

Final Report of the
Emergency Services Facilities
Committee
August 27th, 2007

Introduction:

The Emergency Services Facilities Committee of the Town of Durham was established at the Board of Selectmen's meeting on March 12, 2007.

The charge of the committee was as follows:

The committee is to consider the short and long term needs of the Fire Company, the Ambulance Corps., the Resident State Trooper, the Emergency Management Dept., and Town government storage, and to assess the utility of the town-owned land, and propose a plan to make use of the property and buildings to meet those needs.

The committee was comprised of the following members:

Steve Spooner, Public Representative -- Chair
Tom Palmieri, Public Representative -- Vice Chair
Dave Foley, Planning and Zoning -- Secretary
Harry Hall, Durham Volunteer Fire Co. (DVFC), Fire Chief
Frank Behrens, Durham Fire Company Trustee
Scott Wright, Durham Volunteer Ambulance Corp. (DVAC), Chief
Steve Levy, Emergency Management (EM) Director
Richard Parmelee, Public Representative
Frank DeFelice, Public Safety
Duncan Milne, Historic District Chair

It should be noted that this committee was made up of a diverse group of stakeholders; including the Fire Chief, DVAC Chief, EM Director, and Taxpayers. Throughout all of the discussions and meetings of this committee, many scenarios were discussed and debated. All members worked in a bipartisan fashion to develop these recommendations. The majority of the committee members agreed to the following recommendations and believe that this plan will best serve the people of the Town of Durham, the Emergency Services, and the volunteers for the next twenty years based on current zoning laws, land use, and population trends. In the event of significant changes in Town operating practices, additional facilities and equipment, above and beyond this committee's recommendations, may be required.

The committee began by defining the parameters of the charge. The emergency and public safety services of the town of Durham were defined to be the Emergency Management Department, the Durham Volunteer Fire Company, the Durham Volunteer Ambulance Corps, the Fire Marshal and the Resident State Trooper. Long term was determined to be 20 years. Per the State of Connecticut Population Projections Report, dated May 2007, as supplied by Midstate Regional Planning, the estimated population of Durham in 2027 will be 9050.

The committee then began compiling each agency's requirement for an updated facility with capacity to accommodate the agency's needs for the next 20 years. Upon

reviewing these requirements, commonalities between some of the services were identified. For example, both DVAC and DVFC require training classrooms, locker areas, vehicle storage and maintenance, decontamination facilities, communication rooms and emergency power. After discussion the committee felt that rather than duplicate these common elements it would be best to try to unify these services to allow dual use of the elements. This led to the exploration of housing the Durham Volunteer Ambulance Corps and the Durham Volunteer Fire Company in a single facility, most likely an expanded firehouse. The members of both services were asked if this was an acceptable outcome and a majority of both groups concurred.

The Fire Marshal and Resident State Trooper are both police functions with common requirements for secure storage, restricted access and public interaction with an element of privacy. Both agencies require office facilities with moderate storage requirements and a small fingerprinting work area for the resident trooper. Separate entrances and office areas would be ideal. The Fire Marshal, in particular, should be in close proximity to the Firehouse.

The Emergency Management Department is a developing agency with an overall coordination function requiring office facilities, record storage, equipment storage, and facilities for regular planning meetings with the emergency service representatives. As part of this function an Emergency Operations Center is required in the event of an emergency. During activation, this center acts as the central coordination and back-up dispatch location for all emergency services. When in operation, it should have state of the art communications equipment and computer capabilities along with emergency power. It does not need to be at the same location as the office and regular meeting facilities since it should be operationally independent when open. Consequently it should have a small food preparation area, sanitary facilities and a small bunk area. Secure storage of EOC dedicated equipment should also be provided during out of operation times. A public information or media area external to the actual EOC is required.

The houses at 37 and 51 Main St., adjacent to the Firehouse, are important factors in the development of an Emergency Services Complex. Both buildings are town-owned and in need of renovation, use, and maintenance. Duncan Milne acting as committee member, architect, and Chairman of the Historic District Commission surveyed both houses and deemed them architecturally and economically reasonable for renovation. From a historical perspective, both buildings are important elements in the fabric of the overall Town Historic District. Their renovation and use is an important need and will complement the integrity of the Historic District. The scale and detail of the two buildings is unique, appropriate, and valuable.

Current Emergency Facilities:

Fire:

Fire services for the Town of Durham consists of a fifty to sixty person Volunteer Fire Company (DVFC). The Fire Dept. facility consists of a three bay, masonry structure of approximately 9240 square feet. This building was built in 1978, and is in good condition.

Ambulance:

Ambulance services for the Town of Durham consists of a twenty-five person Volunteer Ambulance Corp. (DVAC). The DVAC facility consists of a two bay, masonry structure of approximately 1600 square foot. This building was built in 1933, and is in fair to poor structural condition.

Emergency Management and Emergency Operations Center (EOC):

The Emergency Management Dept. for the Town of Durham currently has no office space. Steve Levy, Emergency Management Director, currently runs the Dept. from his home office.

The current EOC is located in the Durham Fair owned Safety Building on the Fair Grounds. This facility is approximately 1500 square feet. The building was built in 2005, and is in excellent condition.

Police:

Police service for the Town of Durham consists of one Resident State Trooper. This trooper is part of Westbrook Troop F. The trooper's office is located in the Durham Fair House, adjacent to Town Hall. The trooper uses approximately 200 square feet on the 1st floor as office space and storage.

Fire Marshal:

The Fire Marshal's office is currently located in the Town Hall. It consists of a desk in the Building and Health Dept. Much of the Fire Marshals work is completed at the Fire House or at the Fire Marshals home office.

Assessment of Current Emergency Services Facilities

The committee utilized site visits as well as reports from key stakeholders within each agency to determine the current status of each facility. The committee found that while all facilities are currently functional, they are inadequate for their current use. Below is our assessment of each facility and why it is inadequate for its use.

Durham Volunteer Fire Company

Short and Long Term deficiencies of the current Fire House.

- Inadequate storage space inside the fire house
- Inadequate office space
- No conference room
- No air conditioning in training/office areas
- Inadequate locker room/shower area
- No bunk area
- Lack of a computer network/intranet
- Lack of current AV/media equipment
- No sprinkler system
- Outdated fire alarm system
- No vehicle exhaust removal system
- No hose washing or drying tower
- No flammable storage area
- No SCBA compressor room or bottle storage area
- No turn out gear washing and drying facilities
- No personnel de-contamination area
- No equipment de-contamination area
- Inadequate parking for 1st responders
- No live burn training facility

Durham Volunteer Ambulance Corp.

Short and Long Term deficiencies of the current Ambulance Corp. Building.

- Inadequate parking (parking for 2 – 3 vehicles only)
- Inadequate training facility
- Lack of current AV/media equipment
- Lack of a computer network/intranet
- Inadequate kitchenette
- No storage for servers, radio/telecomm
- No personnel de-contamination area
- No equipment de-contamination area
- Lack of office space
- Inadequate supply storage – unable to properly store equipment (not temperature controlled)

- No vehicle exhaust removal system
- No air conditioning in the office or training room
- No Flammable liquid storage
- No safe oxygen storage
- Inadequate bathroom/shower areas (not ADA compliant)
- No locker room
- No uniform storage and washing and drying facilities
- Inadequate bunk area
- Inadequate secure storage

NOTE: it should be noted that the 1999, "Public Safety Plan To The Year 2015", as published by The Public Safety Committee, also states that the current Ambulance Corp. building is, "not of adequate size to serve present activities."

Emergency Management Dept.

Short and Long Term deficiencies with current facility:

- No office space anywhere
- Inadequate storage for cots, pillows, blankets, and other bulky supplies
- No press/Public Information Officer area

Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

Short and Long Term deficiencies with current facility:

- Located on the Durham Fair Grounds
 - in the event of a possible emergency event during the Durham Fair, the town would not be able to use the EOC
- Facility is too small
- No kitchenette
- No office space for EMD, EOC Director, EM Deputy Directors
- No storage for tables, work positions, general supplies
- Not a town owned facility

Resident Trooper

Short and Long Term deficiencies with current facility:

- Lack of privacy
- No room for possible 2nd trooper
- No vehicle/equipment storage (SMART machine, cruiser, etc.)
- No meeting room, presentation room
- No place for fingerprinting
- Not a town owned property; the town pays for its use

Fire Marshal

Short and Long Term deficiencies with current facility:

- Currently works from the Town Hall, Fire House, and home office
- Remote from sources of data
- No secure storage for evidence
- No privacy for interviews and investigations

Findings

Based on the current state of the above facilities, the committee has determined that the above facilities are inadequate for the current and future needs of the Emergency Services for the Town of Durham. The current facilities restrict the activities of the services and inhibit efficient operation of each service. These facilities do not present an attractive setting for recruiting and may be affecting the staffing of the services. Coordination between agencies is difficult due to the lack of a common location and stable office space for planning and coordination. Independent home offices are not appropriate to store town emergency plans, documents, or other agency documents that must be maintained and transferred when a change in staff occurs. Continuity in emergency planning promotes more effective preparedness and response, and reduces the opportunity for duplication of effort and lapses in service.

Committee Recommendations

It is the recommendation of this committee that the Board of Selectmen establish an Emergency Services Complex on the property of 37, 41, and 51 Main St, and utilize the current DVAC facility for town storage, or any use as determined by the Board of Selectmen.

The committee also recommends that the town move to merge the 37, 41, and 51 Main St. properties onto a single parcel as soon as practical.

Additionally, the committee recommends considering a secondary access to the Emergency Services Complex, and adding a separate, free standing live burn training facility at a location deemed appropriate.

Attached is a rendering of the existing and proposed site plan as recommended. This rendering was provided by Duncan Milne, Architect, committee member, and Chair of the Town Historic District commission.

The committee recommends that the following properties be renovated and expanded as listed below:

37 Main St. (Ackerman House) Office of the Fire Marshal and Resident State Trooper

Recommendation:

Renovate and add an equipment storage bay/garage.

Justification:

The Fire Marshal and Resident State Trooper require similar levels of security and public access. This shared facility will serve their purpose as follows:

Fire Marshal

Provides adequate space for the Fire Marshal.

- Office
- Secure storage area
- Shared conference/meeting room

Close to source of data required for fire investigations (i.e. State Police, Fire Dept.)

Private driveway and adequate parking space provides public access to building without interfering with other Emergency Services.

Should space requirements change, the second floor can be made ADA compliant and provide adequate space for expansion.

Resident State Trooper

Provides a highly visible, town-owned facility for State Trooper within the Durham Emergency Services complex.

Close proximity to other Emergency Services.

Provides adequate space for current and future needs

- Two offices
- Meeting room
- Finger printing area
- Secure storage

Provides adequate and private parking for State Trooper and visitors.

Provides privacy for State Trooper to deal with sensitive matters/issues that require face-to-face meetings.

Constructing a garage/equipment storage bay will protect the State Police cruiser during inclement weather and provide storage for other police equipment (SMART machine).

Should space requirements change, the second floor can be made ADA compliant and provide adequate space for expansion.

41 Main St. (Fire House)

Durham Volunteer Fire Company and Durham Volunteer Ambulance Corp.

Recommendation:

Expand the facility by approximately 5000 square feet to the east (back). In addition, expand the apparatus bays by 4000 square feet to the north (see rendering). Re-locate the Durham Volunteer Ambulance Corp. and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to the expanded Fire House.

Justification:

Expansion of the current Durham Firehouse will provide adequate space for the consolidation of the Durham Volunteer Fire Company, Durham Volunteer Ambulance Corps, and the EOC (Emergency Operations Center).

By combining the Fire Dept. Ambulance Corp., and the EOC into the firehouse building, the consolidation of common requirements will result in a total space savings of approximately 6000 square feet versus having separate facilities.

- Total additional square footage required for separate facilities is 15,000
- Total additional square footage required for a shared facility is 9,000

Additionally, the town will recognize significant savings in equipment requirements. Duplicate equipment such as generators, air conditioning, media equipment, exhaust removal equipment, etc. will only need to be purchased once.

Some common facility requirements include:

- 75 person training room / EOC facility
- Vehicle/equipment bays
- Common/ready room
- De-contamination area for personnel
- De-contamination area for equipment
- Vehicle maintenance bay area
- Locker rooms/shower area
- Conference/meeting room
- Kitchen
- Sleeping area
- Communications / radio room (one common dispatch room)
- Building infrastructure requirements such as generator, utilities, air conditioning, parking, etc.
- Oxygen storage
- AV/Media equipment
- Computer network/intranet
- Exhaust removal equipment
- Office equipment

This building will be equipped to provide adequate facilities for a full EOC activation.

- The training facility will be used in its EOC configuration
- Provides state of the art communications and equipment
- Provides restricted access
- Available at all times, including the Durham Fair
- Conveniently located within the Emergency Services Complex
- Meets current EOC recommended standards
- Designed with flexibility to meet future EOC needs and standards

**51 Main St.
Emergency Management Department**

Recommendation:

Renovate

Justification:

Provides dedicated office and support space for Emergency Management Dept. personnel.

Provides secure storage for Emergency Management documents, and plans within the Emergency Services Complex.

Provides secure storage area for cots, blankets and other bulky shelter supplies.

Provides a conference room for staff meetings and press conferences.

Note: this area will be separate from the EOC.

Close proximity to the EOC, which will exist next door within the firehouse.

WHEN Federal mandates change, the second floor can be made ADA compliant and provide adequate space for expansion.

**Current Ambulance Corp. Building
Town Storage**

The committee believes that this building is well situated and sized for town storage, or any use as determined by the Board of Selectmen. The building has upper and lower level access for bulk storage. This facility does not have adequate parking for it to be used for any Emergency Service.

Additional Considerations

Support our Volunteers

It is the belief of this committee, that the Town of Durham is fortunate to have Volunteer organizations to meet its Emergency needs. We believe that this is a *great* financial asset to our community; therefore, we believe that the community and town should leverage this volunteer effort as much as possible. We believe that by providing facilities that meet current standards, and are comfortable, the overall morale and effectiveness of the volunteers will improve. This will result in long-term gains in training, membership recruitment, retention, and ultimately better preparedness and response.

Membership Support

At a regular Volunteer Fire Company meeting, Harry Hall, Fire Chief, discussed the concept of merging facilities with the Volunteer Ambulance Corp. The membership agreed and formally voted that it would be in the best interest of the Fire Company and the Town that the physical location of these agencies be merged. Scott Wright, DVAC Chief, also reported to the committee that the DVAC membership believes that a shared facility would adequately meet their needs.

Historic Value

By restoring 37 and 51 Main St, the town will be preserving two town owned homes located in the Historic District on Main St. Improving these two properties will vitalize two significant structures and enhance our Historic District, while also serving an important role in the Emergency Services of our town. The town will be able to expand its Emergency Services facilities in the Historic District while preserving and reinforcing the fabric of the Historic District.

Volunteer Recruitment

Harry Hall, Fire Chief, and Scott Wright, DVAC Chief, talk about the difficulty in recruiting and maintaining adequate staff for the Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Corp. The committee believes that a combined DVAC and DVFC facility will better support cross agency membership and improve morale.

Estimate of Probable Construction Costs

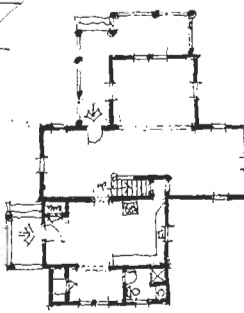
The committee focused on designing an Emergency Services Complex that would maintain the historic footprint of Main St., as well as properly serve the short and long-term needs of each Emergency Service and the taxpayers.

We estimate the cost of these recommendations to be:

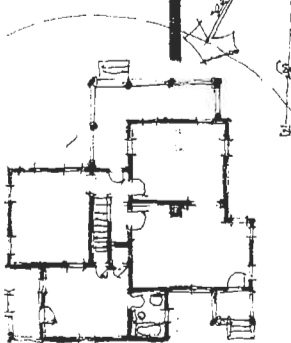
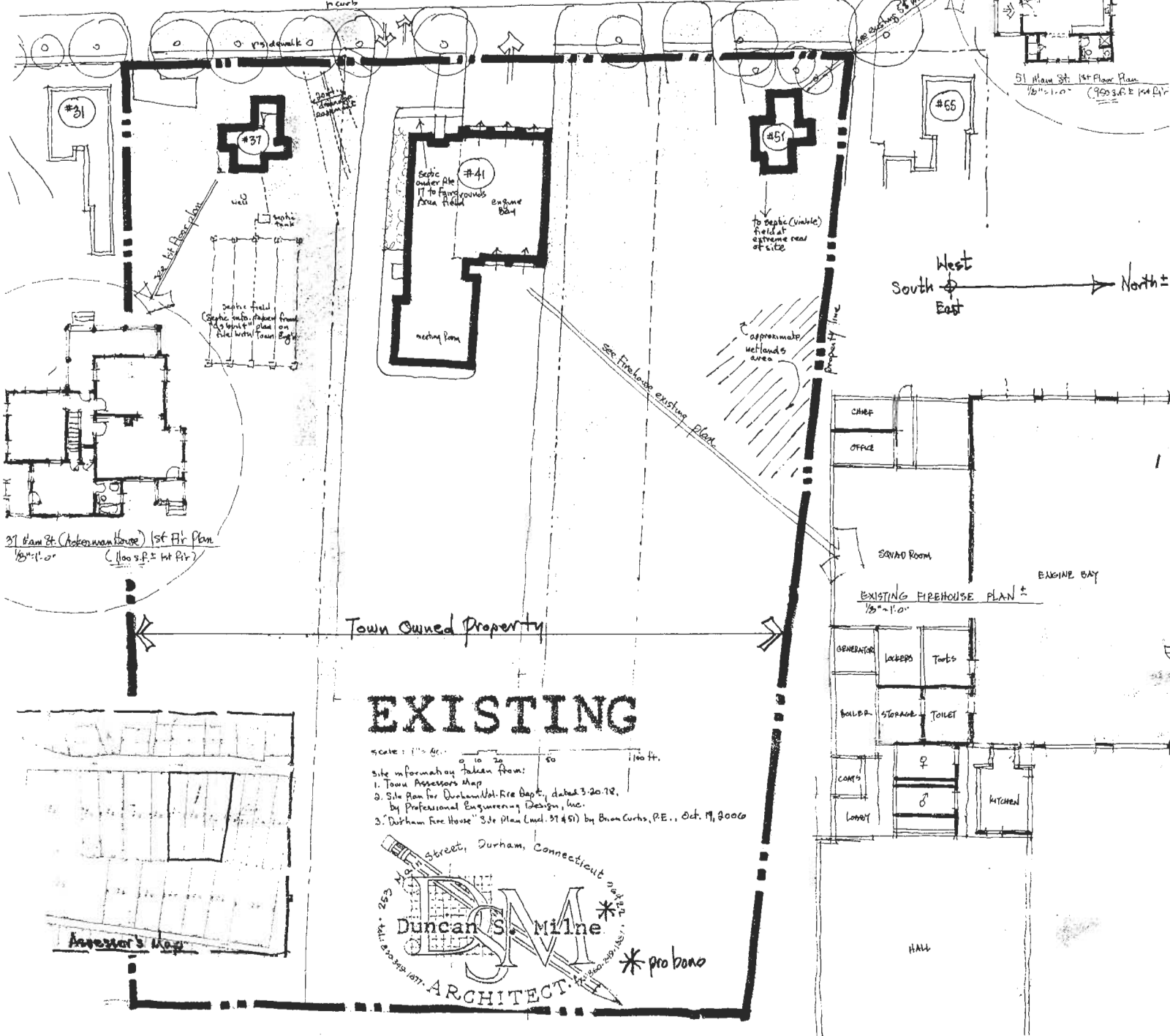
Renovate and add a garage to 37 Main St.	\$350,000
Renovate and add 9000 sq. ft. to 41 Main St.	\$2,650,000
Renovate 51 Main St.	\$250,000
Add a live burn training facility (location TBD)	\$30,000
Total ESTIMATE:	\$3,280,000

The above dollar estimates are based on square footage of additions and renovations to these facilities. This committee believes that if the Board of Selectmen accepts these recommendations, it will be the work of a Building Committee to determine the exact layout, furnishings, and cost of the above.

ROUTE 17 (MAIN STREET) → to Town Green



51 Main St 1st Floor Plan
1/8" = 1'-0" (900 S.F. ± net A/R)



31 Main St (Akersman House) 1st Flr Plan
1/8" = 1'-0" (1100 S.F. ± net A/R)

Town Owned Property

EXISTING

scale: 1" = 40'

Site information taken from:

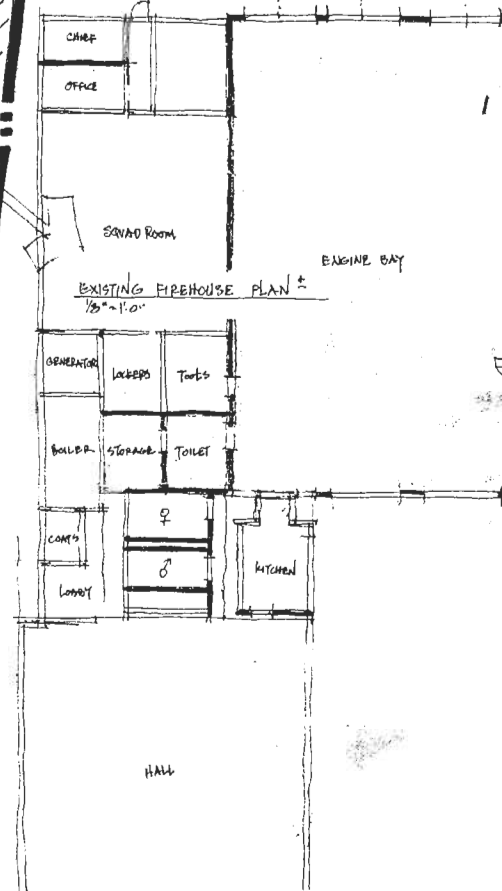
1. Town Assessors Map
2. Site Plan for Durham Net-Fire Dept., dated 3-20-78, by Professional Engineering Design, Inc.
3. Durham Fire House Site Plan (Lnd. 51 & 52) by Brian Curtis, P.E., Oct. 17, 2000

253 Main Street, Durham, Connecticut 06820

Duncan S. Milne

ARCHITECT

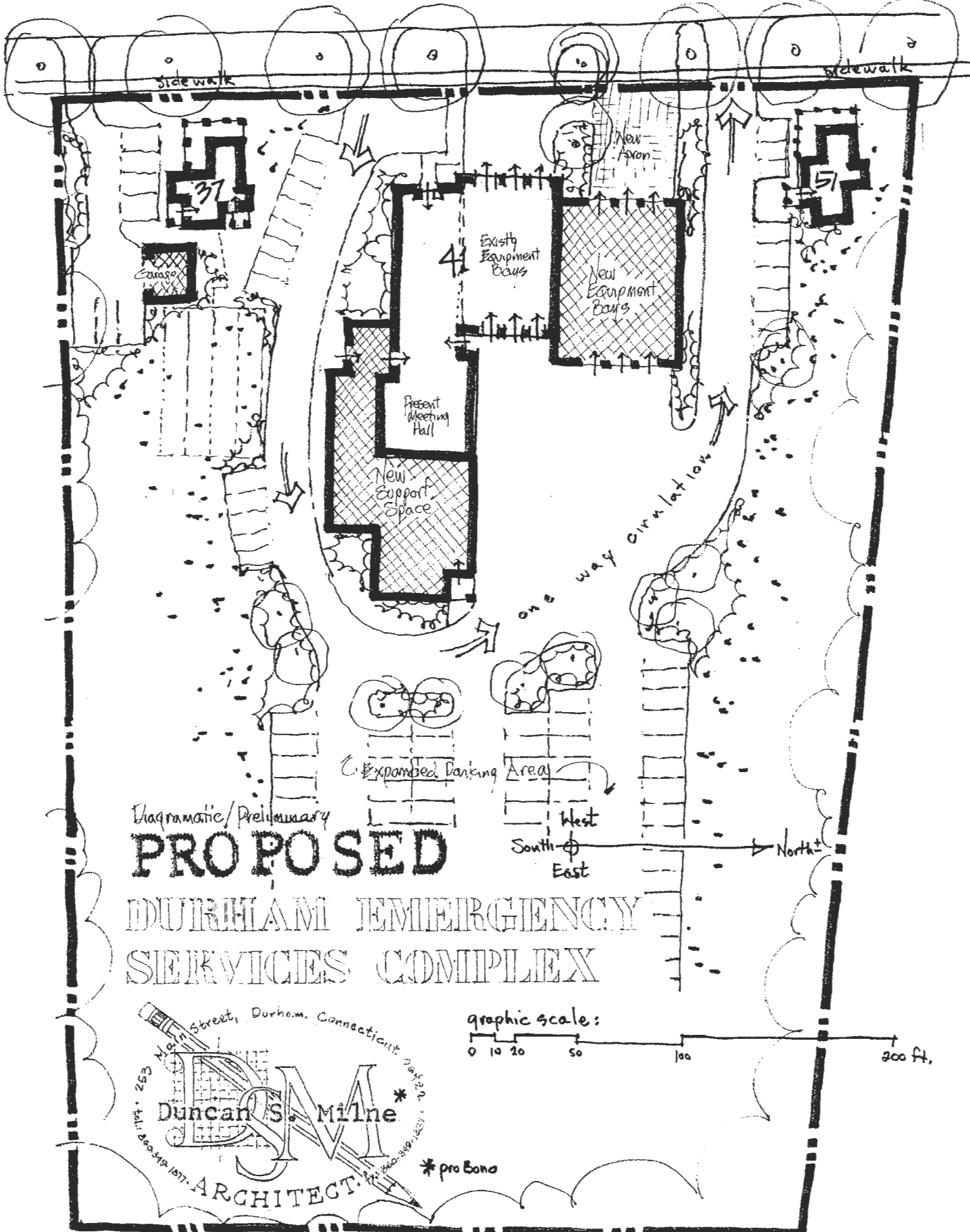
* pro bono



EXISTING FIREHOUSE PLAN ±
1/8" = 1'-0"

HALL

MAIN STREET → to Town Green



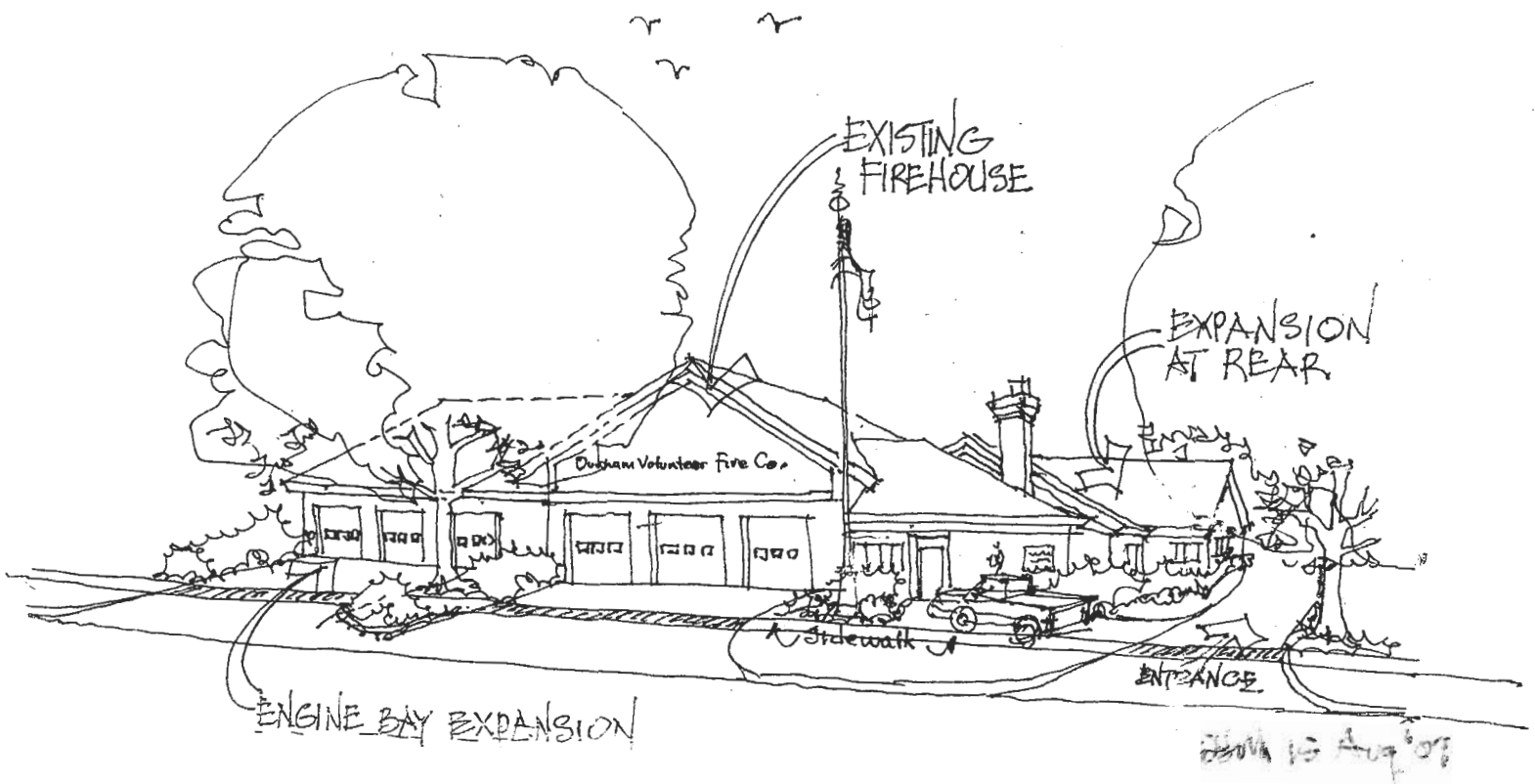
Diagrammatic/Preliminary
PROPOSED

DURHAM EMERGENCY SERVICES COMPLEX



111 Main Street, Durham, Connecticut 06420
 525 241-1111
 525 241-1111
Duncan S. Milne
 ARCHITECT.
 * pro Bono

date: 15 August, 2007



PERSPECTIVE FROM MAIN STREET