

**Town of Richmond
Town Center and Library Committee
Minutes –September 16, 2021**

Present: Christine Werneke, Josh Arneson, Laurie Dana, Jeff Forward, Dave Healy, Linda Parent, Amy Wardwell

Welcome & Public Comment – None

I. Additions or Deletions to Agenda

II. Items for Presentation or Discussion

a) Update on floodplain regulations related to Town Center building

The committee reviewed the email from Keith Osborne, Zoning Administrator for the Town of Richmond which outlined the Zoning Regulations that would govern the renovation of the Town Center Building. There are several options for the basement, which is the space where there are usage and construction rules which would apply.

Committee member observations:

- Need to design for resilience (define what that means)
- Recommend not locating mechanicals in the basement
- If the space continues to be a public space, issues around handicap access would need to be dealt with and may not be practical cost-wise
- Eliminating flood risk (flood proofing) in the basement may be cost prohibitive, need to look at cost-benefit of the loss of 5,000 sq. ft. of space
- Even if not totally flood proofed, it is not necessarily dead space, could be used for storage with the acknowledgement that it could flood.
- We got the answer we needed about the ability to renovate the Town Center building and the concerns that will need to be addressed in the design/architectural process.
- Jeff asked if the Town carries flood insurance, Josh was not sure and will check on that.

b) Update on Library HVAC and Assessment Projects

The library HVAC system is in and working. Rebecca has asked for a training on the use of the new programmable thermostats for staff. Jeff would like to be part of that training. Christine asked that Laurie prepare a Front Porch Forum post regarding the new HVAC system which is being paid for from existing funds (not tax \$\$) and includes heat, AC and ventilation—which is important for COVID protection.

Laurie reported that getting an assessment of the library roof slate, steeple and bell tower flashing and wood status is moving ahead. Through Preservation Trust of Vermont (PTV), Keith Schumacher has agreed to produce an assessment and is working with Jay Labare to figure out what is needed. Also connected with Ann Cousins of CDW regarding drone photos. Jenna Lapachinski, of PTV has agreed that the \$500 grant that the Library has can be used for this assessment. These are matching funds so the Library Reserve fund will match the amount of the grant. Jay asked Keith to assist with the bid creation and I have asked that his proposal break out the assessment work and the bid work separately as it is not currently covered by the grant.

Laurie reported that the Vermont Historic Preservation grants will be due 10/4 and she will be attending a webinar training next week on the grant process. PTV is hoping to have a new round of Bruhn Grants next year (January deadline) but do not know if or

how much funding they will receive. This is a federal grant program.

c) Discussion, Workplan and Timeline for Visioning Process

Christine said that she wants the committee to lead the visioning process and to have a statement of recommendations that is presented for discussion. She will try to put together some ideas and forward to committee members.

Ideas:

We want to be considering renovation of existing Town Center building (Jeff will send out his pros/cons document that he drafted about renovation vs. rebuilding)

- Renovation needs to meet both current and future uses
- Size is governed by existing footprint.
- Based on Breadloaf assessment the current building is structurally sound
- We have information from previous survey on use of the building
- Visioning for the Town Center “campus” – both buildings and land around it
- Renovation of building gives us the equivalent of a new building
- Need to include maintenance plan for new building
- Acknowledge the Committee’s work in stabilizing the 2 buildings

Next steps:

Need to set up a community meeting to present brief information about “how we got here” and the recommendations of the Committee and then invite community input.

Need to invite current building tenants to attend and speak if they wish – Town staff, Police, Post Office, Senior Center, Historical Society, MMCTV, Radiate Art Space & Library staff and trustees.

Need to make sure that all Town Committees (Recreation, Housing, Racial Equity, etc.) are invited plus groups that use the building (Western Slopes, Little League & Soccer, OCC).plus other town movers and shakers & business owners. Northfield Savings!!

Committee recommended that this be a 1 ½ hour meeting and it could be scheduled during one of our regular Thursdays (October 28?).

Christine will send out some thoughts for review and Jeff will send his pros/cons document for discussion at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.