

# TOWN OF BRISTOL



## Old Town Hall Old Fire Station Committee

January 2013

## FINAL REPORT

The Select Board appointed a committee to assess the current conditions of both the Old Town Hall and the Old Fire Station. Following the completion of our task, the Committee makes the following report.

## OLD TOWN HALL

In 1848, the Town voted to form a committee to formulate plans to build a town hall (at a cost not to exceed \$1,200) and the first town meeting was held in the Old Town Hall in 1850. Originally a 45 x 54 foot building, it was later expanded and in the 1870's a wing was added which was used for Selectmen's meetings. In the 1890's the vault was added. The last addition was in 1914 when the cloak room was constructed. Throughout the years various groups have used the Old Town Hall including traveling minstrel shows, magicians, singers, bands and dances, agricultural fairs, the Lilac Festival, plays including the Peter Sleeper Players, as well as a meat market and a lock up for vagrants. Most recently the building has been used for town meetings, voting and hearings.

## FINDINGS

The Old Town Hall has played a significant role in the history of our town. Many individuals would like to see it used and preserved. Others in town feel that it no longer is useful and should be sold.

The damage to the roof is significant. A recent inspection found holes in the roof allowing rain and snow to enter the building. The metal is in very poor shape. Water damage has rusted areas of the tin ceiling in the hall.

Water damage caused the section where the safe was previously stored to rot and cave in. The safe has been moved to the basement of the Old Fire Station. The section of the damaged floor has had plywood placed over it. There is no evidence of further damage to that area. There is black mold present in this same section of the building.

The bathrooms in the main section are dated and would benefit from upgrades though they are functional.

MetroCast cable equipment is kept in the Old Town Hall. This requires the building to be minimally heated during the winter.

The Hall meets minimal life safety requirements and has a certificate of occupancy based on the ways the building is currently used. The building has been updated to provide handicapped accessibility and meets the requirements needed for voting.

Parking is an issue for this building. The lot does not provide more than a couple of handicapped spaces. Other parking must occur street-side but this is a heavily traveled thoroughway for east-west traffic through town. The Baptist Church and Newfound Medical facility have parking lots which are available during non-business hours. Voting at the most recent Presidential election day created parking problems, especially from voters who were tying up the doctor's parking lot.

In the rear of the building, there is a section where the siding is gone and a sheet of protective covering was placed to try to stop rain and wind damage.

There is significant rotting to sills on the sides and rear of the building.

From the rear of the building, there is evidence of where squirrels and other rodents have entered.

The present layout of the building does not make it a suitable space for any of the town's current space needs (a police station or additional office space).

The brick safe area of the building appears to have pulled slightly away from wooden structure.

Previous snow and ice accumulations have caused rusting along the bottom of the metal door at the rear of the building. This door does not close or seal properly because of the damage.

Significant accumulations of animal and bird droppings (Guano) have caused concern with toxins in the building. This is being investigated by a professional firm.

The Old Town Hall has suffered because no one individual or department has responsibility for its management, care or maintenance. Things have been taken care of only when there was an obvious problem.

## RECOMMENDATIONS / OPTIONS

The town needs to decide whether they wish to preserve this building. If so, the roof needs immediate replacement in order to stop further deterioration. Without fixing the roof, there is no point in addressing any of the other problems in the building.

If there is a desire to preserve this building, one option is to phase in the needed repairs.

Phase 1 / year 1     Replace the roof.

Phase 2 / year 2     Repair the sills.

Phase 3 / year 3     Address other problems in the building.

There is no solution to the parking problem short of purchasing land adjacent to the Old Town Hall, which would be an expensive option. An alternative, in order to address the parking issues, would be to procure land

and move the building to a new location. Consideration should be given to removing the addition on the left-hand side that has mold and significant water damage. In order to justify the cost of moving the building and address the already-identified problems, the town would need to have a significant vision as to how to use the building and maximize its service to the town.

At the request of the Committee, Cornerstone Construction, Inc., (CCI) performed an inspection of the Old Town Hall and provided an estimate of what the identified repairs would cost. This estimate is attached below as Appendix A.

## THE OLD FIRE STATION

The Old Fire Station was originally constructed in 1889 and was a 28 x 42 foot structure. When the new fire station was constructed in 1974, the Old Fire Station was used for a while as an EMS station. Upstairs is currently occupied by the Bristol Historical Society. Downstairs is used as storage for off-season town equipment.

## FINDINGS

In the lower level of the station, a temporary wall was constructed in order to provide an office. This has resulted in obstructing air circulation. The rear section of the lower level as well as parts of the outside wall have black mold growing on the walls.

The bell tower is currently leaking because of the ancient age and deterioration of the shingles.

The metal roof needs to be sealed and re-painted. If this is not done soon, the metal will rust further and need to be completely replaced.

The flat section of the roof in the rear of the building needs to be sealed properly to prevent leakage.

There are some areas where water from the roadway seeps into the lower level of the building.

The Historical Society has done an excellent job in improving the upstairs area with the exception of the leaking bell tower section. They have

installed energy-efficient windows and painted as well as scrubbing and keeping the upstairs well cared for.

The lower level of the Old Fire Station provides valuable storage for off-season equipment (the fire department's boat, the police department's speed sign, the Emergency Management trailer and other items). If this area were not available, these items would have to be stored somewhere else and there is very little space available currently.

This building definitely benefits from having two different town groups using it regularly and monitoring its condition.

During the winter, the pipes are drained and the building is not heated.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

When spring arrives and the stored equipment is moved out of the lower level, the non-structural interior wall should be removed. This will facilitate better air flow and circulation.

The areas where mold has been occurring should be treated with a bleach-type product to kill the spores.

During the warm weather, a dehumidifier should be operated in the lower level to remove excess moisture in the basement storage area.

An evaluation should be regularly made after these improvements have been made to determine whether the mold problem has been addressed.

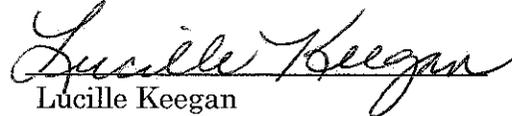
After the drainage issues are addressed on High Street, the lower level should be checked regularly to see if water runoff continues to be a problem.

The shingles on the bell tower need to be replaced as soon as possible. Water is clearly coming in and will cause permanent damage to the building.

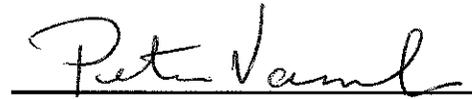
The metal roof needs to be painted as soon as possible before more damage is done. The flat roof needs to be treated with a product similar to what was used on the fire station roof as this will help to seal this roof from leakage.

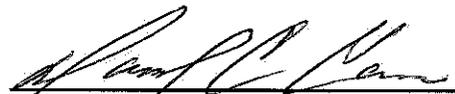
Respectfully submitted,

  
Susan F. Duncan  
Chair

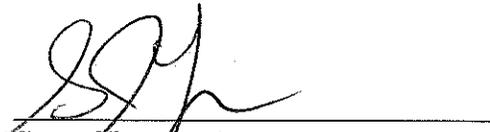
  
Lucille Keegan  
Bristol Energy Comm.

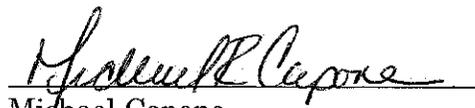
  
Mark Chevalier  
Local Contractor

  
Peter Vannah  
Local Contractor

  
Dave Carr  
On behalf of the Budget Comm.

  
Hilda Bruno  
On behalf of the Historical Society

  
Steve Yannuzzi  
Fire Chief

  
Michael Capone  
Town Administrator

Final Report Old Town Hall Old Fire Station  
January, 2013

***APPENDIX A***

**Sent:** Thursday, December 06, 2012 10:58 AM  
**To:** Town Administrator  
**Cc:** [bill@ccinh.com](mailto:bill@ccinh.com)  
**Subject:** Bristol Meeting House

Based on my walk through with your committee in late November, we would make the following recommendations in order to stabilize the building & renovate it for future use by the community:

#01. Strip existing metal roofing, add new 1/2" CDX plywood, ice & watershield, 30-year architectural asphalt shingles, painted pine trim and flashings. Scope includes debris removal & clean-up.

**Cost - \$49,933.00**

#02. Replace approximately 125 LF of sill, to include building jacking, sill replacement, siding cut & patch, drywall repair (\$1,200.00 allowance) & lead abatement on materials removed (\$1,000.00) allowance.

**Cost - \$29,425.00**

#03. Remove existing chimney (looks like it is going to fall) - direct vent heating system - **\$3,810.00**

#04. Cut bank away from building & install surface drainage swale towards road. Loam & seed areas - provide drip stone at building. - **\$11,170.00**

#05. Patch, paint & repair meeting room ceiling at water damage areas. **\$4,210.00**

#06. Safe room - remove plaster, repair rot, insulate and drywall entire room. **\$9,451.00**

total project - **\$107,999.00**

We exclude hazardous waste survey, abatement, engineering, ledge or boulder removal, unforeseen rot repair not noted above and contingency funds.

Questions - please call.

Jeffrey S. Downing, President  
Conneston Construction, Inc.  
Phone: 603-524-3776  
Fax: 603-524-3681  
<http://www.ccinh.com>

