

# Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes

Montague Town Hall, First Floor Conference Room

One Avenue A, Turners Falls

2:30pm Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Attendees included Capital Improvement Committee (CIC) members Fred Bowman, Josh Lively, Bob Obear, Steven Ellis; Building Inspector Chris Rice; and Colle Building architectural consultant Chris Sawyer-Laucanno. Meeting called to order at 2:35 PM by Chairman Fred Bowman.

## I. Review and approval of minutes

- Mr. Lively moved to accept the minutes of February 26 and February 28 as presented, Mr. Ellis seconded. Motion passed 3-0 (Mr. Obear had not yet arrived). Motion passed 4-0.

## II. Discussion of Colle Building Renovation Project (\$190,000)

Mr. Ellis provided context regarding the history of the town's renovation and maintenance of the Colle Building and historic preservation restrictions it is subject to in perpetuity. He also described the current Mass Historic Preservation Fund grant (Round 24), the balance of available funds in the Colle Reserve Fund account (\$346,000), and the Board of Selectmen's support for the project.

Mr. Sawyer-Laucanno, serving as architectural consultant and lead grant writer, described the extent of work to be done. He estimates the need to repoint as much as 30% of the exterior masonry. Windows are generally in fair condition, but most can be repaired rather than replaced, which is very good news, as replacement is very expensive. The pillars in front of the building also need to be sanded and preserved - they are limestone and unprotected from the elements. Basement windows along Third Street need work. Entry doors all need to be refinished. Mr. Sawyer noted that the roof was last done in 1995. It's not in this grant but we may need to do this next year or very soon thereafter. The building does not have any serious problems, but is at the edge of those types of issues based on its original date of renovation, between 2000-2003.

Mr. Obear inquired whether the Town has a management firm in place to ensure maintenance is done in a timely fashion. It does not. Mr. Sawyer-Laucanno noted that a maintenance schedule will be required as an exit report requirement and we will be held to that schedule by the state. He would like to see the CIC take a greater role in monitoring building conditions and the maintenance schedule.

The question of energy efficiency was discussed. Mr. Sawyer observed the draft coming in through the interior storms and feels immediate improvements can be made to them. They will all be removed and checked for functionality. They need more fasteners and felting or other product to reduce airflow passage. The windows themselves are all original and Mass Historic prefers to maintain rather than replace windows. Mr. Bowman says this is something of a stop gap to deal with the existing issues. Mr. Obear - they may be eligible for a federal or state energy program. We should look at this.

Thinking more about energy efficiency, the committee discussed the compelling need to do this work now and then start doing phased replacement of interior storms using high efficiency compression interior windows. Some of these were installed last summer and others, on the first floor along Avenue A, are planned for this project. Mr. Ellis asked whether the cost would be much different if we were to replace windows rather than work on the ones we have. Mr. Obear asked whether the grant specifications can change after submission. Mr. Sawyer said they cannot.

Mr. Obear indicates the cost per window of historically accurate energy efficient windows would likely be \$4,000-5,000 per window, not including labor. Sawyer suggests Mass Historic is extremely rigid when it comes to windows and that they want preservation, not replacement. They prefer to create energy efficiency through storms and other means. It would be a huge challenge just to get approval for each window, especially if they are salvageable, which almost all of ours are.

We could work with the Montague Energy Committee to develop a long term plan to improve efficiency of the building. Install high quality compression storms throughout the building over time. This would be the next round of improvements that Mr. Sawyer would suggest. Perhaps we can apply to MHC for \$50,000 of the roughly \$100,000 to do the storms to a better spec in the next couple of years. It is also possible that we will have extra money in this project that can be redeployed to buying at least some additional compression storms. This would be the case if we don't have to do full replacement of the six.

Mr. Bowman requested the consensus of the group, are they ready to vote? Mr. Lively moved to recommend the Colle Building Renovations (windows and masonry) for funding at a cost of \$190,000, some of which may be offset by grant funds, to the Finance Committee. Mr. Obear seconded it. Motion passed 4-0.

### **III. Preparation of CIC Report to the Finance Committee**

Mr. Ellis moves to allow Mr. Lively to write the report on behalf of the committee. We will meet at 5:30 next Wednesday March 21 to review and approve the final report.

Basic outline requested by the committee:

- Introduction to report as per current draft
- Include separate section for DPW Building Project with existing text
- Separate section for special articles with summary table
- Final votes and priorities, with short explanation of each
- Table of projects and expected cost
- Attached special articles

### **IV. Unexpected Business**

Mr. Bowman moves to change the recommended funding level for the COA front entry project to \$30,000, noting that the previous figure of just over \$26,000 was consider a very lean estimate. This change was recommended by DPW Superintendent Bergeron and we forgot to consider it when we originally voted the item. Mr. Obear seconds. Motion passes 4-0.

### **V. Meeting adjournment**

Mr. Ellis moved to adjourn at 4:20 pm and Mr. Lively seconded. Motion passed 4-0.