

**Town Hall Barrier Removal Committee
Minutes of December 7, 2009
Brookfield Elementary School Library**

Meeting convened at 6:08. Members present: Donald Faugno, Barbara Clancy, David Holdcraft, Clarence Snyder, John Wild, and Peter O'Connell. **Absent:** Donna Neylon and George Dellomo.

Also present: Steven McAlister, Clark & Green, Selectmen Rudy Heller and James Allen

Minutes: Approval of the minutes of the November 24th meeting was deferred.

Chairman Donald Faugno opened the meeting by noting that the Committee needed to come to decisions about (1) whether to simply present information to the Town Meeting and not make a recommendation, (2) whether to recommend a three-phase plan as outlined in the last meeting, or (3) whether to recommend some modification of the three-phase plan. The Committee consensus was to make a recommendation for a two-phase plan with a phase I total project cost (including design, administration, hazardous waste removal, construction costs, etc.) of approximately \$3.5 million that would begin in the summer or fall of 2011. Of that amount a building committee would raise a minimum of \$500,000 through grants and fundraising activities. In addition to the \$3.5 million, some project costs might be covered by town staff (water line, site work, septic excavation) and/or funds from existing town accounts (installation of roof insulation).

Mr. Faugno presented information that showed significant declines in the Town's debt service costs in the next ten years as the elementary school, Tantasqua, and highway barn are paid off. Debt service within the Town operating budget for the fire truck and the Town Hall Roof will also decline on a similar schedule. Therefore, with careful use of the stabilization fund and financing of the Town Hall project over 25-35 years, it would appear that the Town can afford a Town Hall renovation project of the scale contemplated with no increase in current debt service. Mr. Faugno suggested that the Board of Selectmen meet with the Treasurer, his advisors, and a representative of the Farmer's Home Administration to determine actual costs of borrowing over alternative periods of time.

The Committee then discussed a realignment of the three-phase renovation plan into a two-phase plan. The following were discussed:

1. The phase I plan should accomplish the following to demonstrate to the voters that they would be getting full value for their money:
 - a. A fully usable, ADA compliant building that returns the Town Hall to its rightful place as a center of community activity. All levels of the building would be accessible via an elevator, ramps, accessible toilets on the first floor, ADA compliant doors, a lift adjacent to the auditorium stage, and handicapped accessible parking at the rear of the building.

- b. A more energy efficient building resulting from insulation in the roof and replacement of windows;
 - c. A fire suppression system throughout the building (required by the barrier removal renovation);
 - d. A long-term home for the Police station that provides 3000 square feet of usable space plus other Town Hall facilities for records storage, meetings, training, etc. This would be sufficient for 20-25 years until such time as the Town population approaches 5000 people, triggering the need for a larger facility. Cost of rent and utilities for the interim police location would be saved.
 - e. A design for later renovations and rearrangements of town offices to be accomplished with assistance of the Tantasqua Technical School and/or other project funding as part of the Town operating budget.
2. The following were discussed as part of the Committee's instruction to Steve McAlister to come back to the Committee with a Phase I project totaling approximately \$3.5 million:
- a. Delete the reconstruction of the back stair way (building inspector says it would not be required but he recommends better lighting be included in Phase I)
 - b. Contingent on final report from energy consultants, delete the insulation of the walls, including all related construction
 - c. Assume that the installation of a water line, removal of the handicapped access ramp, site work, septic system, and roof insulation will be done by the Town prior to beginning of the project)
 - d. Defer any reconstruction of the Auditorium Balcony level except to make it accessible via the elevator, requiring planned toilets be moved from this level to the first floor.
 - e. Install plumbing for a kitchen off the second floor lobby, but defer kitchen construction to Phase II;
 - f. Revise HVAC plans in light of final Phase I and Phase II alignments
 - g. Assume the costs of grant writing will be paid from a separate Town Account and grant administration will be 10% of grant funding (\$50,000). The BOS will confirm these estimates with Bill Scanlon.
 - h. The Town would waive any fees associated with permits for the project.
 - i. The Committee will confirm that state bidding regulations allow technical school students to complete a portion of the project (third floor offices, for example)
 - j. Escalation costs would be calculated assuming that the project would begin in the summer or fall of 2011.
 - k. Project costs would assume that the project would be financed by long-term loans rather than through the issuance of a bond.
 - l. Steve McAlister will check on the required insurance costs, since does not involve the construction of a new building;
 - m. Calculate design costs based primarily on Phase I construction

Steve McAlister thought that he could come back with projected costs in two weeks, but would be seeking the assistance of Town officials in answering questions about the following areas:

1. Hazardous materials in the Town Hall that must be removed;
2. Likelihood of contaminated soil, underground tanks, etc. in the area behind the Town Hall
3. Direction about whether to include debt service, grant writing, and grant administration costs in the total project budget;
4. Information on required insurance coverage for a renovation project
5. Confirmation that state bidding rules allow a technical school to perform part of a building project;

Mr. Heller noted that the current building had served the Town well for nearly 100 of its 107 years of existence so the Committee and the Town should share the cost of funding the renovation with the next generation of taxpayers though longer term financing. He noted that this project would be eligible for state funding under the Community Preservation Act and indicated that he would urge the Board of Selectmen to put the adoption of the Community Preservation Act before the Town Meeting and the voters as part of the funding strategy for the Town Hall project. Finally, he urged the committee to consider gas or geothermal as more sustainable sources of heating and cooling.

Mr. Allen noted that some expenses currently included in the Phase I project budget could be funded out of existing accounts such as the Town Hall Improvement Account. He called the Committee's attention to the need to find \$30,000 to move the Salt Shed to its new foundation at the Highway barn and raised the question of whether there would be a need to remediate soil contamination caused by salt. He asked whether there was provision in the building plan for the storage of historical records and noted that in the Town' capital planning, we should not forget other capital needs such as the expansion of the Library and the Cemetery. He suggested that the cost of relocating staff during construction might be addressed by a local philanthropist and he reminded the committee that site planning needed to address the Fire Department traffic needs.

Next Meeting: December 21, 2009 at 4:00 in the Brookfield Elementary School Library

Adjournment: Peter O'Connell moved and David Holdcraft seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. So voted at 6:25 P.M..

Respectfully submitted,

Peter O'Connell, Clerk