

Cornish Library Exploratory Committee Meeting

7 September 2021

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Minutes

1. Call to order - The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by Chairperson, Laura Cousineau. All seven committee members were present - Laura Cousineau, Caroline Storrs, Susan Chandler, Heidi Jaarsma, Kathi Patterson, Dillon Gallagher, and Larry Dingee. Community members present for all or part of the meeting included Sandi Guest, Bill Gallagher, Colleen O'Neil, Lois Fitts, David Aguiar, Brian Meyette, Barbara Cieslicki, Stephanie McAndrew, and Chris Chilton.
2. Approval of minutes for 8 August 2021 - There being no additions or corrections, Caroline made the motion to approve the minutes as written and emailed. After a second by Sue Chandler, all voted in favor.
3. Reports
 - a. Interior/Exterior (Caroline) - Caroline presented the report from the Interior/Exterior Subcommittee. The committee had set two goals. The first goal was to contact an engineer and engage his/her services for a structural analysis of the building. Kathi had contacted Chris Kennedy of MAKE (formerly U K Architects who had completed the handicap access plans for the current library building) asking for his recommendation for a structural engineer. He recommended Miles Stetson of Engineering Ventures in Lebanon. Caroline contacted Miles who met with the subcommittee members on Thursday, September 2, for a walk-through of the building. His first impression was that, since the building had first been designed as a store that required a stronger lbs./sq. foot load capacity than a library's lbs./sq. foot load capacity, the building should be structurally able to carry the library's materials. He planned to have his report finished in two weeks. The committee's second goal was to complete an RFP for architectural concept plans for interior and exterior of the library and to submit them to a list of architects. Caroline and Susan completed the RFP after input from the other subcommittee members and sent it to six architects, including MAKE, asking for responses by October 8. Chris Kennedy in his response suggested the subcommittee ask for qualifications of the architects rather than an RFP. Caroline stated that the subcommittee would ask for qualification once they had the RFPs in hand. Larry wanted to know where the funds were coming from for payment of the engineering study. Laura replied that the library trustees had authorized payment for the engineering study from the Library Building Fund.
 - b. Fire inspection (Larry) - Larry stated that he had spoken with people in the Fire Marshall's office, but, due to retirements and job shuffling, he had not been in contact with a specific person to arrange an inspection. He expects someone to contact him soon. When the meeting date/time is established, he will invite the

Cornish fire chief and assistant fire chief to attend along with the Exploratory Committee and subcommittees' members. Laura suggested that Larry's committee should maybe be titled Safety Committee instead of Fire Safety Committee.

- c. Open Forum (Laura) - Laura expressed her concern about the type of meeting we want with the recent surge of the Delta variant. Heid asked what was the purpose of the info to be given out at this forum and do we need to wait until the vision of the committee is better formed. Caroline felt that the previous forum was more about what the current library needed. Heidi felt we maybe need to reach a broader spectrum of the public. Colleen wondered if we could use some sort of online survey similar to the recent Cornish Town Meeting day survey. Kathi suggested a town-wide mailing as was done to announce the library's automation. The consensus was that the committee felt it was best to postpone the public forum and, in the meantime, develop an on-line survey and a public mailing.
 - d. There were no other reports.
4. Draft Letter of Intent: Review and discussion - Colleen explained that her letter of intent was a draft and a place to start. (Laura had forwarded the letter to the Exploratory Committee members earlier in the day so some had not had time to review it yet.) She emphasized that it was a working document and a place to start and has not yet been reviewed by her accountant or her lawyer. She described the location, the property, the tax map locations, and that this would be a charitable donation. She listed several terms of the intended gift including that it be named the Cornish Library and Community Center; that the Town agree that the library be open at least 25 hours per week and increased up to 40 hours per week within 5 years of opening, based on the needs of the community; that there be the continuation of the current apartments as rental units, the continuation of the old bank space as a rental unit for at least 6 months, and the rental of the commercial kitchen to William Winand for his chocolate business based on the needs of the library; that the Cornish Aging in Place Committee will be allowed to continue to store handicap equipment in the basement; and that, if the building is sold any time after 20 years, half of the purchase price goes to the Cornish Fair Association.
- a. Heidi thanked Colleen. She wondered what questions Town Counsel would have - would there be statutory restrictions on her name request and what were the written terms of the current leases. Colleen was going to supply copies of the leases to Heidi for Town Counsel.
 - b. Laura asked when would the leases begin. Colleen's answer was the leases would begin when the property becomes the property of the town. Her hope was for a smooth transition if the RSAs allow rentals.
 - c. Susan commented that her recollection of the previous community center discussions was that there would be a designated space within the library for community meetings and programs. The use of the space would be guided by the librarian. This community space would not be space considered separate from the library.

- d. There was a discussion of lease terms. Heidi explained that the selectmen are authorized to lease town property for 1 year with Town approval required for leases of more than 1-year. The Town may vote to extend that approval to a 5-year lease. These votes would be warned via the Town Warrant and voted at March Town Meeting.
- e. Caroline asked, if we decide to keep the current building as an annex, does it remain under the control of the library trustees? Does having a new library with a new name mean new trustees? She doesn't want any roadblocks with the difference in names for the current library and the new library. Heidi replied that the difference is what statute to cite.
- f. Caroline asked Heidi about the flood plain and the LOM (Letter of Map Amendment) because the back corner of the building is in a flood plain. Would Town ownership of the building require a new letter? Heidi said it probably would need to be refiled.
- g. Lois asked why we were not continuing with the plans that had already been designed for the current building. Kathi explained that, although those plans did provide handicap access, a bathroom, and meeting space for about ten people; they had been put on hold when the possibility of a better space more suited to the needs of the library had become available.
- h. Larry asked how many hours the current building is open. Current library hours are Mondays, 4-6 PM, Wednesdays, 3-6 PM, and Saturdays, 9 AM to 1 PM. In addition, curbside pickup is also available on these days and on Fridays from 3 - 6 PM when requested.
- i. Larry also asked how many people were envisioned using the meeting room in the proposed space at any one time. Chris wondered if a fire suppression system would be required by having large groups. Heidi replied that the space is what it is. It will be only one of the many town spaces available for meetings.
- j. Colleen said that there was a lot of enthusiasm with the Friends of the Cornish Library group already. There are about 40 names on her email list. Their next meeting is scheduled for September 15th.
- k. Heidi felt she had enough info with Colleen's Letter of Intent and the forthcoming lease agreements to go to Town Counsel for advice. She would be scheduling that when he was available.
- l. Chris had questions about renters. Heidi will be consulting Town Counsel.
- m. Colleen will share the info from her energy audit. Richard Thompson had approached her about installing solar panels and an electric car charging station.
- n. Susan felt we needed to be proactive with the use of funds for improvements to the current library for water, septic, and sewer. Heidi explained that there were American Rescue Plan funds coming to Cornish based on our population. These funds have to be obligated by 2024 and spent by 2026.

5. Other business -

- a. Larry asked who was going to review the RFPs and added that it might be advantageous to have the selectmen involved. Caroline replied that the process of reviewing would start with the Interior/Exterior Subcommittee who would review all

of the proposals and then make recommendations to the committee. Heidi suggested that the whole committee meet to discuss all the responses. The consensus was to bring all of the RFPs to the whole committee for discussion. Dillon will also bring them to the selectmen for their input.

6. Next Meeting - It was decided to set the next meeting for Tuesday, October 5th, at 6:00 PM at the former General Store Building.
7. Adjournment - Susan moved to adjourn the meeting. After a second by Caroline and unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM.