



Memorandum to Select Board

December 14, 2015

Authors: Town Center Committee

Contents

Charge to the Committee from the Select Board	3
Executive Summary	4
Goals and Objectives	6
Findings.....	6
Recommendations.....	8
Appendix A - Town Center Committee (TCC) Members	9
Appendix B - Goals and Objectives.....	10
Appendix C – Pros and Cons	11
Appendix D - Agendas and Minutes.....	13

Links to the work of the previous Town Center Committee can be found at:

http://www.leenh.org/Pages/LeeNH_BComm/towncenter/index

Charge to the Committee from the Select Board

Purpose

The purpose of the Committee is to determine the status and existing conditions of municipal administrative and Library facilities within the Town Center and to develop a broad set of goals, objectives and recommendations through a collaborative planning approach for the future use of Town facilities in order to increase capacity and communication, while decreasing potential duplication of goals or services.

Scope

Lee's Town Center has been defined as the area within a 1/4 mile radius of the Lee Triangle, which is at the intersection of Mast Road (Route 155), George Bennett Road and Lee Hook Road.

The following functions and facilities are those that are assumed to be in scope:

- Town Administration
- Town Clerk/Tax Collector
- Code Enforcement and Planning
- Town committee meetings
- Town Equipment storage
- Library
- Historical Society Museum

Deliverable

The Committee is to prepare a memorandum of preliminary findings that contains goals, objectives, and recommendations and other related information and figures as deemed appropriate by the Committee and the Select Board.

Duration

The Committee will produce a preliminary memorandum within six months following the first meeting of the Committee. This schedule may be subject to modification according to review and approval of the Select Board.

Mission

Develop a plan that determines the future utilization of current town center facilities and identifies requirements for new or renovated facilities.

Executive Summary

The Town Center Committee (TCC), as charged by the Select Board at its meeting on May 26, 2015, was formed in June 2015 and commenced meeting biweekly in July 2015. The TCC members are listed in Appendix A; the Committee is facilitated by Julie Glover, Town Administrator. The Town Center Committee had representation from the Town Administration, Code Enforcement, the Historical Society, the Library, the Police Department, the Fire Department, and citizens-at-large, many of whom also serve on other Town Commissions

The TCC met on the following dates in 2015: July 9, July 13, July 27, Aug. 10, Aug. 24, Sept. 7, Sept. 22, Oct. 5, Oct. 19, Nov. 2, Nov. 16, Nov. 30, and Dec. 14. Meeting minutes and agendas are attached in the Appendices.

Early in its work, the Committee was briefed on the work of previous Town Center Committees and provided with links to reports and studies on the Town Center. These documents are referenced in the Appendices of this report. The Committee then surveyed all of the buildings by performing walk-through inspections, accompanied by representatives of the facilities. In subsequent discussions, the Committee performed qualitative assessments for each of the buildings, focusing on general conditions and capabilities. Overall, the buildings exhibited lack of adequate space, inadequate structural integrity (mainly floor loads), environmental issues (such as poor air and water quality, inadequate lighting, and poor acoustics) and various levels of wear and tear. Other areas of concern are a lack of security protection as it relates to free access to the Town Hall offices and the lack of adequate space to house town records, historic archives and library collections. ADA compliance was also noted as a deficiency in the Town Hall and Library.

Document storage and retention of records surfaced as a significant issue for the Town where protection from fire and environmental damage must be considered. The Historical Society has a need to protect their collections in an archival manner and the Heritage Commission has also indicated a requirement to archive a significant amount of historical records, which are in multiple locations and need to be sorted for retention or disposal. The total amount of archival material involved is not defined.

Discussions regarding the disposition and future use of the buildings centered on the Town Hall building, since our findings showed that it has the most urgent unmet requirements. The Committee developed and discussed at length various options, which ran from an addition to the current Town Hall, moving the town facilities into the current Safety Complex upper floor, adding a wing onto the Safety Complex, or building a new facility at Stevens Field. Much consideration was given to the impacts of these various considerations on other Town departments, committees, and buildings. These options, as well as the associated summary of Pros and Cons are presented in the appendices. Since this was a qualitative assessment of facilities and the last professional assessment of the buildings was performed in 2009, it is recommended to have a professional assessment of the buildings performed to quantify the costs and effort involved in insuring the buildings meet the requirements of the occupants.

Working with an outside builder, the Committee developed some sketches and derived rough estimates for basic construction of an addition to the Town Hall. More detailed work will be required. Also, the Committee was briefed on (and discussed) funding and the existing capital reserve funds that reside in

various accounts. The Committee determined that the disposition of the Capital Reserve Funds was outside its charge.

The Committee extended an invitation to the Lee Public Library Board of Trustees, who attended the October 5th meeting. During this meeting, the Trustees were briefed on the Committee's discussions and work completed to date; this was followed by a question and answer period.

In October the Committee developed and refined its Goals and Objectives and began to format its work into a report for the Select Board. The Goals and Objectives, in annotated outline form, follow this Executive Summary along with Findings and Conclusions, presented graphically in a spreadsheet format.

The Committee contacted the Lee Congregational Church in order to determine if the church would entertain the possibility selling a parcel of land to the Town of Lee. The use of the parcel is yet to be determined but would provide more alternatives in deciding how best to make use of current town buildings options. The Church indicated it would entertain the possibility.

Goals and Objectives

Goals and Objectives are presented in the appendices.

Findings

Town Center Building Visit Findings

The visits to the various town facilities resulted in indentifying several deficiencies noted in the following chart. As a result of the numbered of observed deficiencies of the Town Hall, it was determined that the TCC would recommend that the Town Hall be addressed as a priority.

The asterisk refers to the old school house area.

	Observation	Town Hall	Hobo Shed	Library	Museum	Annex	Safety Complex
1	Inadequate floor space	✓	N/A	✓	✓		
2	Inadequate record floor space	✓	N/A				
3	Inadequate floor strength to house records	✓	N/A	✓*			
4	Lack of privacy	✓	N/A				
5	Lack of security	✓	N/A			✓	
6	Poor ventilation	✓	N/A				
7	Poor water quality / no water available	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	ADA non compliant	✓	N/A	✓	✓		
9	Computer room not climate controlled	✓	N/A				
10	Inadequate meeting space	✓	N/A	✓			

Town Hall Options and Impacts

The TCC conducted several sessions where various options were considered and weighed with regards to the identified Goals of the committee. The agreed upon options are noted in the following chart.

Town Administration Office Options		
1	Town Hall Renovation & Expansion	
		A Town Hall renovated on site
		B Town Hall expanded on site
		C Code Enforcement incorporated into Town Hall
		D Annex Repurposed or razed
		E Library expanded
		F Hobo Shed addressed
2	New Building at Stevens Field	
		A New facility
		B Code Enforcement incorporated into Town Hall
		C Town Hall repurposed
		D Annex repurposed
		E Library expanded
3	PSC Renovation & Expansion	
		A PSC renovated for Town offices
		B PSC expanded for Town offices
		C Code Enforcement incorporated into Town Hall
		D Town Hall repurposed
		E Annex repurposed
		F Library expanded
4	PSC Renovation	
		A PSC renovated for Town offices
		B Town Hall repurposed
		C Code Enforcement incorporated into Town Hall
		D Annex repurposed
		E Library expanded

Option Pros and Cons

Pros and Cons are presented in the appendices.

Recommended Actions

1. Determine and document requirements
2. Develop a phased approach to address the needs identified per the documented observations and requirements
3. Appropriate funds to complete high level estimates to determine feasibility of the options presented

Appendix A - Town Center Committee (TCC) Members

Julie Glover	Town Administrator
Cary Brown	Citizen
Larry Kindberg	Citizen
Ruth Eifert	Library Director
David Meeker	Citizen
Thomas Dronsfield	Chief of Police
Ron Pitkin	Citizen
Chuck Cox	Citizen
Paul Gasowski	Citizen
Janet Allen	Citizen
Deborah Schanda	Citizen
Robin Estee	Secretary for Committee
Scott Nemet	Fire Chief
Caren Rossi	Code Enforcement

Appendix B - Goals and Objectives

1. **Goal:** Observe the condition and status of each of the buildings within the Town Center to include Town Hall, Hobo Shed, Library, Historical Society building, Annex building and Safety Complex.

Objectives:

- Visit each facility accompanied by a resource that can speak to the usage and challenges of the facility
- Document the findings of each facility
- Document the collective opinions of the group for each facility

2. **Goal:** Preserve the historic, cultural, and aesthetic qualities of the buildings in the Town Center. Reuse, renovate existing town buildings where feasible

Objectives:

- Develop options that will address the structural deficiencies of the buildings in the Town Center
- Recommend that any additions to the Town Center (1/4 mile radius of the Lee Triangle) will be architected with the historic look and feel of the current Town Center buildings

3. **Goal:** To provide efficient, safe, secure, attractive, and comfortable work, meeting, and gathering spaces in all Town Center Buildings for employees and citizens that also provides adequate and secure storage for Town records and collections.

Objectives:

- Document usage requirements by square footage (i.e. storage vs. office space)
- Document parking requirements
- Develop options that will address the structural and functional deficiencies of the Town Hall, Library, Historical Society, and Annex
- Coordinate with Town Boards, Committees, and Commissions for input on facility requirements
- Develop priorities in terms of greatest need
- Obtain the requirements for each Town function by communicating with each using department, committee, and commission

4. **Goal:** Report the Town Center Committee's recommendations to meet the requirements of the Select Board's charge.

Objectives:

- Document proposed options with pros and cons and proposed phasing of each option, with due consideration of fiscal and environmental impacts
- Present recommendations of the Town Center Committee

Appendix C – Pros and Cons

Town Center Addition		New Building Stevens Field		Add to PSC	
PROS	CONS	PROS	CONS	PROS	CONS
Maintains/Upgrades Town Center location and historic aspect, centralization	Limited parking, unless expanded by removing Annex and/or acquiring land from Church	Moves all Town offices to one central location	Breaks w/historic use of "Federal Hill" as Town center	Moves all Town offices to one central location	New traffic pattern and additional parking adds cost
Allows upgrades and continued use of existing Town Hall	Proximity to bog may present design/construction challenges	Allows for creation of Cultural Center at old Town Hall	May impact bog and vernal pools	Allows for creation of Cultural Center at old Town Hall	Impacts to emergency response during construction
Septic, Water, Electric, Parking Upgrades immediate benefit to all buildings	Permits, regulations, well placement, leach field may be issues	Shared conference room/closer to all of PSC meeting spaces	Must incl. septic, new well, plumbing, electric	Septic & well already in place. Generator could be extended to new space	More potential for public interference with emergency vehicles; security issues
Build to suit needs, i.e. privacy, security, meeting space	Cost to move Hobo Shed	Ability to build according to needs, better security for employees	Eliminates a recreation field & green space	New space could be designed to fit needs	Architecture, scale, design of PSC already imposing
Hobo Shed could provide needed display/storage for Historical Society	Limited area for future expansion of Town services	Create new traffic pattern and parking to alleviate current issues at PSC	Need to continue maintenance on existing buildings	Create new traffic pattern to alleviate current issues at PSC	Does not preserve historical use of Town Center in meaningful way
Leaves Steven's Field for recreational use	Limits Library expansion at existing site	May allow for solar		Leaves Steven's Field for recreational use	May require additional maintenance cost for elevator and bldng
Improved layout easier for residents	Disruption to daily activities, complicates construction	Improved layout easier for residents		Smaller footprint since ADA access is already available for 2 floors	Need to continue maintenance on existing buildings
Allows use of portion of Town Hall during renovations	Need to remove a building to gain parking	No disruption to Town Center daily activities during construction		No disruption to daily Town Center activities during construction	No synergy with Library
Provides attractive/comfortable meetings spaces in renovated Town Hall; available to Library	Current site may be too small	Room for expansion		Share meeting space more readily	Two story office can be inefficient
Ability to phase multiple projects, easier to budget	Longer design phase	Simple design, efficient and attractive			PSC has structural issues that may make adding on difficult/impractical
Addition/connection to the Library may create an interesting municipal structure		Some site work already done i.e. trees removed, partial road in place			
Minimal moving costs					11

