

## REPORT OF TOWN OFFICES BUILDING COMMITTEE

December 2012

Executive Summary

This report is presented to provide a summary of the activities of the Town Office Building Committee and the options it considered in determining a recommended course of action to the Board of Selectmen regarding the town offices at 137 Ramsdell Lane which were vacated in the summer of 2011 due to indoor air quality issues. At a Building Committee meeting on 27 November 2012, the committee voted (7 for and 1 against) to recommend to the BOS that they draft a 2013 warrant article that appropriates \$2.3 million for renovation of the now vacated structure to return it to use by the town offices, SAU, and Recreation Department.

Background

The existing structure was originally constructed as a grade school. The easterly portion (approximately 8,800 SF) was a WPA Project that was completed in the 1930's. The bottom floor of the westerly portion (5,000 SF footprint) was built circa 1954 and the upper floor of that section was added circa 1965. The total building area is approximately 18,800 SF. Among other deficiencies, the structure is non-compliant in many areas with regard to ADA requirements and records storage does not conform to Secretary of State requirements.

Indoor air quality has been an ongoing issue due to the poorly insulated building envelope and lack of an air exchange system. Both the older and newer sections' exterior walls are hollow 8" cmu with a brick façade (no insulation). Although there is no obvious interior evidence of leakage, these types of walls are susceptible to rain water intrusion, and the bottom floor of the 30's section is below grade and has experienced groundwater intrusion. The windows are a significant portion of the exterior wall area and contribute to significant energy losses. Window units provided inadequate and inefficient air conditioning.

Two new Buderus oil fired hot water boilers were installed in 2007.

Concerns regarding indoor air quality and the presence of mold resulted in the structure being vacated completely by the summer of 2011. Town offices were relocated to a rental building on Route 125, the SAU offices and the Recreation Department's Discovery Center classrooms were relocated to the ECLC.

Committee's Task

In the fall of 2010 the Town of Barrington retained the services of H.L. Turner Group to provide an assessment of the feasibility of renovating the existing structure and provide an estimated cost for those renovations. A report issued in February 2011 concluded that the renovations were feasible and would cost approximately \$3.7 million. A warrant article to appropriate funds in that amount was defeated at the March 2011 warrant. The Town Office Building Committee was then tasked by the BOS to re-examine the Turner Group Report, particularly with a hard look at reducing the costs of a renovation and to consider future location of new town offices (i.e., a value engineering effort). The review also was to consider the needs of the SAU and Recreation Department (who had previously occupied 5,000 SF and 2,500 SF +/- respectively in the vacated building) as well as the library, which is presently occupying approximately 3,500 SF in the former municipal offices/gym building. The study was to include a benefit/cost analysis of locating all of the above entities at one site (i.e. a "municipal complex") that due to its 30,000 SF +/- size and site footprint would possibly be a "phased" project.

At the committee's recommendation the Building Science Corporation was also hired to provide an assessment of Turner's report, make their own on-site assessment of the vacated building, and provide recommendations for rehabilitation, particularly in regard to IAQ and mold problems. Subsequently, Turner Group was tasked with a review of their original report along with BSC's report with the goal of a critical determination of items in the original report that could be reduced in scope of eliminated and thus significantly reduce the original costs estimate. As a pro-bono favor to the Town, Ricci Construction/Lassel Architects independently provided a considerably detailed plan of action and cost estimate for rehabilitation of the building. Ricci's study and cost estimate confirmed that Turner's final report and cost estimate for renovation of the building was a practical solution with a cost of approximately \$2.3 million, well below the \$3.7 million cost of the failed 2011 warrant article.

A recommendation was to be made to the BOS by November 2012 to allow time for review and preparation of a 2013 warrant article that would fund the proposed course of action.

The attached Power Point presentation (Attachment 1) was shown at a public informational meeting on November 14, 2012, and provides a chronological review of the above information as well as a detailed list of the tasks assigned to the committee as well as the options and sites and associated costs that were considered. It is noted that the cost matrix in the presentation for the various options (see Attachment 2) was developed from a cost matrix provided by H.L. Turner Group, with an explanation of data presented in an e-mail from Jay Dougerty of H.L. Turner (see Attachment 3).

Hard and electronic copies of the Fall 2012 H. L. Turner report, the February 2011 H.L. Turner report, and the Building Science Corporation report of October 2011 are available at the Barrington Town Offices. The Ricci cost estimate is also on file at the Town Offices. An example of just some of the considerations involved with the various options the committee examined is presented in Attachment 4.

#### Summary

The Committee believes they provided due diligence in examining the various options and associated costs concerning the town offices as well as the present and future needs of the SAU, Recreation Department, and the Library. The consensus of the committee was that the preferable option for the town is to renovate the vacated structure at an estimated cost of \$2.3 million. This option addresses the near term needs of the Barrington Town Offices, the SAU, and the Recreation Department. See Attachment 5 for notes of the November 27 committee meeting where this decision was made. It is recognized that the library's space needs deserve attention and should now be addressed by their building committee, which has previously and to this time accomplished a significant amount of work to this effort.

The Building Committee would be happy to assist the Board of Selectmen as needed if the warrant article is presented.

#### Town Offices Building Committee Members

Tom Abbott, Code Enforcement  
Chris Dundorf, Citizen (Energy)  
John Huckins, Planning Board  
Keith Pratt, Selectman  
Paul Sanders, Facility Manager

Tara Barker, Recreation Department  
Dave Gibson, School Department  
Brian Lenzi, Chairperson  
Peter Royce, Library Trustee