

Town of Cornwall
Capital Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 6, 2015

Present: Mary Conlon, Ben Wood, Stu Johnson, Sue Johnson, Jake Chapline, Denny Rheume
Guest: Ashar Nelson of Vermont Integrated Architecture

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Sue Johnson. There were two items on the agenda:

- Old business: roof replacement information – B. Wood
- New business: Discuss plans and costs of proposed Town Hall renovation with Ashar Nelson from VIA

Ben Wood reported that the replacement of the Town Hall roof, which had been scheduled for this year, will have to be postponed. The contractor who had been expected to do the work is not going to be able to do it. Ben is talking with other contractors in order to line someone up for next spring. The condition of the roof is not so bad that it is likely to cause a serious problem this winter.

Ashar Nelson of Vermont Integrated Architecture presented estimates for the cost of planned renovations to the town office building. He cautioned that the estimates are based on a very early schematic design and could change as details are decided (quality of materials, for example). He also noted that the schedule for the work has not been decided. If it turns out to be several years in the future, the committee should expect some inflation in the figures. And since the building is quite old, the figures are based on some assumptions about the conditions that will be found when work begins. Ashar suggested that it might be wise to do some exploratory demolition to find out what is actually in the walls.

Ashar presented three sets of figures. The first is for the base project—the work necessary to provide additional space for the town clerk’s office, additional secure storage for town records, a lift giving handicapped access to the upstairs meeting area, and more space for the town library. This estimate is based one of two designs that were presented at the committee’s August 18, 2015, meeting. The committee members unanimously preferred this design option. The preliminary cost estimate is \$287,109.

The other two sets of figures reflect the cost of additional improvements to the building that could be done at the same time as the base project. One estimate is for upgrading insulation for the entire building to current standards and installing an efficient heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning system at a projected cost of \$58,655. The other estimate is for replacing the

suspended-tile ceiling throughout the building with fire-rated gypsum board and painting all of the ceilings and walls. The projected cost for that work is \$20,309.

The committee asked about possible costs that are not included in the estimates. Ashar said the town could anticipate some “owner’s costs,” such as furnishings for the added space, as well as costs for additional design work and engineering services that could be required as work progresses. He said he would develop estimates for those costs. If the town decides to proceed with all of the work that has been proposed—the base renovation, the energy-efficiency improvements, and the ceiling replacement and interior painting—it’s going to be a \$400,000 to \$500,000 project, he said. “The choices you make will determine whether it is at the high or low end.”

After Ashar had left the meeting, the committee members discussed next steps. The committee has anticipated renovating the Town Hall for several years and has been setting aside money for that purpose in the town’s annual budgets, but there is not yet enough set aside to cover the cost of the entire project. The committee agreed to update the select board on the project and the cost estimates and to give a status report to voters at Town Meeting in March.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.