

## **Town Offices Future Options Committee (TOFO)**

### **September 9, 2008 Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was called to order by Fred Szmit at 7:00 P.M.

Present: Mary Maxwell, Joe Scrivani, Fred Szmit, & Bayard Tracy, & Don Brehm.

**Minutes of the August 18, 2008** meeting were read and approved

### **Maggie Stier of the NH Preservation Alliance**

Maggie, the Field Service Representative for NH PA, <http://www.nhpreservation.org> returned to provide the committee and meeting attendees with information on how the former Town Office Building might be preserved. Her opinions of the building and the ways NH PA could be of help are contained in her letter to the Selectmen of August 21, 2008 (attached).

During her presentation, Maggie mentioned other programs designed to help communities preserve buildings of historical interest. These were, among others: Historic Stewardship Program, Moose Plate Grants, N.H. Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) and Programs through the Department of the Interior.

The ensuing discussion centered on steps that local groups could take to deal with buildings/areas of historical interest. Among others these include establishing a local historical district or enrolling properties in the State's or the National Registry of Historic Places.

### **Public Discussion**

Attendees suggested that that TOFO committee:

- Increase from 3 the number of options it provides to the Selectmen,
- Obtain more time for study of additional alternative uses
- Set up a new committee
- Use the \$2,500 to educate the townspeople of TOFO
- Be aware that many people are not at all interested in spending any money on the Old Town Office Building
- Consider leaving the building in place, doing nothing with the building for a least a year
- Hire a real estate broker to assist with the sale of the building

Fred Szmit pointed out that the purpose of the presentation at the summer town meeting was to inform the town's voters:

- That TOFO committee had been created by the Selectmen,
- Of its purpose and the time frame,
- Of the general conclusions which had been considered,
- The pros/cons of each option, and
- To solicit their ideas and participation

In this light, committee members suggested that if anyone wishes to advocate for a particular use of the Old Town Office Building, a plan should be submitted to TOFO or the Selectman for consideration.

### **Other Business**

Mary Maxwell suggested, as an option, that a foundation, with a defined use/objective, be established to take control of the Old Town Office Building. The foundation could then be given a limited period of time to secure necessary financing. This advocacy group could then avail itself of volunteer labor, fund raising, etc. to put the building to use.

Issues surrounding selling or leasing the building were discussed. As to a sale, Fred explained that the committee had looked at this alternative and decided that the town would likely not want a private party to own the building in the middle of the Town complex. Zoning and water rights are issues as well

The next meeting of the TOFO committee will be at 7:00 on 9/22/2008 at the new town offices. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bayard Tracy