

The Need for a New Hebron DPW

History

This fourteen-acre parcel of land on Old Colchester Road was originally a gravel pit and later was used as the town landfill, which was closed and capped in 1995.

Department of Public Works (DPW)

Services provided by the public works department include road maintenance and reconstruction, solid waste disposal, snow and ice removal, maintenance of town buildings and grounds, animal control, trail maintenance and construction, vegetation control, vehicle maintenance, site improvement and construction activities, and drainage maintenance and improvements. Overall, the complex is run down as a result of the usage and the age of the structures on the property. None of the buildings are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Transfer Station

This building is for an attendant from the public works department to track and direct visitors of the transfer station to the proper locations for the disposal of items into the proper bins. Access into the building is on a sloping drive, which is unsafe.

Salt Storage

This building is for the storage of salt and the sand/salt mixture. Currently, the sand product is stored outside in the weather. The capacity of the current building is around one winter storm. This requires deliveries of sand and salt on a regular basis and the possibility exists for a shortage of material in the event of a heavy storm or a multi-day storm.

Project Summary: June 2023

A **2010** facility study for the Town of Hebron identified the need to invest in and improve the DPW complex at Old Colchester Road, with a **top priority being to “address employee life safety issues,” as stated in the study report.**

The report also stated that:

- “The intention of the study was to identify areas that are either code violations or maintenance items and to develop a schedule for corrective action.”
- “The public works facility is in desperate need of additional space and more efficient working conditions. Development of a master plan with phased construction should be the main priority.”
- “The Town will have to make some tough decisions in the upcoming years with regards to the buildings. The facilities that need the most attention were constructed in the 1970s with little preventive maintenance.”

As a result, the Hebron Public Building Committee was formed in 2010; and **37** sites have been evaluated for DPW development since then.

[For more information, please click here to view the presentation from the Public Information Session held on September 18, 2022.](#)

Areas Potentially Feasible for DPW Development (as of 2023)

- **Reconstruction on existing site: Old Colchester Road (currently has 2.15 of buildable acres on a total of 19.6 acres)**
 - Capped landfill occupies 15.65 acres (not buildable)
 - Transfer station occupies 1.8 acres (**transfer station would need relocation and/or contracted private trash collection**)
 - Adjacent Eversource properties (**land would need to be purchased by the Town from Eversource**)
 - In addition to relocation of the transfer station and the purchase of adjacent land from Eversource (if agreeable), the Town estimates **additional design costs of approximately \$250,000** to determine feasibility of reconstruction of the DPW facilities on this site

- **New construction on Horton Property/Kinney Road (5.65 acres = layout of existing DPW facility, on 88.62 total acres)**
 - Currently undeveloped

- **DPW Garage on Kinney Road with Salt Storage at another location (to be determined)**

Additional properties evaluated in 2022 and deemed not feasible (and reasons why):

- **Burnt Hill Park (1.67 buildable acres on 3.2 acres)**
 - Park Operations occupies 1.2 acres (**new athletics fields would need relocation**)
 - Property includes **10 acres of wetlands not included as buildable**

- **Hebron Lions Fairgrounds (declined purchase offer)**

Horton Property Purchase (2019)

A Special Town Meeting was held on March 7, 2019 to vote on a resolution for the Town to purchase the 89-acre Horton property for \$600,000* with the stated intent of municipal development on a portion of the property, including a new DPW facility.

The resolution passed with 63 voting Yes and 29 voting No.

*\$160,000 from Open Space Land Acquisition and \$440,000 from General Fund open balance

[For more information on the Horton Property Purchase, please click here to view the video from the Special Town Meeting held on March 7, 2019.](#)

[For more information on the Hebron Center Plan approved by the Department of Planning in May 2016, please click here to view the plan.](#)

Concerns Regarding DPW Development

- Salt storage contamination of groundwater, wetlands, wildlife
- Public works truck traffic, noise, maintenance pollution
- Alternate land purposes/utilization for:
 - natural/historical significance
 - open/recreational space
 - economic/community development...vs. municipal/industrial building
- Building project cost to taxpayers

[For more information on the Town's response to Public Comments received at the September 19, 2022 Public Building Committee meeting, please click here to view the document.](#)

[If you would like to read the Hebron Green Committee's May 1, 2023 letter to the Board of Selectmen and the Public Building Committee, please click here to view the document.](#)

Estimated DPW Building Project Costs

- \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000 to be obtained with a 20-year bond
- \$150 to \$325 estimated annual increase to taxpayers
 - This estimate is based on:
 - Bond repayment model for range of property sizes using current mil rate
 - \$18 million bond with the rate of the Town's last bonding project of 1.33% and repaid over a 20-year period

Proposed Next Steps

With the understanding that **employee life safety issues are the primary concern**, the Town of Hebron has affirmed that continuing to “do nothing” with the current DPW facilities is no longer an option. The proposed next steps toward development of a new Hebron DPW are to:

1. Conduct and report findings from a Public Opinion Survey (June 2023)
2. Present and respond to Frequently Asked Questions based on survey findings, in order to identify public concerns and instill confidence that the Town will mitigate issues utilizing best management practices (July 2023)
3. Decision by Board of Selectmen to select a site plan and authorize a bond (TBD*)
4. Town Meeting (TBD)
5. Public Referendum (TBD)
6. Proceed with DPW building project plan (TBD)

*TBD = To Be Determined