Town Hall Study and Barrier Removal Committee
Minutes of the Meeting of April 28, 2009, 6:00 PM

Members attending: Donna Neylon, Peter O'Connell, Barbara Clancy, Donald Faugno, John David Holdcraft, Clarence Snyder, and John Wild. Absent: Jennifer McMillan, George Dellomo, and Sheila Frangiamore

Agenda and Actions:

1. **Minutes of the April 15 meeting** were distributed, but approval was delayed until the next meeting to give members time to review them.

2. **Discussion of Expectations for Clark and Green:** Steve McAlister and Stephan Clark were introduced to the committee members. Using the "Expectations" document previously prepared by the committee, the architects and the committee reviewed committee objectives. Mr. McAlister suggested that we make some assumptions as we address these objectives: (a) that we assume we will use and renovate the current building, (b) that we will try to house the police department, and (c) that we develop an inventory or "program" for the use of the building. We would then test those assumptions using data from the building itself, by exploring whether there are off-site options to satisfy a need instead of meeting it in the Town Hall (document storage, for example), or whether an addition might be required on the building to meet needs and by comparing projected costs of renovating the current building against a "hard-cost baseline estimate" of constructing a new building.

   Subjects reviewed included:

   - **Insulating the roof, windows, and walls:** Stephan Clark clarified the difficulty of insulating the walls in a brick structure that had no cavity in the masonry. If insulation and a vapor barrier is installed on the inside of the brick, and if wind-blown moisture is driven into the brick and freezes, it does so where brick meets the moisture barrier. The freezing and thawing process occurs in the brick masonry stressing the brick and mortar, causing deterioration, which then requires more frequent maintenance of the masonry. Therefore, it may be better to find a solution to insulate the roof and change the windows/install storm windows, etc. to cut down on heat loss, while simultaneously installing an inexpensive heating system like geothermal. Donna Neylon will forward to Clark and Green earlier estimates for replacing the windows.
   - **Sprinkler system:** There was some question about whether a sprinkler system would be required for all floors or only for the first two floors, which will be clarified at our next meeting.
   - **Septic System:** Although it is permissible to locate a new septic system that would serve Police, Fire, EMS and the town hall under a parking lot, if the town has to acquire land to gain access to Prouty Street, it would be better to locate the septic system there.
   - **Parking and egress:** The committee reported the offer of Rudy and Sarah Heller to donate the land to the Town that lies between the Tip Top property and the Town Hall, as long as they retain the easement rights to use the driveway. We

discussed the need for additional parking for expanded Town Hall events and for safe egress for the fire trucks.

- **Police needs:** Donna loaned a copy of the Lieb study to Clark and Green, who will review state requirements and professional recommendations for such a facility.
- **Library and records storage:** Mr. McAlister and Mr. Green asked for copies of plans for the expansion of the library, which Barbara Clancy, a library trustee, agreed to give to Donna who will forward to them.
- **Recommended points of consultation with the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the AAB:** Donna Neylon will alert Paul Holtz of MHC that we are working on our preliminary plans and will research our local ADA advocacy and review group.

3. We discussed the timeline for the town to qualify for CDBG grant funding for the elevator and other handicapped access expenses and the potential for other segments of the building renovation (geothermal heating & cooling) to be paid for through grants. Mr. McAlister said while the current study could estimate the cost and payback for a geothermal system, a separate feasibility study would be required to determine actual costs of engineering, drilling, number of wells to serve demands of public buildings in the cluster, etc. . The ballpark estimate would be $425,000 - $500,000 for a geothermal system, admittedly a high up-front cost, but if fuel prices go up significantly, the payback could be quite reasonable, particularly if state/federal grants subsidize the costs.

The required steps to be ready to submit a CDBG grant include:

Completion of the design and preliminary plans: April – July/August
External Review of proposed preliminary plans and/or new RFQ to hire an architect to complete bid-ready documents: August/September
Completion of bid-ready documents (probable cost of $200,000 - $250,000 or 10% of projected building renovation cost): September – December/January
CDBG grant deadline: February 2010
Do we need to fit in a Special Town Meeting in this schedule somewhere?

This is a very tight timeline. The committee agreed that we needed to take whatever time we need to develop a compelling proposal to the town and to build strong support for the proposal through community presentations. An alternative timeline would be to submit the cost of completing the bid-ready documents as our CDBG grant proposal in February 2010 and then submitting a proposal for making the building handicapped accessible for a February 2011 deadline. The committee asked Donna Neylon to seek input from the town's grant writer, Bill Scanlon, about:

- The reaction of CDBG reviewers to a grant proposal to pay for bid-ready documents
- The process the committee needed to follow in hiring an architect to complete the bid-ready documents
- Whether the inclusion of a senior center in a CDBG grant would strengthen the proposal or affect the amount of funding we could seek and

- Whether there were state or federal funds we could apply for to pay for feasibility studies and implementation costs for installing geothermal vertical wells.

4. Timeline: Mr. McAlister and Mr. Green will review documents and come to the next meeting with (a) a timeline of work and (b) some initial proposals for programming the building, including preliminary diagrams showing what fits and what doesn't fit, based on assumptions about changes in the physical structure or lack thereof.

5. **Next Meeting: May 11 at 6:00 PM Town Hall Barrier Removal Committee's first meeting with Clark and Green.**

6. **Adjournment**: Clarence Snyder moved and George Dellomo seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:06. The motion passed unanimously. *I don't think that George was at this meeting and that Barbara made the motion and Clarence seconded it – I could be wrong!*

Respectfully submitted,

Peter O'Connell, Secretary