

TOWN HALL BUILDING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF SITE VISIT – TOPSFIELD TOWN HALL

August 9, 2018

Members Present: Jay Butler, Jean-Pierre Minois - Chairman, Tim Olson, Patrick Reffett, and Mike Toomey

Members Absent: Allison Jenkins, Jeff Hubbard

Others Present: Phil Stearns - FinCom Liaison, OPM John Sayre-Scibona of Design Technique, Lee Sollenberger of Design Technique

This meeting was called to order at 8:00 am at the Topsfield Town Hall, currently under renovation.

***Secretary's Note***

*This meeting was a site walk of the Topsfield Town Hall that was currently under renovation. The walk was coordinated and led by the Topsfield Town Hall OPM, John Sayre-Scibona of Design Technique, who is currently the Committee's recommended candidate OPM for the Hamilton Town Hall project. Owing to the nature of the walk, not every conversation was captured in these minutes. No votes or topical deliberations were taken during the site visit. Committee members who participated are asked to carefully review these minutes for correctness and completeness prior to a vote on making these notes a permanent record of the meeting and publishing them on our webpage.*

**General Comments on Topsfield and Hamilton Town Halls**

Topsfield Town Hall, consisting of approximately 14,000 square feet of space was built in 1793 while Hamilton Town Hall with approximately 12,360 square feet of space (includes basement) was built in 1897. Topsfield's population is 6062 vs. Hamilton's at 7264. The cost of the Topsfield renovation is \$9.3M. A previous conceptual estimate of \$6M for Hamilton Town Hall had been put forward to the CPC for discussion purposes although the Hamilton scope has never been fully or professionally determined.

**Topsfield Town Hall Renovation**

The Topsfield Town Hall renovation project was started in early 2015 with the Town first hiring the Designer or architect, McGinley Kaslow Associates, several months before Design Technique was hired as the OPM. Consigli Construction was hired several months after Design Technique came aboard. According to John Sayre-Scibona, Consigli Construction has met all of their schedule and cost projections and the project will come to completion by the end of this month, August 2018. There was no "Clerk of the Works" used on this project. The only lingering effort beyond the end of this month is the continuing removal and handling of contaminated soil

from around the building. Purportedly when Design Technique came aboard and questioned the need for a soil HAZMAT evaluation it was considered not necessary as there had been no hazardous materials previously stored around the property. It was later determined that scrapings from lead paint had accumulated over time in the soil around the structure and exceeded MDEP maximums. This \$500K unanticipated expenditure was an unintended project cost in an otherwise smooth running project. Although there were other issues during the construction, John Sayre-Scibona pointed out a recent issue was that the main entrance doors are not tall enough to meet current codes. The Architect has taken responsibility for the cost of rectifying this oversight.

Topsfield's Town Hall has a second floor arrangement very similar to that of Hamilton's Town Hall with a large open meeting area, very high curved ceiling, a stage and balcony. Current renovations are underway to restore this area to its original splendor with the Town having already made the decision to move all of the offices to the new addition. Hamilton's current office setup on the second floor of their Town Hall is similar to Topsfield's prior to its renovations. Topsfield had relocated its DPW operations off site a couple of years ago to 279 Boston Street (Route 1) in Topsfield, unlike Hamilton which still must address the continued co-location of a renovated Town Hall and the DPW yard. The second floor kitchen was also completely renovated. The addition and renovations to the original building will provide updated, individual room split air-conditioned office space for the various departments and with the middle transitional brick structure between new and old, allowed for an elevator and the building's updated first floor bathroom (the building has only one). Exterior colors of original building and addition are the same but the exterior appearance of the addition, in accordance with federal regulations "honored" the original windows and trim moldings but did not attempt to replicate them exactly. The basement of Topsfield Town Hall has considerable lower ceiling heights at just over six feet, no air conditioning, and has a French Drain installed on one side to protect against water ingress. The basement will house the furnace, supply rooms, IT room, and archives storage for documents. The air conditioning units are located on the roof. Mike had a concern over the distribution system design. Mike also had concerns over the installation of wood flooring throughout before the air conditioning was turned on but the Consigli Project Manager assured us that they too had concerns and had been diligently using dehumidifiers on a daily basis to address potential wood shrinkage issues. Mike also had questions and concerns over the lack of vapor barriers and will get some info provided to him.

Patrick asked if building security had been addressed, i.e., cameras, panic buttons, etc. John indicated that the Town had no concerns for this building so no special security features were installed.

Jay asked about historical preservation inputs and John assured him that the Historical Society had weighed in on the renovation with what they felt important. John also indicated that when it came time to produce his monthly report of detailed activity regarding performance to schedule and budget, that he would be able to keep track separately of those items pertaining to historic preservation to allow for appropriate accounting and cost allocation.

John mentioned that the condition of Hamilton Town Hall is considerably better than was the initial condition of Topsfield Town Hall.

### **Operating Issues**

John indicated that prior to his coming aboard the Topsfield had generally approved the project although it had taken some time to do it. He appreciates the need for public marketing to convince Hamilton Town Meeting to commit financially to the project. When asked how he dealt with the communication amongst Selectmen, Town Coordinator, interested citizens, and the Town Hall Committee all trying to confer with him to ask questions or offer inputs on the project, John offered that it was not that much of a problem in Topsfield and that the primary means of communication on the project was with the chair of the Town Hall Committee and the Town Purchasing agent.

The Topsfield Town Hall Committee, appointed in 2015, consists of five volunteers with one of the Selectmen, Town Clerk, and Town Administrator as ex officio members. John indicated that he initially was meeting with the Town Hall Committee every two weeks and gradually only once per month. The weekly meetings that developed with the architect and construction project manager and John also included several of the Town Hall Committee members as they had an open invitation.

### **Committee Business**

Patrick and Tim told the committee that that they were appointed by the interim Town Manager as the negotiators for the OPM position and indicated that the negotiation with John Sayre-Scibona of Design Technique may happen next week. Other Town Hall Building Committee members are invited to attend as well. The Committee will meet again sometime in the next few weeks.

### **Adjournment**

The site walk ended at 9:15 am.

Prepared by:

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Jay Butler Attested 8/8/18