9/11/2024 – Addison Town Hall Committee

Present: John Spencer, Levi Barrett, Chris Stackhouse and Bob Schatz. Also present, 3 selectmen not attending as selectmen, and 5 members of the public.

John opened the meeting at 6:33 pm.

Public comment: Bob Schatz apologized for failing to effectively warn the cancellation of a public hearing held 9/10 at 7:00 PM at the ACC. A group of the public had shown up to find no hearing being held. He apologized for their inconvenience.

Steve Torrey spoke to the pressing need for a rapid solution to the unfit, inefficient, and unsustainable conditions in the current Clerk's office. He stated that everyone in Addison had best wake up and work hard to address the issue.

John stated he had had limited conversation with Laz Scangus regarding potential redesign of the Town Hall scope of work, while still possibly getting the town offices in the first floor. The second floor would be developed latter by other means. Chris had also written Laz discussing next steps, and had arranged for Laz to call his phone at 6:45. However it seemed the committee felt it premature to attempt redesign via phone call when no clear description of an alternate plan a had been developed. Chris cancelled the call.

Bob Schatz reported the VCRD ADA grant was no longer viable without a bond to back up the project description. We can reapply once a new direction is developed.

The Bruhn grant is also cancelled but can be reapplied in the future. Jenna Lapachinski from the PTV will schedule a site visit in a month or two and bring other funding personnel with her.

John explained the "Village Center" grant could help gain tax credits for Addison.

Levi explained the ARPA funds must be "obligated", as in signed contract, by December 1st, 2024! That gives us very 11 weeks in which to find a design, go to bid, and contract with someone to jack the TH up, install a new foundation, thus taking the first critical step toward spending the funds, preserving the Town Hall, and hopefully creating a great use and solution for the Clerks and Listers.

Jacking would hopefully address the bowed north and south walls, prior to lifting the building.

Chris volunteered to create a list of urgently needed tasks needed to prevent further rot and decay of the building. The chimney is currently leaking and soaking the structure, missing siding, broken windows, replacing failed ridge cap, covering the thick expensive windowsills, etc. All these tasks should be done this fall if possible.

In discussing potential alternative uses for the TH, we saw no obvious good fit, especially without feedback from the selectboard. Could the TH be rented? sold? Would others be able to use the septic system? The building needs a solid use, and the committee agrees the Town Offices is the best use.

Bob hoped a rapid redesign could allow bidding to proceed and start the work in the spring.

Public comment: Elizabeth Armstrong spoke to the previous investments the town had made, from septic system to architectural design, etc. She further questioned the legality of the vote to rescind.

The next meeting date was delayed until we hear more from Laz.

Levi moved to adjourn, second by Chris, 4 yes, 1 absent.

Chris Stackhouse - Clerk