

**Morse High School Reuse Public Meeting
Bath City Hall
June 25, 2019**

The City of Bath is starting the process to consider and evaluate future reuse options for the existing Morse High School Site. A new high school is currently under construction and the existing Morse High School will no longer be used as a public school as soon as January 2021. The City asked North Star Planning to facilitate a public meeting with the purpose of presenting and discussing options for reuse of the buildings and site once school operations have moved to the new high school, understanding that the process to adaptively reuse this property at 826 High Street could take several years,

Public Meeting Details

This public meeting was held on Tuesday, June 25, 2019, at the Bath City Hall. The original date for the meeting was Thursday, June 20, but it had to be rescheduled due to electrical power issues. There were approximately 70 participants at this meeting, and 57 people signed in.



Presentation

A half hour presentation was provided as background for participants. The presentation included an introduction to the effort by City Manager Peter Owen, a brief history of the chronology so far by Assistant City Manager Marc Meyers, and the neighborhood context of the site by City Planner Ben Averill. Ben Smith from North Star presented a range of uses and options for adaptive reuse of the site.

Structured Stations

About 45 minutes was allocated for group work at three stations designed to get input from attendees that will shape how the City thinks about the site and process going forward.

1. *What are the most important aspects of the site and buildings to retain?*

Information from this station is envisioned to help the City identify the most valuable buildings, building elements and site qualities to preserve or retain regardless of the ultimate mix of uses on the site going forward.

2. *What is the right mix of Commercial/Residential/Public Uses?*

This station combined an informal voting exercise, where participants put individual or handfuls of beans into jars to show their level of support for commercial, residential, or public use categories, with flip chart work where participants could add more detail and narrative around their preferences.

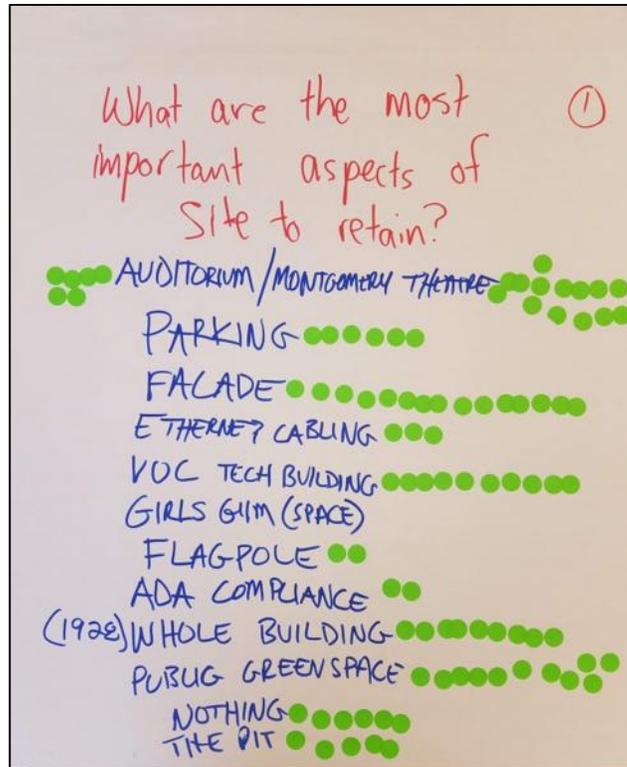
3. *What are the City's areas of greatest need and your big ideas for the site?*

Attendees were asked to think about this site in relation to needs the city is currently facing, and how this site or buildings could be used to help meet those needs. Additionally, there was an opportunity to express big ideas that might not have been considered yet, and to show support for other's thoughts.

Summary of Comments

The most important aspects of the site and buildings

The most valued elements of the site are within the original structure as well as the structure itself. The newest portion of the building, the Vocational/Technical Center is also highly valued, as is the lawn and landscaping around the buildings.



Elements	Dots
Auditorium	20
Façade	15
Public Greenspace	11
Vocational Tech Building	10
Whole Building (1928)	9
Parking	6
Nothing	6
The Pit (gym)	5
Ethernet Cabling	3
Flagpole	2
ADA compliance	2
Girls Gym (space)	

Preferred mix of Commercial/Residential/Public Uses

The bean allocation exercise shows a pretty even distribution of beans based on general use categories of Commercial, Residential, and Public options. No beans were counted, but the bottom of the box was generally evenly covered in all examples, with the Public option getting slightly less than the other categories.



How to Balance Commercial/Residential/Public Uses ①

- Assisted Living - Residential
- MIXED Use - Commercial/Residential
- Public Use - green space
- TAX Generation
- Shifting Resources - opening Public space
- Office Space - 2nd story?
- Start-up/Incubator
- Mixed use - Public/Residential/Commercial

Balance Uses ②

- PERFORMING ARTS CENTER AND SCHOOL
- Co-Housing
- Non-Profit
- Affordable Housing
- Homeless Shelter - Public
- Studio/1 Bedroom - Mixed use
- Senior Housing - Public
- Daycare (in conjunction with house)
- Restaurant/Bakery/Food Service
- Movie theater
- Columbarium
- TRADES SCHOOL

Uses	Dots
Mixed Use - Public/Residential/Commercial	11
Mixed Use - Commercial/Residential	6
Public Use - Green Space	6
Tax Generation	5
Restaurant/Bakery/Food Service	5
Studio/1 BR - Mixed Use	4
Senior Housing - Public	4
Movie theater	4
Affordable Housing	3
Assisted Living - Residential	2
Co-housing	2
Performing Arts Center and School	2
Homeless Shelter - Public	2
Daycare (in conjunction with house)	2
Trades School	2
Office Space - 2nd story?	1
Start-up/incubator	1
Non-profit	1
Columbarium	1
Shifting Resources - open public space	0

The posters and table above allowed people to get into more detail with desired uses than the bean exercise and shows a general openness for a diverse mix of uses, with many attendees specifically calling out more than

one type of use. Within that general openness is a preference seems to be a preference for some type of housing to be included in the mix. There were eight separate categories calling out various types of housing options.

Areas of greatest need and big ideas



Needs	Dots
bring into Bath tax dollars	15
Middle class single-floor housing for downsizers	10
Affordable apartments - studio, 1BR, 2BR	9
Condo's, 300-350 range, taxable	6
Parking	5
Activities for youthful residents	5
Trained trades workers	4
Assisted living	3
Bike racks	3
Place for kids to hang out	2
Improved schools	2
Coordinated & adequately sized Public Safety (Police/Fire)	2
Culture to attract population	2
Consolidated elementary school	1
Tech ready business space	1
Neighborhood markets	1
Pocket parks	1
Broader focus on younger people	1
Stormwater/Sewer separation	1
Bike lanes	1
Better bus service (times/routes)	1
Less parking	1

The single most popular comment under Biggest Needs was to “Bring in more tax dollars,” with 15 supporting dots. Important as well, were four different notes with a total of 28 supporting dots that all had to do with housing needs. These ranged from assisted living to market rate options.

Big Ideas	Dots
Restaurants, movie theater, brewery	11
Elderly Housing	9
Affordable housing would include a mix	8
Mixed -Use, Residential above, Retail/commercial below	7
Use - add renewable community solar	6
Preserve 1928 building, repurpose the rest w/commercial	6
Middle class market housing	6
Mixed use commercial/residential - No TIF	6
Space (small!) for Bath Historical Society. Office? Museum-ish?	5
Public Safety Buildings	5
Keep historic!!	5
Multigen co-housing	4
Business incubator for trades businesses	4
All 3 - Public Safety, Residential, Commercial & non-profit that relate to residents	3
Use commercial kitchen for business +/-or training +/-or food service for residents (restaurant style)	3
For any use ensure green/park space	3
Municipal space & greenspace	3
Votec for adults- Vets/displaced workers w/apts while in school	3
Mixed use resid & community- w/ theater to replace Chocolate Church	2
One of those new work/life spaces where people can live short/long term in Bath "offsite"	2
Get rid of most buildings & build new efficient housing	2
Precedent - "The Kennedy School" (old school turned into hotel, restaurants, movie theater, brewery, swimming pool, etc. Façade kept in tact	2
Longevity Economy Business Incubator	2
? Housing that opens up housing stock for new families to move into single family	2
Maker space/workshops	1
mix in public green spaces	0
Keep space vibrant people coming & going through the day!	0
Partnership with theater company co-founded by Priscilla Montgomery-studio theater of Bath	0

There were a lot of great ideas discussed in this portion of the exercise. Generally, they show a preference or understanding that there will be a diversity of uses possible on the existing site. These results are harder to categorize, but various housing options were suggested here along with community-oriented commercial uses. More ideas around public amenities regarding the historic aspects of the original building, the desire for public spaces and community solar were also raised.