

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

October 12, 2012, Center Hall ,

Members present: Scott Roper, Julie Zebur, Clayton Brown, alternates Stephanie Roper and Andy Roeper; clerk Jessie Salisbury

Also present: Selectmen Kevin Boette, Town Administrator Kate Thorndike, post-and-beam builder Phil Brooks, Kent Perry, and James McEntee

Scott opened the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING ON REPAIRS TO CENTER HALL

Scott said the hearing was called at the request of the Board of Selectmen to discuss alterations to the Town Hall: a series of horizontal bars to be added in the attic for strengthening of the building.

Kevin Boette said that board had worked with Phil Brooks, “he and Wally went over the building and found it is in good shape.” The main risk is there is no tie holding it together. It is not a complicated job.

Andy said he had found the report done in 2008 by Timber Framer Aaron Sturgis which showed no evidence the building was spreading. In looking at Phil’s report, is there anything actively happening (with the building)?

Kevin said it was not a concern of the building moving. We asked Phil to find where it is weakest. We are seeking to keep the building as it is.

Phil showed drawings of the structure, said it was an attempt o strengthen a failed truss. He explained how the rafters were spread to raise the roof and create the dining room. He described the function of trusses. My suggestion is a relatively simple job of putting in the rods. It’s the cheapest way to stabilize it. The intention is just to make it secure. He said there are five major rafters which hold the weight of the building, It was well built until somebody decided to raise the roof.

Andy said, when they put in the dining room, they cut into the rafters. He said, since there was a difference of opinion, an engineering study should be made. Speaking for myself, I need numbers to back this up; not taking the town's money to do a job that might not stand up.

Kevin said an engineering study would "find the same thing."

Andy said with an engineer's study, with his mark on it, you'd have some assurance. He acknowledged Phil's "not insignificant experience" in the area of old buildings.

Phil asked, your concern is an area has been weakened and with a load it could pop? He noted a horizontal beam as his reason why he thought his idea would work.

Andy said there was nothing now in place that he would trust structurally, no strength in the peak where it was "cribbed in places."

Phil said, the question boils down to, no matter how you look it, it'll cost money. The cost of an engineering recommendation will be ten or fifteen times what we want to do.

Andy said a study would have to define the scope of the work.

Scott asked how many rods would be installed.

Phil said where there are main cross pieces, five of them.

Scott said he had some idea as to what was historically significant. One idea is to dismantle the dining room and put it in storage until the Historical Society can reassemble it somewhere. Walls could then be removed to make reconstruction easier.

Clayton asked the cost of an engineer.

Scott said \$5,000 had been budgeted two years ago.

Andy said it would depend on the scope of the project. We'd have to prioritize.

Stephanie asked if the study was required to get grants. Scott said, probably. She said it would be a good idea to get it done. Is it required for Certified Local

Government status? Scott said we could try to get a grant to do the engineering study. Phil said, get a defined study and then go for a grant to do the work.

Kevin said, Let's secure the building and then you guys go ahead and get the study done.

Scott asked if there was a rush to do this?

Kevin said it is not a permanent change, it would be fairly simple to undo. It's nothing anyone can see.

Phil called it an insurance policy.

Jim McEntee said, in the 1960s, this building was in dire shape and we had some reputable builders come in. The town decided, however, to spend money on the larger Citizens' Hall. We did some patch-up here, and painted it.

Scott asked for comment from Commission members.

Julie said, if we delay, the grant money won't be around. Clayton said a lot of towns are looking for grants. Scott said having C.L.G status would help, but not be a guarantee.

Julie moved to approve the plan as presented. Andy amended that to "install the tie rod assembly only." Clayton seconded. The motion passed with Andy voting no.

At 8:25, p.m. Kevin, Kate, and Phil left.

The minutes of Aug. 27 were accepted on a motion by Julie, seconded by Clayton.

Scott said he hopes to have the Certified Local Government paperwork completed this fall. He is still waiting on a resume.

He has given his budget requests to the selectmen, which includes funds for one workshop each year and one public hearing with required notices.

Andy said for anyone working on projects to track their hours because it figures into grant applications.

It was agreed that the Commission wants an engineering study done.

Scott said he had been asked by the selectmen to look into the status of the road at the eastern end of the property, there is confusion as to where Stonebridge Road crosses the common area and joins Center Road, and determined that it is all on town property. He will have a report for the selectmen.

The next meeting will be held in February.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Notetaker