

Town Hall Building Committee
April 14, 2021
Virtual Meeting via Zoom, 5:00pm

Present: Phil Lehr (Chair), Sam Wakeman, Mark Cameron, Gerhard Lubitz, Carolyn Coffey, Josiah Stevenson, Tucker Meehan, and Wayne Sawchuk

Also attending: Michelle Leary, Jason Federico (Town of Cohasset)
Steve Kirby , Jon Lemieux (Vertex)
Stew Roberts, Phil O'Brien (Johnson Roberts)
Lisa Pratt (Cohasset Drama Club)

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 pm.

Town Hall Basement Plans & Cohasset Drama Club (CDC)

- L. Pratt discusses current use of Town Hall basement and expected future needs of CDC. Expects to store sets and costumes, typically only things that are used for a planned production or that are valuable.
- L. Pratt notes that there is a production planned for Fall 2021 and that much of the existing stored materials can be cleared out by Winter 2022.
- W. Sawchuk asks about need for bulkhead to move materials and L. Pratt indicates that the bulkhead is useful for moving larger materials in and out of the basement.
- W. Sawchuk asks about ceiling height/clearance in existing basement space and L. Pratt indicates that current ceiling height is sufficient, but more height would be preferable though not necessary.
- P. Lehr asks if CDC anticipates need for storage on an ongoing basis. L. Pratt states yes and P. Lehr indicates that the Committee plans to designate a small storage space for CDC materials.
- L. Pratt asks about lift to stage and notes that these can be distracting if not properly placed/designed. JRA to consider this input as part of the interior design process.

Johnson Roberts (JRA) Shares Revised Basement Plans

- JRA prepared revised basement plans swapping Safe Harbor space with land use files per the Committee's input.
- M. Cameron raises point in needing to ensure basement is accessible for equipment replacement/servicing since existing bulkhead is being removed. JRA to review this point.
- C. Coffey asks if possible, to move voting equipment from New Town Hall basement to Old Town Hall basement to increase useable space in New Town Hall. JRA believes this should be possible so long as equipment less than 7 feet so as not to interfere with sprinkler system.
- The Committee notes that the cost to drop the floor of Old Town Hall 2 feet would be approximately \$300-350k, which the Committee does not believe warrants further consideration due to cost.

- JRA to incorporate feedback to swap location of land use files to voting equipment storage space (in New Town Hall basement) to enable larger Flex Space. Voting equipment to be stored in Old Town Hall basement, to the extent possible.

JRA Shares Revised Town Hall Renderings

- JRA prepared revised Town Hall exterior renderings. Windows have been revised in response to online feedback. In addition the stairs now need to be separated under current code, so no floating stairs which results in “squared off” windows.
- G. Lubitz notes that windows on New Town Hall do not match Old Town Hall. JRA indicates that historic images show Cohasset Town Hall with black/dark windows and not white windows.
- JRA leads discussion of elevations and walkways around the building. J. Stevenson raises question re: need for pathway from fire exit to sidewalk. JRA believes pathway is required, but will confirm and in any event will design pathway so it is not mistaken as an intended entrance to Town Hall.
- General discussion by Committee regarding the desire to have a drop-off box for property tax payments in the parking lot. C. Coffey suggests placing a drop-off box in one of the islands. JRA indicates that this will require revising the current site plans for one-way traffic and agrees to provide revised plans to the Committee incorporate this change.

Upcoming Meetings with Select Board and Capital Budget Committee

- Committee discusses joint meetings with Select Board and Capital Budget Committee.
- Select Board: M. Leary advises that Select Board would like to better understand what the requested \$750k at Town Meeting is intended to cover (additional design fees). Vertex to attend meeting to help direct conversation with Select Board.
- Project Budget: S. Wakeman raises point that current total cost of project is running to about \$14 million. Suggest use range when stating costs, \$13.5 million to \$14.5 million instead of fixed amounts. Need to consider impact to town budget, possibility to obtain up to \$4 million from CPC. Need to confirm with CPC that these funds are still available.

Social Media

- T. Meehan updates the Committee on social media presence and post strategy. Show needed repairs, highlight history of Old Town Hall and finally discuss expected costs. Initial posts getting good engagement.
- Questions continue to be raised on Facebook, specifically Cohasset 143 page. Need to pull together FAQ to post in reply. Recurring question, why not use old plans? We were tasked with starting from scratch with new requirements. 1) investigate potential renovation and rebuild, 2) review current programming needs rather than needs from several years ago, 3) working with new architects.
- Committee discusses FAQs and plans to distribute draft of FAQs for review.

Revisit Upcoming Meetings with Select Board and Other Committees

- Committee discusses upcoming schedule of meetings to determine which members should attend which meeting.
- P. Lehr to reach out to CPC about setting up a meeting and also to get preliminary feedback on availability of \$4 million.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.