

Highland Building Committee
Tuesday, January 26, 2021
5:30 pm via zoom

Members: John Ballantine, Marilyn Harte, Walter Hickman, Ellen Huber, Kathy Keller, Christine Lear, Annette Lee, Melissa McMorro, Bonnie Miskolczy, Bryan Sorrows (at 6:40), Jack Troast (until 6:30)

Public: Mark Brittle, Carlisle Mosquito, Ellen Huber, Bonnie Miskolczy

Meeting called to order at 5:35

1. Walter made a motion to accept the minutes of December 21, 2020. Kathy Keller seconded the motion. Roll call vote John Ballantine - aye, Marilyn Harte - aye, Walter Hickman - aye, Ellen Huber - aye, Kathy Keller - aye, Christine Lear - aye, Annette Lee - aye, Bonnie Miskolczy - aye, Jack Troast - aye
2. Review Highland Committee to dos: Cori, building codes, architects, and evaluation criteria. Following is a summary of the some of the issues / concerns discussed.
 - . CORI clearance will not apply to the Highland Building.
 - . The Superintendent of the schools is not comfortable with the building housing apartment spaces for fire fighters without further conversation. Jack proposed the idea of four apartments for teachers. The committee will need to prepare a more complete understanding of possible housing / other uses for the Superintendent and School Committee.
 - . Marilyn noted that there is a wait list for people to live in the Emerson Umbrella in Concord, and so there would likely be interest for people using Highland for artist and other studies.
 - . Annette noted that whatever choice this committee recommends for the town, it has to be economical.
 - . John Ballantine noted that the Bog House is also a potential rental if we cannot use Highland for the fire fighters.
 - . Jack noted that we should find out the cost per square foot for renovation and cost of use, to determine what the offset could be for rental or building use.
 - . Marilyn asked about a comparison between Emerson Umbrella and Highland. Emerson was over budget and the rents were kept low for the artists. This probably isn't a fair comparison.
 - . Kathy asked about the possibility of the building being used when school is not in session (afternoons, weekends, and summers.)
 - . Use of the building will trigger different ADA requirements for access to the building and to upper and lower floors.
 - . The unqualified cost to renovate the building would probably be around \$3M. Billerica did a similar renovation to a school for \$5M.
 - . Jack asked about the needs and costs of Town Hall, in relation to Highland.
 - . Marilyn asked about the residence across the street from Gleason Library. It is apartments and business space that is privately owned.
 - . Christine asked if there are town needs that Highland could solve.
 - . Storage is an issue in town for Town Hall, the fire department, and the school right now. Storage will be hard to sell.
 - . Walter Hickman clarified that we need to present valid ideas to the town. Asks how do we focus on developing ideas?
 - . The town costs to renovate would require prevailing wage and would increase the cost about 25% over private contracting.

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- Jack would be willing to work with John and an architect to explore some of the numbers for public or private use, or a combination of both.
- Walter asked if the fire fighters would pay rent. Probably, subsidized by the fire department. Chief Bryan Sorrows was going to speak with the Carlisle Building Inspector.
- Melissa asked if renting four apartments would be cleared as a viable use.
- Bryan, John, and Christine will speak with the Superintendent about some of the ideas being considered.
- Kathy asked about a pop-up shop or small retail shops.
- Perhaps pop up shops on first floor, storage in the basement and archives on upper floors.
- Bryan noted that the fire fighters in Highland could save the town millions of dollars in operating costs over time.

Community comments

- Ellen noted that donors supported the renovation of the Emerson Umbrella. Should Carlisle seek local support for part of the renovation? And will there be paying activities to pay for the maintenance of the building. John noted that CPA funds might be a portion of the renovation as well. Ellen suggested work-spaces. Bonnie noted that there is a lot of historical preservation money to be found/used.
- Bonnie commented that we consider the cost of the gained parking spaces if Highland was taken down.
- Bonnie would like to encourage that the building be 'green' where we can. Bryan noted that an older building is difficult to make 'green'.

3. Next steps

- Bryan, John, and Christine will meet with the school Superintendent.
- John and Jack will work on square footage and some of the financial projections

4. Meeting times and follow-up

- Bryan noted that there are financial schedules / annual budget requests if this committee is seeking study money.
- The committee doesn't feel that we would be ready for any sort of proposal or study proposal this year.
- Monday, February 8 at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Christine Lear

Approved 6-0