

Proposed police station's size reduced

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HAMDEN - In an effort to cut costs for the proposed police station, the square footage has been cut by 8 percent, the architect working on the project reported.

The 3,800-square-foot reduction would bring construction costs to \$28.4 million, architect Jeff Bianco told members of the Town Building Committee Tuesday night.

Those costs previously had been listed at \$29.7 million.

Overall, the project is now projected at \$35.2 million, which includes \$400,000 in financing.

Bianco said that the biggest area of savings comes from changing lockers from 3 feet wide to 2 feet wide, which would still be much bigger than what officers have today. Shrinking the space saves square footage on two floors, according to Bianco, whose firm, Bianco Giolitto Weston of Middletown, is working on the three-pronged project.

Besides building the new police building, now slated at 46,000 square feet, the project calls for renovating Memorial Town Hall and the adjoining fire station.

Kennels for police dogs have been removed from the project, though the officers who work on the canine unit will have an office.

Police dogs live at the homes of the officers who handle them.

Chief Administrative Officer Scott Jackson said arrangements could be made for the dogs to stay at the town's new **animal shelter**, once it is built, when officers who handle the dogs are on vacation.

A police museum, an outside courtyard and several other spaces also will be removed from the plan.

But even with close to \$1.4 million in cuts in construction costs, committee

members wanted to know the bottom line as it relates to "soft costs," such as contingencies, furniture and fixtures.

Last week, Jackson said the administration didn't want to go higher than \$34.8 million.

Given that some of the soft costs would be reduced proportionately, committee members said they wanted to know how the other costs would be calculated.

Previously, they had been estimated at \$12 million to \$15 million, Councilman Jack Kennelly, D-At Large, pointed out.

Jackson said about \$2 million could be taken off the top of the project because money has come from grants or capital funds, but Kennelly and citizen members Michael Mednick and Chris Daur still wanted the numbers specified.

"It looks like you've done a nice job," Daur told the design team, "but you're still not at \$34.8 million. It's going to run more than \$34.8 million. We owe it to ourselves to see what the number would be."

Councilwoman Kathleen Schomaker, D-5, then asked for the list of exclusions to be defined, and Jackson said he could work on it. The task could take up to three weeks.

The Legislative Council was to hold a public hearing Monday to consider a \$35.2 million appropriation for renovating Town Hall and adding the police station, but the hearing has been canceled so that the building committee can get more information and better numbers, said council President Al Gorman, D-at large.

Meanwhile, the Historic Properties Commission is still reviewing the plans for the Memorial Town Hall rehabilitation.

A public hearing is scheduled for 7 p.m. Wednesday in the third floor conference room of the **Hamden** Government Center.