



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Seeking Consultation Services for the Evaluation of the**  
**ROGERS SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The Town of Fairhaven seeks proposals from Consulting Firms who can provide leadership, direction, expert advice, detailed developmental/feasibility study for the disposition to a possible developer and/or for potential town re-use of the Rogers Elementary School including all financial aspects. Said consultant(s) shall be knowledgeable with grants, tax credits, historical preservation and real estate development. A copy of the RFP is available from the Planning Department at 508-979-4082, Ext. 9 or [broth@fairhaven-ma.gov](mailto:broth@fairhaven-ma.gov). The Town must receive your proposal at the Town Administrator's Office no later than 12:00 noon on Friday, July 15, 2016. Proposers must submit three (3) copies of their proposal and one digital copy. The Town reserves the right to reject any proposal deemed not to be in its best interest and waive minor technicalities. The contract period shall be from about August 15, 2016 until January 16, 2017. The budget for this project is \$25,000. Postmarks, faxes, and email proposals will not be considered.

---

## **Purpose**

The Town of Fairhaven (the Town) has voted to hire a consultant to help the Town resolve the future of the Rogers School property. The Rogers Elementary School is located in the historic center of downtown Fairhaven. It is situated in a neighborhood of single family homes. The 1885 section of the school is located on Center Street and the 1957 one-story addition is located on the south side of the 1885 section. The School was shut down in 2013 and was turned over to the Town in 2013. The former Rogers Elementary School that sits on a 71,751 SF site improved with approximately 46,721 SF of space in the former educational facility. The property is located at 100 Pleasant Street.

We encourage the consultant to look creatively at the entire property and to consider a wide range of options including, but not limited to, potential municipal use, housing, mixed use, redeveloping part or all of the current buildings as well as demolishing part or all of the buildings, and to propose only options with realistic possibilities for implementation that would also benefit the Town economically.

The Fairhaven Board of Selectmen is seeking a consultant who can provide leadership, direction and expert advice on the disposition, potential redevelopment, and/or reuse of the Rogers School property. We are seeking a professional planning consultant to provide the town with realistic recommendations on appropriate and financially feasible options for repurposing the buildings and/or site of the Rogers School property and to help us determine what town needs might be met by this redevelopment. The consultant is needed to assist the Town in formulating a real estate development strategy for the possible options. In short, the Town needs a vision, a plan to get there, and sufficient hard data to know, whatever this turns out to be, that it is economically feasible for the town and for this property.

## **The Town**

Fairhaven is located on Buzzards Bay in the southeastern corner of Bristol County, with 15,873 according to the 2010 US Census. Fairhaven's picturesque 19<sup>th</sup> century Town center is clustered around the waterfront on the Acushnet River, and is known as Fairhaven Center. The Town is 56 miles south of Boston and 35 miles southeast of Providence, Rhode Island. The Town of Acushnet is to the north, Mattapoisett to the east, in Plymouth County, and the City of New Bedford, New Bedford Harbor and Acushnet River to the west border Fairhaven. Two parallel east-west highways serve Fairhaven. The first is Interstate Route I-195, a limited access highway that runs between Cape Cod and Providence, and has one exit in Fairhaven. The second is U.S. Route 6, an older major commercial route and traffic artery connecting Fairhaven with the communities to its east and west. In addition, State Route 240 provides a short north-south connection between Route 195 and Route 6.

## **The Rogers School Property**

The Rogers Elementary School is located in the historic center of downtown Fairhaven. It is situated in a neighborhood of single family homes. The property is zoned Single Family Residential (RA) District. The RA zone is primarily for single family residences; however, there are certain uses identified within the Zoning Bylaw Chapter 198 that are allowed As-of-Right and by Special Permit. The 1885 section of the school is located on Center Street, a few blocks east of the historic Town Hall, Millicent Library, and the Unitarian Memorial Church. The 1885 section of the Rogers School consists of three floors with the boiler room, boys' and girls' restrooms and several small rooms located in the basement. The first and second floors each have four classrooms and the third floor consists of a large assembly space as well as an

apartment that was once used by the school custodian. The third floor also has some storage space. The 1957 one-story addition located on the south side of the 1885 section includes a gymnasium, small kitchen area, office space, restrooms, and four classrooms. The former Rogers Elementary School that sits on a 71,751 SF site, Assessors Map 8, Lot 9, improved with approximately 46,721 SF of space in the former educational facility. The portion of Union Street between Chestnut and Pleasant Street(s) was discontinued in 1955 and turned over to the School Committee for “school purposes”. There is a sewer line that runs within the old right-of-way. Adjacent to the south of the discontinued Union Street is the playground parcel of approximately 79,328 SF, Assessors Map 8, Lot 68. The property is located at 100 Pleasant Street.

### **The Town’s Recent History with the Rogers School**

The property has been vacant for over three years. The Town created a study committee to review the options for the school. The committee assisted in the recommending the Development Concepts and the Design and Development Guidelines contained within the RFP. The priority of the Committee was to maintain the historical character of the historic building. The Town in January of 2015 solicited an RFP for the sale of the Rogers School. One proposal was received and the Selectmen rejected it. In August of 2015 a second RFP was solicited and no proposals were received.

It should be noted that a 2/3rds vote at a Town Meeting will be required for any future conveyance of the property, or for borrowing funds, or for taking from the town's Stabilization Fund if that were necessary to move a plan forward. Contributing to building community consensus for a vision about what to do with this property is an important component of the consultant's task.

### **The Scope of Work**

Article 7 at the Special Town Meeting held on May 7, 2016, was approved and reads as follows:

*“Move adoption and the sum of \$33,000 be transferred from Group Insurance to hire consultant(s) to assist in the Rogers Elementary school in providing detailed developmental/feasibility study for a possible developer and for potential town re-use of the building including all financial aspects. Said consultant(s) shall be knowledgeable with grants, tax credits, historical preservation, real estate development, and/or environmental assessments including any associated requirements or costs.”*

The budget for this project is \$25,000 for the services described in this Request for Proposals and \$8,000 to conduct an ASTM Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and ACM Survey. The environmental assessment will be a separate contract.

The scope of services that the Town is seeking is, in general, for a consultant to conduct sufficient fact finding and analysis to have a clear idea of what's feasible and what isn't; work on consensus building; and outline potential development plans.

This will involve the following:

- Research and analysis;
- Conducting community meetings seeking input and presenting findings and options;
- Preparing a preliminary report outlining potential options for the property and strategies for proceeding; and

- Presenting findings and final recommendations in a final report.

The Town is hiring a consultant to:

**Evaluate appropriate uses:**

Determine the town's interest and desire for certain types of potential uses or redevelopment, especially addressing town needs, and the scale, intensity and economic market for those uses (e.g. senior housing, affordable housing, office space, Town use, retail, community use, agricultural and recreational use, etc.). Such uses should be compatible with the character of the town.

**Research the economic feasibility of the Rogers property for the possible uses:**

Conduct a market analysis of what size and scale project might work at this site and in this town.

Determine if it's financially feasible to use all or parts of the existing buildings and analyze the potential economic impact of preserving historic components.

**Investigate specific financing options & implementation strategies:**

Determine what grants, tax credits or public funds might be available for municipalities (such as community development grants) and how they could be applied to this property. If sold or conveyed to private and/or non-profit ownership, what combination of financing or Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits could make redevelopment of the property viable.

**Planning Process:**

Hold three public meetings open to all to solicit input from town boards (e.g. Planning Board, Historic Commission, Board of Health), town departments (e.g. fire and public safety), and residents including:

- One early in the planning process seeking input;
- Another with a presentation of preliminary findings and initial ideas (in November of 2016);
- A final public presentation of the draft report (in December of 2016);
- and review of public comments received at a meeting with the Board of Selectmen with revisions to draft report as deemed appropriate.

These public meetings should not preclude additional meetings with town boards, town departments and residents as deemed necessary by the consultant. The Town will assist in guiding this process by providing a venue and framework for public understanding of and participation in this activity.

**Products:**

In addition to periodic progress reports, a Preliminary Report will be due from the consultant on November 15, 2016 outlining preliminary findings and initial ideas for the Town in planning for this property. A Final Report will be due no later than January 16, 2017 that presents the consultant's analysis of the situation, various options for the property, recommendations for funding strategies and implementation, and an outline of proposed next steps, and includes an executive summary for the Town. Any assumptions made in the recommendations or proposed options in the report should be clearly stated. Similarly, all calculations in the report should be

shown and the source of any values or variables should be noted. All products are to be submitted in hard copy (12 copies) and also to be provided in digital computer format.

**Project Duration and Schedule:**

The project shall start upon awarding of the contract and shall be completed no later than January 16, 2017. The consultant is to provide a work plan, including an anticipated meeting schedule.

**Budget:**

The cost of the project is not to exceed \$25,000 dollars.

**Proposal Submission:**

The Town must receive your proposal at the Town Administrator's Office no later than 12:00 noon, Friday, July 15, 2016. Proposers must submit three (3) copies of their proposal and one digital copy. The Town reserves the right to reject any proposal deemed not to be in its best interest and waive minor technicalities.

Proposals shall:

1. Describe a plan for executing the work and methods described in the above Scope of Services.
2. Provide information that is responsive to Consultant Selection Criteria below.
3. Provide a budget for the project that includes hourly rates of principals, estimated number of hours per principal per task and a statement that the project will in not exceed \$25,000.

Questions about this RFP may be directed, in writing, to William Roth, Director of Planning and Economic Development. Email: [broth@fairhaven-ma.gov](mailto:broth@fairhaven-ma.gov).

**Consultant Selection Criteria:**

1. The consultant should have prior experience and expertise working with municipalities on planning for the redevelopment of challenging properties, and experience with catalyzing redevelopment projects including projects with historic preservation components.
2. In selecting the consultant the following factors will be considered:
  - a. Balanced professional expertise and sufficient technological resources of the applicant and any named sub-contractors to perform the work required to complete the project within the specified time period
  - b. Demonstrated knowledge by the applicant and any named sub-contractors of the principles of economic development, project financing, zoning and permitting, historic preservation, land use, and rural planning issues
  - c. Knowledge of restoration and reuse planning and experience with vacant properties
  - d. Demonstrated ability by the applicant and any named sub-contractors to conduct a public process, including consensus building and conflict resolution
  - e. Number of years the firm has been in business
  - f. Years of professional experience of personnel assigned to the Project
  - g. Demonstrated experience by the applicant and any named sub-contractors in performing similar work in communities in New England (Provide a list of towns in New England for whom applicant provided similar services
  - h. Review of the applicant's supporting references

- i. Content, organization and presentation of the proposal that demonstrates capacity to do the scope of services included in this RFP
- j. Responsiveness of the applicant during interviews
- k. Knowledge of southeastern Massachusetts

In submitting your written proposals reference the above criteria when providing the requested information.

The top applicants will be expected to attend a meeting with the Fairhaven Board of Selectmen for an interview on August 8, 2016 at approximately 7:00 p.m. The Board of Selectmen reserves the right to reject any and all proposals it deems not to be in the best interests of the Town of Fairhaven. The award of this contract will be based on the qualifications of the proposals as demonstrated through review of the written proposals and interviews.