

**Library Exploratory Committee Meeting**  
**15 March 2022**  
**Cornish Town Offices**

Present:

Committee members: Laura Cousineau, Heidi Jaarsma, Dillon Gallagher, Kathi Patterson, Larry Dingee, Susan Chandler  
Absent: Caroline Storrs

Citizens: Colleen O'Neill, Keith Mullane, Bill Gallagher, Stephanie McAndrew, Nancy Newbold

**Agenda**

1. **Call to order** at 6:32 pm. Agenda review—additions by Kathi and Heidi
2. **Approval of 2/15/22 minutes.** Kathi moves, Heidi seconds, unanimous approval
3. **Review/debrief of Town Meeting :**

Laura shared comments from those citizens who visited the Trustees table at the town meeting. Most of the comments were very positive. Some said that a new library building would mean that Cornish would never have a store, that Cornish doesn't need a library, that the town has too many buildings. Others were very excited by the prospect of a new library.

Colleen said that the CCI and Friends tables were well visited. They handed out info and spoke about future activities. Many signed up to be Friends.

Susan and others spoke to being surprised by the increase in the amount requested in the warrant article.

Susan and Heidi spoke to the need for a forum in which we listen to the concerns and idea of our citizenry—a foundational forum.

Larry, echoing Ginger Atwater's Town Meeting comments, wondered how much of the taxpayers' money we will spend in the future.

Heidi wondered how we thought the vote, if taken at this Town Meeting, would have gone.

Nancy Newbold and Bill Gallagher spoke to the composting toilet, both feeling the need to replace it now. Heidi felt that there would be funds available from the selectmen.
4. **Clarification on the limits of committee's scope: plan for Stowell renovation as library vs plan of Stowell renovation for any purpose:**

There was a discussion about the details of contacting the MA+KE architect, Chris Kennedy, re: new plans for the Stowell renovation. Kathi and Larry were assigned as a team to pursue this. Kathi felt out of the loop when Larry on his own contacted the architect. She had been invited to attend the virtual meeting as the architect was in Australia, but time differences prevented her doing so.

Laura felt that our discussions had concluded that the Trustees would be selecting the plan that would be used by the architects to project renovation costs. Heidi felt that all of the possibilities had been discussed at our February meeting. Laura was under the impression that we were using the original A2 architectural plan with the addition of the new land acquisition allowing water and septic and ADA required improvements, not an entirely new plan.

At the mention of the state librarian's call for ADA compliance, Dilly wanted it noted that he had not been invited to the meeting with the state librarian. Other members of the committee stated that they, too, had not been. (That meeting was not under the auspices of the Exploratory Committee nor the Trustees).

Laura is confident that Larry and Kathy can work together with MA+KE (or any other architect).

There was discussion of the ADA compliance. Larry felt that the building as a town building still needed ADA compliance. Susan wondered if it was a historical building on the historic register would ADA compliance be required.

Laura felt that we were going out of scope. The basic issue was if the library is here here's what you get at this price. If the library is there, here's what you get at this price. It was determined that the town needs to be able to compare the two buildings. A motion was moved by Larry, seconded by Kathi, approved unanimously that:

**Should the town hire MA+KE or any other architectural firm to make plans for the Stowell Building renovation as a library, all the Exploratory Committee members would be part of it.**

5. **Explanation of expanded costs on the warrant:**

Heidi stated that she had expanded the costs based on new information and that she had informed the chair. She had not sent out a group email fearing that that might constitute a meeting.

The costs are as follows:

Part I Professional fees: 12,711 Project proposal p.15

Part Ia Preliminary Energy Modeling: 4378 Project proposal p.16

Construction cost estimate: 1200 Chris Kennedy email

Space Utilization study: 1500 Verbal estimate from Tom Ladd

Estimate for furnishing store: 5000 Laura Cousineau email

TOTAL: 24,789

Stephanie McAndrew has a lead on other interior furnishings people recommended to her by other librarians. There is one in the state who is free and we would get a discount on furnishings. Laura cautioned that there are companies people work with whose designs are free but the furnishings are very expensive. She has spoken with Chris Surunis who suggested that we may take advantage of offices disbanding by getting good used furnishings at a discount.

Larry and Susan both emphasized using local resources whenever possible.

5b. Kathi provided handouts for the Stowell renovation, for shelving configurations due to ADA requirements, and a comparative analysis of Stowell vs. the store. These handouts were made available but not discussed at this meeting.

She read a letter from Tony Newton, written at her request, that stated that the Newtons were selling only .09 acres and no more and that they would not allow parking on their property.

Dillon stated that the Selectmen were going ahead with closing on the purchase of the land next week. A question came up as to whether the septic system design has been approved or is legal. Dillon will look into that.

Laura shared that the Trustees had drafted and approved a motion making their feelings clear based on the information that they have. They do not recommend renovating the Stowell Library and do recommend moving to the new building. (The exact language was not available for this meeting.) Their intent is to give the town the best library it can. She stated that in her role as chair of the Exploratory Committee, it was her duty to provide the town with the information they needed to accept or reject the offer of a new library. Her role as a trustee is to ensure that Cornish has the library it needs, it wants, and it deserves, and is the best library it can be.

Larry wondered if with new information, the Trustees would reconsider. Laura stated that she could not speak for the other trustees but "if you can pull a rabbit out of a hat and make that building everything it needs to be, I'd consider it."

#### **6. Open Forum(s):**

It was proposed to host a first foundational forum in April as a listening session to hear citizens' thoughts on what they want, what a library should be in this community and any concerns. A Saturday at 1:00 was considered the best time to attract as many people as possible to the Town Hall .

A Banwell forum was suggested for May. Other forums with MA+KE were suggested. Postcards via Everydoor Mail to announce the meetings were thought to qualify for an expenditure of money from our funds.

Parking was discussed as there have been complaints from a neighbor when cars are parked on his lawn. Kathi spoke to Doug Hackett who stated that as long as the north passenger side tires were on the pavement, all was well. On someone's lawn, not ok. Cars parking on both sides of School Street with tires on the pavement would not allow enough room for emergency vehicles to pass. Larry and Dillon felt that the selectmen could override this according to their authority over the roads right of way. Susan stated that in her experience, the fire department's needs always won in any discussion. It was agreed that how many parking spaces are needed and where they are to be located needs to be addressed in any Stowell renovation plan.

Next meeting: March 29, 2022

6:30 pm

Town Offices

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm