea of a historic one, but it just seems like a luxury we can't afford. He added this is not based on other people's opinions it's based on him processing everything that we talked about.

Councilmember Morgan added he didn't feel that restoring village hall was feasible. He would like to continue with a new building and trying to consolidate and getting some parcels back on the tax rolls to help you guys out in the village.

Mayor Gearhart stated the day after our last meeting he and Morgan took one of the ceiling panels out, they very quickly put the panel back on. Morgan stated it is just botched after botched all over in this building. Trustee Lamont asked for an example of what Morgan was saying, Gearhart said asbestos. Morgan said he couldn't remember off the top of his head but there are fire walls that have penetration that are done improperly. There is a lot of rot on the outside along with peeling paint and everything. Opening all this up so it could be larger given the load bearing wall and everything would be very difficult. Gearhart said one of the things Morgan did mention was for those that are stuck on the "historical value" was even if we were to sell this building we could include in the deed on the external part of the building to preserve as it is or to restore to what it is rather to allow it to simply be torn down or renovated in a completely different way. This would at least retain the historical appearance of the building. Morgan said it is a civil thing to enforce it, but it is one of the things you can do to keep the character of it.

Trustee Lamont asked Justice Burkert if there was ever any information about what the DCJS is able to do. Burkert stated he had spoken with Boukai about it, but they will only pay a maximum of \$30,000 a year no more than that a year, that's all they will grant. You can get \$30,000 each year but if the elevator costs \$100,000, he can only get the \$30,000 for the first year. So, they have maxed him out right at \$30,000, they did say you could get for anything ADA compliant it's pretty much a shoo-in, you would get the full \$30,000 but that's the maximum, that's all they will give. Lamont said he was thinking there was some kind of grant through them for actually building a courthouse; Burkert interjected he spoke to them about Middletown, and they got the full \$30,000 to do their bench and their chairs. Burkert said when he asked them about a new building, they said absolutely they could do a new building for the bench and chairs. You could get \$30,000 for the bench and next year \$30,000 for other things for the court. If there is anything for ADA compliance let's say if we get

another building and we wanted a separate entrance for the court for ADA we could get the \$30,000 for that part of it. But they said the maximum they will give him, and the justice court is \$30,000 a year.

Burkert further said he spoke with Maya, where maybe we could do it where you find a contractor who will put it in and say hey, here is \$30,000 this year and we will give you \$30,000 next year. But still, you are dealing with the state and just because one person today tells me yes, we will give it to you every year; when one person leaves, or the administration changes things can change.

Councilmember Krzyston said when we were here last time, we discussed our hopes and dreams of what a new building would look like over on our property; he just couldn't recall if we discussed that afterwards amongst ourselves or if we talked about it here. Gearhart said he and Josh talked, Jeremy and he had talked, and he spoke with Daren about the feasibility of putting in a joint garage over on Sherwoods Road yet maintain separate compartments which he thought was very feasible. He is not sure where all the boundaries are, he wasn't absolutely sure but pretty sure we could swing that pretty easily. Which would then free up where the town barn is now to do with it as we chose, which would allow both the village and town to operate should we decide to build something there and deal with the properties afterwards once it's completed.

Gearhart further said Jerney has been dealing with this building for a while now, he is kind of tired of doing so. Gearhart has been making sure that everything he has been doing with this building would be equity in the building, so should we reach a point where we did want to sell the building under whatever circumstances or conditions we would want to impose, we would get that money back. We are rapidly approaching the point where once we start in the inside and start redesigning and rebuilding, that's not something that necessarily reap any extra money in terms of sale. Anyone purchasing would want to impose their own ideas with the internal parts of the building. That's kind of where we are at, at this point.

Supervisor Boukai stated what we discussed on Monday, was we are prepared to move forward with the village that would be ideal, but we are also prepared to move forward on our own if that's what needs to occur. Boukai is hoping that's what the grant if we get the funding will identify. She further stated we can start spending on it as long as whatever we are entering into a contract with was after January 1st, those fees incurred can be reimbursable should we get the grant. So, if we want to keep moving forward with this regardless of if we get the grant or not, knowing that if we get the grant we can use what we spent as the match for the \$20,000. What Boukai is hoping the grant clarifies is the feasibility of both the municipal building and the co-located highway garages, but also the third step, which is once these parcels, become available (hypothetically 3 to 5 years down the road) what is the best use for them in a comprehensive kind of way. We are waiting on that grant as well, it's imminent as she just emailed them and they are assigning us an advisor for the grant for the \$15,000, so she believes the planning grant should clarify a lot of this. There is also no obligation should we determine this is something that isn't going to work out either collectively with the two entities. There is nothing binding us from either going off on our own and taking some of the data that we have gathered, or the consultant has been able to gather and make some decisions. Maybe the highway garage is the one thing that does make sense because it's less expense to an extent and maybe that's the first thing we do and do our two buildings separate and we get one building on the tax rolls. She thinks at least from the town council's perspective we are ready to move forward either

way, it's obviously a lot better if we move forward together. She also believes the planning will clarify a lot of expectations (you have read what she has put in the grant), expectations, concerns that each entity has represented appropriately. This is kind of where we are. Mayor Gearhart said the planning phase really needs to precede all of this and may in fact direct our discussions later on. He is finding more frequent discussions today without having the details, without having the plans, specifics of who's involved, not involved it's hard to tell what money is truly available. They want to see details, they want to see details before anybody is willing to commit money to those projects, so at this juncture he would think that the commitment that we are making is to first do the planning and see what that looks like first; Boukai said the feasibility yes. Gearhart said yes, the feasibility, the cost as a project, what the options would be, what the details are and then make a decision after that. Once we have that to make a decision. At this point to be committed in full if we are building, etcetera, might be a bit premature.

Supervisor Boukai stated she has been talking to Margaret Irwin, she did the joint comprehensive plan for the town and village ten or twelve years ago, she has been the one who Boukai has been in contact with. Both for redoing our comprehensive plan this specific grant, the first question she asked was are you co-housing so she knows this will be really good for the application and we are hitting all the marks for smart growth and all of this kind of stuff, she feels like we have a really strong application and she is in complete agreement, she thinks is premature to make any like "let's decide." She also said with the \$40,000 total it will cover very little design itself, but it will cover public input sessions to where we can get a feel for what the community wants. We know they want the aesthetics to not be like the building on Bridge Street, but what would be some ideas that people would agree to. There is a public component to this planning process. It basically gets us she believes a site plan, kind of a determination of the footprint of what the building could look like based on code and setbacks and all that kind of stuff. But this will not get us to a design stage, which is fine because she doesn't believe we want to spend money on design if we don't really know if we want to move forward with this anyway.

Councilmember Baldwin said we are going to have to go slowly, because the comprehensive plan needs to be completed. That will strengthen our possibility to even get a grant, Boukai agreed. Boukai then stated that with the LGEG grant there is a planning component, and an implementation component in which the implementation is only a 10% match, so that's really nice. But again, if your comprehensive plan isn't newer than ten years you are docked points for that. Boukai added she believed we had done a really good job this past year of setting ourselves up getting the climate smart designation, getting the pro-housing designation, meeting and having these meetings together. Tomorrow she and Gearhart were doing an interview with the paper; she is going to include that in our grant application to show that we have taken the steps over the past year to build a cohesive conversation around this idea. Baldwin asked for clarification on "pro-housing", Boukai said it sounds like we will not have to reapply but maintain our designation by doing certain things or by sending certain reports (that's the impression she got from the letter she was sent). She believed the village also received the same letter. They were going to start coming up with parameters in order to continue to receive that designation. Gearhart said he hadn't received anything. Boukai then said it's not any specific housing, its how we are updating our zoning, making it more housing "friendly" so that we are removing barriers for people constructing ADU or other things that can really help the

housing supply. Gearhart added the other part of this is the state is trying to get a handle on exactly what the housing situation is, it's part of their short-term housing, which Baldwin said we tackled that in 2005/2006 when she was on the village board. There is an interesting process, to which Councilmember Morgan said he found it interesting as the state created all of this, zoning and everything now they want to take it back.

Trustee Lamont questioned, does this study that we are talking about include this as one of the options or are we excluding that at the at-set. Boukai said the way she wrote it was she included a map with it that included the five parcels, so she was talking about this building, our building, the highway garages and the town's Sherwood Road property. She just said a "co-located" facility, she had mentioned the towns property being the most likely to build something new on, but to your point I don't think we would be prevented from including this in a feasibility study, because it's really feasibility for the entire idea and its three steps; highway, building and what do we do with the land afterward. Gearhart added that one of the things he taught when he was a teacher was research papers and the one thing he always made clear was you can not go in with a preconceived idea of what you're going to have as a thesis. You must have the information first and your conclusion is based on the information you got and not a preconceived idea. He believed this is the best approach for us, to get the information first and then based upon that information draw whatever conclusions that leads us to. He believes it is important to go in with somewhat of an open mind and see what comes of it, he knows there are concerns on everyone's part. Some of the people that were spoken with were their biggest concerns were money, there are people out there whose biggest concern is this building (village hall) the historic value of it. We are wary of the concerns of those people and it's very hard to answer those concerns without knowing the information that we need. He believes this first step is the direction we really need to go, gather the information, get the study accomplished and see where that leads us. If it leads us to step two then great if not, we make other plans to see where we go. Gearhart feels it is in the best interests of the town and village to work together on this. Where that leads us eventually, he doesn't know. There are things that are still in the works at this point that are other options. The door hasn't been slammed shut yet on the Wickhams property, but that's not something we can plan on at this point, that's not an option that is absolutely available to us at this juncture. Who knows what will change in the course of going through this with what's available, that's where he stands on the whole thing. Keep an open mind, get information. Boukai added the worst case out of this grant or any kind of study we've identified on the worksheet (the return on investment worksheet), the planning grant will help identify how we are able to save money in certain instances. So even if that's all we get out of it and nothing is co-located and we can save money by doing "x, y and z" that will be part of what the planning process is. Worst case we are left with a document that maybe we can use for other things, best case we get clarity on what direction to go and costs. She added there are other grants available as well, she knows this isn't dedicated and it's not designated historic but maybe it falls into some realm where there is grant funding available to preserve something whether it gets uses a municipal building or something that's for the community that might be identified. She believes we don't have much choice but moving forward with the planning process.

Councilmember Krzyston said another rational is he mentioned at the last meeting it's not the first-time people have tried to have this discussion, and they never paid for any studies, the result was nothing. We can't do the same thing over and over again; this is a smarter way to do it.

Judge Burkert stated Colchester just built a new town hall, we could talk to them. Boukai said maybe in the meantime while we wait if we go somewhere and there is a new municipal building take a picture of it, we could call them up figure out what architect they used, how much it cost we can do some of the research on our own as well.

Burkert added everyone he spoke with loved the idea of the town and village working together. Some people were concerned about spending the money but when he relayed to them the potential of reducing costs for everybody and both parties were working together, he didn't hear anyone against the idea. They loved the idea that it was going to be looked into and that hopefully something could be done to lower costs, because costs are hurting everyone around here. They understood laying out money to benefit the future is a benefit for everything.

Mayor Gearhart said this is a little off the topic, he didn't know how much Maya had told the town council but you should be aware of the fact that he keeps calling it "historic" but there was a group meeting between all the mayors of this county and the supervisors of the towns, it's the first time he has ever heard of such a meeting. It went very well, there was a lot of cooperation and for the first time there was a unity between the towns and villages. Maya had a lot to do with that. Everyone agreed it's the way it should be. Gearhart added it is good to know there is concern on the part of the towns for the villages. The villages in turn reciprocate the concern and would like to work with that. Boukai said she thinks we should have those meetings quarterly if the mayors want to set that up.

Supervisor Boukai said we are at the point where we submit the grant see what happens and then we can move forward, we set up our next meeting for May and we will try and meet three times a year at minimum. Trustee Lamont asked the time frame for the grant, Boukai said it's due on next Friday and the way the awards worked last year it looked like they were awarded sometime in April, so she feels like we would know sometime around the end of March. But like she said, she will re-confirm this by email so we have it on paper that if we want to start incurring costs with the hope, we are getting the grant we can then get it reimbursed if we do get the grant. She added she has not gotten a total price from Margaret Irwin about how much their company would charge. The comprehensive plan is \$75,000, and for this type of study she said \$40,000 should be sufficient if we are not doing design plans, if we are not hiring someone to do the design plans ourselves. We will have to go through the procurement process anyway, but she believes there is a big argument for using the same company that did our previous plan because they already know us. Gearhart said the village would have to at a board meeting get those approvals, but not having heard anybody's objections to this path he would say we are kind of in agreement to move forward. Trustee Lamont added as long as all the options are on the table; Gearhart said yes.

Boukai said do we want to wait until we hear about the grant or do we want to just set up the meeting, Gearhart said quarterly. They both agreed. Trustee Lamont thanked Boukai for her emails regarding county business, it has been helpful he said. Councilmember Morgan said he appreciated it also. Lamont asked Boukai how long the comprehensive plan would take. Boukai said she was told plan for a year, this grant though she is thinking six months though as she doesn't know if they have the bandwidth to do both at the same time. Trustee Sturdevant asked wouldn't the comprehensive plan a lot of it just be updating; Boukai said updating what the county's been doing. Gearhart asked do we know when the last one was done, Baldwin said 2012. Trustee Tweed said that is why the

Shared Services group had been dragging its feet; they were waiting for the county to be done so we could piggy-back on that. She further said we had identified community people just like last time but that was as far as we made it. Councilmember Baldwin said she thought the community had changed a lot since 2012, so it should be very interesting and worth every penny.

A joint meeting/workshop was set up for May 14, 2025, at 5:30pm at the town hall. A motion for the clerk to advertise for two weeks was given by Councilmember Morgan with Councilmember Viafore seconding. Motion carried. As there were no further discussions, Councilmember Viafore made the motion for the Town of Delhi to adjourn at 6:13pm with Councilmember Morgan seconding.

Respectfully submitted,

Elsa Schmitz

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Town Clerk, Town of Delhi