

WASHINGTON PLANNING BOARD
Town Center Vision Subcommittee – Working meeting Minutes

August 21, 2018

Members present: Lolly Gilbert, Jim Crandall, Roxy Otterson, Jean Kluk, Ron Jager, Kevin Provencher, Bert Bodnar and Nan Schwartz.

Visitors: Mike Petrovick

1.0 **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Jim Crandall at 8:00 AM, in the Town Hall.

2.0 Crandall thanked Mike for meeting with us. He explained that the idea for the subcommittee came up last year when Kevin Provencher brought up the idea to improve the center of town. The Planning Board got a group together this spring and blue skied a list of issues and are now in the fact-finding stage. Provencher found Petrovick to help with direction and focus and we are working toward a community meeting. Provencher said he spoke with Petrovick and since the Schoolhouse is a priority now we can use his expertise in preservation and renovation of historic buildings and talk about funding. Crandall said we have reports on the building but no costs were assigned. There are choices to make which need to be decided and the choice of doing it in installments or all at once is an option. Crandall would like to have the town vote to make the commitment for the project and do it over time. He said who will use the building is up in the air; the police are there right now. He said funding could be done in several ways and there is money left over from the Safety Building project which the use of these funds would need to be decided at Town Meeting.

Petrovick asked about LCHIP funding. Crandall spoke about the use of LCHIP money for the Town Hall project. Petrovick said he is working on 2 LCHIP funded projects right now. Kluk pointed out that the Schoolhouse doesn't have the historic value that the TH has. Petrovick said that the Preservation Alliance also has money for planning. Kluk said the Preservation Alliance is coming to Washington in October for their annual meeting. Petrovick said that Francestown just did a \$1M project on their 1847 Meeting House; put in a LULA from the 1st to 2nd floor and renovated using \$250K from LCHIP, \$350K in bonded money and fundraised the rest. Provencher said that on the Schoolhouse we need a directional priority list and cost estimates. Crandall said we have no funding at this point but need to get cost estimates. Petrovick said we are at a good starting point; we have a feasibility study and cost is important, a structural engineer and architect report that pinpoints problems so we need estimates. Crandall said ballpark numbers would be a big help. Jager said use is crucial for knowing cost. Petrovick said maybe but structurally stabilizing the building has to happen first. Crandall said an elevator is needed for 2nd floor use but Petrovick answered not necessarily so, you could work toward that but don't let it stop you. Crandall said it should be designated as office space, preserving the building is the top issue, not who is using it. Petrovick said that code for Police is hard for small towns let the BoS deal with that problem. Petrovick said he would put some numbers on the project for us. He said you need to put design fees into the budget to nail down what you are doing and create a scope of work. He said we should be transparent and educate people. He will look at the report and estimate on the high side. Kluk asked about community outreach. Petrovick said for the building use yes but for now focus on stabilizing the building and there is no need for input at this point. Crandall said that interest in the building is high. Petrovick said that Massachusetts's towns have permanent building committees to watch over the town buildings. Kluk said our focus is encompassing the whole center of town, including the schoolhouse. He asked a few questions about demographics and town buildings.

We went over to look at the Schoolhouse building with Petrovick and did a full tour of the building. He thought it was a great building with good spaces. He commented that there is too much weight upstairs with the exercise equipment and suggested moving it. It was suggested that

it be moved to the cellar of Camp Morgan where it could be accessed and used by Police, Fire and Rescue members since there isn't enough room for it at the Safety building. Petrovick commented that there is exposure for lawsuits with inadequate space for Police. This has been reported before and Schwartz said the BoS has made the Police responsibilities in the station mostly administrative in nature as a work around. Kluk asked about repurposing the building. He said the building is a good space for many purposes.

Petrovick said insulating the attic (roof) and cellar first, is a priority and insulating the walls last, we should focus on stabilizing it for now. He said he would look through the report and come up with some priorities and costs. We thanked him for the visit and any help he can give us.

3.0 **Next meeting** – Wednesday, August 22nd at 10:00AM in the Town Hall, we are meeting with Penny Whitman and Jared Reynolds fro UNH Cooperative Extension.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nan Schwartz
Planning Board Secretary