

**Town of Richmond  
Town Center and Library Committee  
Minutes November 3, 2022**

**Present:** Jeff Forward, Laurie Dana, Linda Parent, Amy Wardwell

**Guests:** Martha Nye, Gary Bressor

**I. Welcome & Public Comment**

Gary Bressor made a statement registering his support for renovating the existing Town Center building, rather than exploring building a new building. He reviewed some of the history of decisions made when the Town Center & Library were established (1980s?) including the fact that in a vote, there was overwhelming support for keeping these buildings in their current use. He feels that support to keep these buildings would be even more overwhelming today with the current tenant configuration. He also mentioned the buildings as the core of Town with the business district, walkability, visible presence of town governance, caring for our historic buildings, the emotional connection people have to these buildings and the financial reasons for not abandoning or deconstructing an existing structure. Martha supported this statement.

**II. Additions or Deletions to Agenda -- None**

**III. Items for Presentation or Discussion**

**a) Discuss Post Office Space**

After some discussion, the consensus of those present was that the Post Office needs to stay in a renovated Town Center building. Amy mentioned that many of the community members, and the business response, was that they wanted the post office to stay in the Town Core. There is also the not inconsiderable income from rent. Committee members recognized that whether they need all of their existing space or whether the space could be configured differently should be part of future design discussions.

**b) Discuss space needs for Police Department**

Recognizing that discussions about the changes to the Richmond Police Department are ongoing, Jeff gave the committee a brief report on the status of the discussions with Hinesburg about some type of shared policing. That said, the committee members felt that we should design space for Police Department offices – with space for the intended 5 officers in any future plans. Laurie observed that there is no appetite to revisit a separate police or public safety building. The committee recognizes that the current space and configuration of the Police offices are not functional and that there is a long list of “would like to have” elements. This needs more discussion and prioritization in order to give the architects direction on what to include or not include in any designs.

**c) Create matrix of priorities for Town Center space**

The committee members present agreed that they need more information from Christine about how to develop a rubric as she described. Jeff will ask her to send a couple of examples, or start a list and send to committee members to form the basis for discussions at our next meeting.

Jeff commented that the document that was created and that he recently shared with committee members, “Richmond Town Center Usage Criteria” provides a good starting point for developing this list and is in line with the decisions on post office and police department described above.

**d) Update on Historic Preservation workshop**

Laurie reported on the Preservation Trust of Vermont’s retreat on Historic Preservation and Energy Efficiency she attended. She stated that one of the biggest benefits was to meet in

person with grant funders from Preservation Trust, the State Division of Historic Preservation and USDA Vermont representatives and Efficiency Vermont who were all in attendance. In addition, Laurie and Jay recently met with a historic preservation contractor who was in attendance and who may be interested in bidding some or all of the Library projects. She also learned more about the concept of “embodied energy” – the fact that historic buildings represent stored energy (energy used in the original construction of the building) in addition to our historic past. She also cited ideas to consider such as phased projects and renovating with an eye toward reversibility so that you can take advantages of new technologies as they are developed. This also means as we design tenant space we remember that tenants could change in the future so spaces need to be functional as rentable space and tenants can customize (within reason) the space they rent.

**e) Minutes of the Sept. 29 & Oct 20. meetings**

Minutes from 9/29/22 and 10/20/22 meetings were approved.

**The next meeting of the Committee will be Nov. 17, 2022 and will be a hybrid meeting.**

**Agenda items will include:**

- Creation of a rubric for evaluating design options
- Discussion about next steps in resolving the renovate vs. new build options
- Approval of replacement proposal for parking lot light pole.