

Officials optimistic about vote

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Maynard -

Town officials are optimistic about the June 12 vote. Optimistic but not overconfident:

In the next week, they'll be knocking on doors, visiting the seniors, posting fliers and writing letters to the editor to ensure the town gets out to vote.

"I am pretty confident that voters will continue to support this," said Selectman Sally Bubier. "The key is to make sure people go to the polls."

On the ballot is a \$4.8 million Proposition 21/2 override question that will raise the average taxpayer's bill by \$95 a year.

Items included in the override — relocation of the police station, replacement of three boilers and renovation to the elementary school — are all considered critical. Officials say many town-owned buildings have reached the end and their useful life.

"Someone asked me: Can we afford to do this?" Bubier said. "Truthfully, we can't afford not to do this. If this doesn't pass, we will be paying for it one way or another."

A large percentage of the \$4.8 million request is intended for the renovation of the former library and its reconstruction as a police station.

Crammed into an eroding building on Summer Street, the police department is a health and safety threat to its employees and its visitors, said Police Chief Jim Corcoran.

There is no private interviewing space; prisoners are handcuffed to the radio console; the female locker room is a closet and the building is not handicap accessible.

For as long as Corcoran has worked in the Maynard Police Department, the town has been working to find police a new space.

But plans have been either too expensive inadequate to address the police department needs.

A police station proposed for the Roosevelt School was approved in the 1998 Town Meeting, but failed in a subsequent vote. In the early 1990s, plans to locate a police station on Bancroft Street failed because the building is in a neighborhood.

Town officials are unconcerned about previous votes. They think they've got the best solution this time around.

"This proposal just makes sense," Corcoran said. "The price tag is unbeatable. You'll never build a police station for less money."

Already town officials have addressed residents' concerns regarding plans for the police station. After a Town Meeting comment about the lack of an elevator in the proposed police station, town officials went back to the architect to have an elevator drawn into the plans.

"We have been listening to residents all along, which is one reason we have little opposition," said Selectman Bob Nadeau, who serves as liaison to the Public Safety Building Committee. "So many people have come up to me and said that it is about time we address this. Everyone is realizing that

you can't have people operating out of these environments."

According to the Council on Aging van dispatcher and resident Dave Hull, there doesn't seem to be much dissent for the override question among seniors.

"Everyone knows that the police station should have been replaced a long time ago," Hull said. "I haven't heard much opposition. No one is happy about paying more taxes, but we know we need [to support this.]"

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