

Town Offices Future Options Committee (TOFO)

July 14, 2008 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Fred Szmit at 7:10 P.M.

Present: Mary Maxwell, Joe Scrivani, Fred Szmit, Andrew Auger, & Bayard Tracy

Absent: Peter Mitchell, Dutch Walsh, & Don Brehm.

Minutes of the June 16, 2008 meeting were read. Motion to approve by Bayard Tracy, seconded by Andrew Auger.

Follow-up from the June 16th meeting:

TOFO presentation at the summer town meeting: There was much discussion regarding the above presentation. Dewey Auger will create the power point with the relevant historical photos. Fred Szmit will create a presentation outline for discussion at the July 28th TOFO meeting.

It was agreed that this presentation is to provide an overview of the options the Committee has considered with pros and cons listed for each. As envisioned, the presentation is intended to solicit discussion rather than recommend a specific choice of action.

In that light, the Committee reviewed the Selectmen's initial request of the members. This request was to provide 3 alternatives to assist the Selectmen in making their decision.

The importance of informing voters of this presentation was discussed. It was suggested that we use "Star Spangled Banner" publication as an initial step. The Town's web-site was mentioned as another avenue. It was agreed that the summer town meeting's agenda needs to be publicized if this topic is to get any meaningful visibility.

Post Office Use- Fred reported that he uncovered little interest here given the nature of the building and the needs and plans of the Postal Service

Early Childhood Education Center: There has been no formal enthusiasm evidenced by the School Board for using the building for this purpose. Fred volunteered to speak with Judy Idelkope to get a firm idea of the school's board's thinking. It was agreed that if the building were to be used as a temporary classroom, significant structural and safety changes would have to be made.

Becky Auger (a School Board member) briefly joined the meeting and suggested the following uses for the building: as the meeting hall for the scouts or similar organization or as an artisan's temporary residence (where the individual could trade residency for services to the school).

COOP: While this remains an interesting option, no organization has come forward with an idea or plan for the building. The thought is that, perhaps subsequent to the Summer Town Meeting, an individual or organization may emerge to run with this.

Private Sale of the Building (or Rent for Private Use): Fred Szmit circulated a list of ‘Pros/Cons’ for this option. Committee members agreed that most of these issues had been discussed with respect to other options, at other TOFO meetings. Never the less, a review and discussion of presented and added options highlighted the benefits of and obstacles to selling or renting the building:

Pros

Sale value to the Town
Saves Historic Building
Maintains current area aesthetics
Puts value on the tax roles
Use for a summer residence only

Cons

Water source needs protection
Adds to site for water use
Zoning issue on lot size
Need to find a Buyer
Parking/Traffic issues
Rental upgrade requires capital improvement
Code enforcement issues on change of use
Septic system issues
Town would likely add with use limitations
Sale would mean loss of continuity on the
Town’s property
Lot line adjustment needed for the tennis court

It was agreed that this option would likely be expensive to implement or would substantially alter the Town’s common area.

**Next Actions: Define the content and form of the Summer Town Meeting Presentation
Take action on Publicity**

Next Meeting: Monday, July 28th at 7:00 pm in the Town Office Building

Meeting was adjourned by 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Bayard Tracy