



TOWN OF ST. JOHNSBURY

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Police Chief's Perspective

August 20, 2021

On September 14th, 2021, the citizens of St. Johnsbury will be asked to vote on a \$5.4 million general obligation bond to fund the remediation of contaminants and redevelopment of the Armory building at 1249 Main St. into a new police and dispatch facility.

I understand the impact a request of this size places on the citizenry. For that reason, everyone involved in the project was adamant about reviewing all options and coming up with the best solution.

This proposal was neither spur of the moment nor based on something as simple as a desire to have a new building. Operational inadequacies of the current building at 1187 Main St., along with the cost of the building code upgrades and deferred maintenance issues, made us investigate alternative solutions. The marketability of 1187 Main Street and the opportunity to revitalize the vacant and blighted Armory building located within our Historic Main Street District, provided what we believe the most viable option for St. Johnsbury.

Several alternatives were considered, including new construction, alternative locations, and even private facility ownership. After much research, the Armory option, owned by the Town, proved most beneficial to the community. It keeps the Police Department and Dispatch Center centrally located on Main Street, close to the schools, and puts a vacant, blighted downtown building back into productive use.

The redevelopment of the Armory into a police and dispatch center will be a testament to public safety and show our commitment to the protection of our residents.

From my perspective and that of the men and women of the St. Johnsbury Police Department and Dispatch Center, it will be a building that they will be proud to enter every day they come to work. For years it has housed men and women who proudly served their country, and once again, it can house men and women who proudly serve their community.

The Armory Redevelopment Project will transform blight into a state-of-the-art facility that will serve as a resource in recruiting and retaining officers and dispatch personnel. It will also allow for inter-agency meetings and training events by providing adequate space and technology for those events.

Over the past few years, the police and dispatch staff have stepped up their professionalism, conducted themselves with pride and integrity, and been transparent in all they do. We are committed to a profession of service in a very demanding and challenging climate.

I sincerely hope that the citizens of St. Johnsbury can see the advantages of this Armory renovation and vote affirmatively to pass this bond proposal.

Sincerely,

Chief Tim Page

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