

The Rye Select Board published a statement on December 14, 2020 in regards to the Parsonage Demolition/Land swap and TD Bank. [Click Here](#)

This document (produced by Steven Borne as an informed Rye voter) is to point out what the Select Board did not include in the December 14, 2020 Statement and provides additional information.

Select Board Statement	Additional Information
Voters rejected at least 7 Different plans	This leaves out that voters did support spending over \$350K towards Town Hall and several other articles to move the Town forward. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - While Articles 7, 8 & 9 passed. Article 7 refers to the signed December 2019 contract, that was voided by 500 Washington LLC in June. Click Here for the December 2019 agreement.
2019 Article was amended Article 31	Yes, article was drastically changed, but the amended wording that was approved, only called for developing the plan for how to renovate. Evaluating options for how to best find/make additional space has yet to occur.
2016 Parsonage Committee Findings	Committee also said they could not make recommendations about what to do with the Parsonage, “out of context” for what Rye wants for a Town Center. Committee recommend Plan NH help Rye evaluate options for the center of Town. Click Here for the report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select Board did not act on completing the Charette - Select Board opposed petitioned warrant article for a Charette - Select Board did support privately funded initiative that completed the Charette Click Here for final Plan NH report This led to the Rye Town Center Committee who were told by the Select Board to first focus on a “Quick win”, not understanding options.
Housing Partnership Lease	The Housing Partnership were the “Agents” the Select Board used for managing and maintaining the Parsonage property. Parsonage residents made many requests to the Select Board that the property be better maintained.
Omitted from the time line.	RPLBOT presentation to Select Board of conclusion of feasibility study saying private monies to expand library needed an overall plan for Town Hall. August 21, 2019 <p>Each member of the Select Board spoke in support of Scenario #2 – a collaborative approach with all stakeholders participating. Click Here for minutes.</p>
September 23, 2019 Dan Philbrick Presentation to the Select Board	From those meeting minutes “Chair Winslow explained the charge (of the RTCC) in detail. He pointed out that if the Board does what Mr. Philbrick is suggesting, they would be gutting the whole charge of the Committee. He stated that the only way he could see this happening is by going to the voters with a warrant asking for permission to make the swap if the Town Center Committee recommends it” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The planning and options for what is best for all of Rye, not just Town Hall has not happened. - 2020 Article 7 passed, but it was presented as “no cost to the town” and section 13 of the December Swap/exchange agreement starts off with “In Renovating” This comes after the August 2019 meeting with the Library Board of Trustees and a consultant. See above point.

<p>The Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) had stated publicly that the Library did not have an interest in the Parsonage. “Shortly thereafter (March 12th vote) the Library trustees expressed concerns over the final lot lines.”</p>	<p>More clearly, the LBOT said it did not make sense for them to have a separate stand-alone building needing renovation. LBOT was also asking about where the lot lines would be for the property that would no longer be held for future Library expansions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select Board has stated that they communicated what their understanding was with 500 Washington LLC at one of the March Listening sessions as to where the property lines would be. - Prior to the March 12th vote and twice afterwards the LBOT requested a written response on the property boundaries. While the Select Board has stated they communicated this verbally, the Select Board chose not to respond to the three formal Library requests.
<p>At the end of May, the Select Board signed a maintenance agreement that they felt adequately protected the Library Interests”</p>	<p>This was over the unanimous objection of LBOT; Maintenance agreement gave walkway lighting to 500 Washington LLC, control of when library lights would be on to be determined. See LBOT May22 letter for details.</p>
<p>In late July, 500 Washington Rd LLC Proposed.....</p>	<p>This proposal (click here) involved the Library buying property the town currently owns. What it was doing was helping buy the TD Bank for the Town and protecting the libraries ability to expand and achieving the “purpose of the swap: acquisition by the town of TD Bank.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select Board September newsletter said that Library’s deal was substantially different from Article 7 and required a Town Meeting vote - LBOT does not need a Town Meeting to expend money that was bequeathed to the LBOT - The demolition of the Parsonage and elimination of \$850,000 expenditure by private party and other aspects that are in the November 2020 agreement are what is substantially different from the December 2019 swap/exchange agreement
<p>Agreement fell apart in late August due to irreconcilable differences?</p>	<p>What these differences were, has never been made public or communicated to the LBOT.</p>
<p>November 10, 2020 Planning Board</p>	<p>The Planning Board chose to only view the specific questions requiring approval. While the entire lot is impacted by Lot Line changes, the Planning Board would only hear of and discuss the specific questions and not the impact to the full lot that was being impacted. First public access to November 25 deadline for Parsonage demo was provided prior to this meeting.</p>
<p>The Judge ruled in favor of the Town on request to stop Parsonage demolition</p>	<p>The ruling was based on the fact that a Town is not subject to land use ordinances and is not required to have approval from those boards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section 13 of the December 2019 swap/exchange agreement states that “In Renovating the Rye Property, 500 shall”. “Amendment says 500 is responsible for the cost of razing the Parsonage, but says the Town is who is doing it, thereby avoiding requirements that what happened at the Parsonage Property would go before Town boards and committees.
<p>Much of the above time line and plan was posted in advance on the Town website and Facebook page</p>	<p>The information was sent to the Herald and posted online by the Herald on October 28th. Nothing appeared on the Town Website or Facebook page until November 2nd. The October 31st print addition contained the Legal Notice.</p>

as well as in the Portsmouth Herald on October 31 st .	- Note Legal Notices on the town website can only be found by searching for them. There is no way to navigate through menus to them. The Select Board was informed of that public challenge this past Spring.
The Select Board has never wavered from the commitment to effectuate the will of the voters that passed Articles 7, 8, and 9	While the LBOT did not publicly oppose Article 7 before the election. Once the LBOT understood where the Select Board had agreed the lot lines would be the LBOT would have been opposed to Article 7. Swap/Exchange was positioned as “a no cost swap”. The LBOT and Select Board have expended large blocks of time and legal fees. This cost should be made know to voters. The Select Board found funding to pay for the demolition of the Parsonage or no funds have exchanged hands. The November 2020 swap/exchange differs in significant ways to what the voters approved based on the December 2019 swap/exchange agreement, but the current plan is not going to the voters. The August 2020 agreement was requiring a Town Meeting, but the November 2020 is going forward with no Town meeting.
This proposal in no way either inhibits or infringes on that plan (potential Library expansion)	Select Board remains significantly underinformed about library expansion.
Further, the library has control of land in the back and to the north where any future expansion could take place.	Drop off behind library is too steep and contains leach field for library.

Point of interest:

In the winter of 2019, Dan Philbrick was very upset with the way the Town was proceeding with the permitting of his Crown Colony Cottages on Ocean Blvd. Mr. Philbrick was asking for a public discussion of his concerns, while the Select Board was only offering a non-public discussion. It appears Mr. Philbrick received the occupancy permits, but the subject was not discussed at public meetings.