

Town of Middleburg

County of Loudoun

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Town of Middleburg Announces Proposal to Acquire Land as a Part of Its Future New Town Hall Project

MIDDLEBURG, Va., August 14, 2020 – The Town of Middleburg is excited to announce it has entered into a Letter of Intent (“LOI”) with Salamander Middleburg MUV, LLC to acquire 0.597 acres of land, located immediately behind the existing Town Office, as a part of its plan for the future construction of a new Town Hall building on the existing Town Office site. Under the terms of the LOI approved by the Town Council, Salamander will give the Town the property for a total price of \$1. The property would be used for the construction of public parking, sidewalks and landscaping, with the new Town Hall being constructed on property already owned by the Town.

“Under the terms of Salamander’s rezoning proffers from 2007, Salamander was required to provide the Town with property for the construction of a new Town Hall building; however, the identified property was further to the north. With the cooperation of Salamander, we will be able to relocate the proffered site so it will be contiguous with our existing property, allowing the Town to continue to utilize its current location, reduce the overall cost of the project in the long term, and continue to serve residents in the most effective way possible,” said Mayor Bridge Littleton.

In 2017, the Town Council identified the construction of a new Town Hall as one of its strategic priorities. This was the result of a number of factors, including that the current Town Office, built in 1964, is too small to effectively provide services to the community and to house the Town staff; the Town is leasing separate office space for the Police Department, which is disconnected from the rest of the Town operations; and the existing Town Office building has undergone three mold remediation events, creating health concerns for those spending extended time in the space.

To this end, the Town contracted with PMA Architects to conduct a space needs study to identify how much space is required to meet the Town’s existing operational and staffing needs, to plan for future needs to best serve the public, and to provide usable public gathering spaces. The

Town then explored at least 8 possible locations to ensure it pursued the project in the most viable, cost effective manner before identifying the existing location as its preferred site.

In addition to meeting the Council's strategic initiative of the construction of a new Town Hall, the project would address needs identified by the community and included in Middleburg's 2019 Comprehensive Plan, such as the need for more public parking, the need for a Village Green space, and the need for more public meeting space for use by all members of the community. In particular, the proposed Village Green would be made available for use by the Town for various community events and activities.

The Town Council recognizes that the timing is not right to advance a construction project due to the current COVID-19 crisis; however, the Council also recognizes that once the pandemic has passed, the Town may have a tremendous opportunity to save money both in the form of interest rate savings and in lower construction costs that may not be experienced ever again.

"We want to make sure we position ourselves to take full advantage of any and all possible cost savings when the time is right," said Councilmember Peter Leonard-Morgan, the Council's community liaison for the Town Hall project. "Doing low-cost concept planning work at this time is prudent from a long-term perspective. To that end, the Town has been working to complete the site acquisition phase of the project so we will be prepared for the future. I want to assure the community that the Council will not take any action to advance the construction project until we are confident of our revenue projections and that the timing is right. We will also plan community outreach efforts to make sure the public is informed and engaged in the design process before moving forward with any construction plans."

The next phase of the project includes finalizing the land acquisition and formally issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for architectural and engineering. At this time, all funds are coming from the Town's Fund Balance, which has a current balance in excess of the Town's fiscal policy guidelines. Future financings will be pursued at the appropriate time to take advantage of low interest rates.

More information can be found on the Town's website at:

<https://www.middleburgva.gov/TownHall>

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About the Town of Middleburg

Located approximately 50 minutes west of Washington, D.C. in Virginia horse country, the Town of Middleburg has approximately 800 residents. Established in 1787 by Revolutionary War Lieutenant Colonel and Virginia statesman, Levin Powell, the Town was previously called "Chinn's Crossroads." Powell chose the name Middleburg because of the town's location midway between Alexandria and Winchester on the Ashby Gap trading route (now Route 50). Middleburg remains a charming town frequented by visitors who flock to its luxury resort and historic inns, walkable tree-lined streets, signature shops, wineries, cidery/distillery and chef-driven restaurants. Middleburg was recognized in 2008 for its historic preservation efforts by being designated a Preserve America Community. For more information, visit www.MiddleburgVa.gov.