

TOWN OF STOW COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

APPLICATION

Submitter: Doug Hyde

Submission Date: December 1st, 2021

Group or Committee Affiliation (if any): Town Hall Restoration Committee

Submitter's address and phone number:

Doug Hyde

380 Great Road

Stow MA

978-897-2193

Purpose (please select all that apply):

☐ Open Space / Recreation

☐ Affordable Housing

☒ Historic

Submitter's email address: building3@stow-ma.gov

Project Name: Town Hall Restoration

Project Description: The town hall is the landmark center of the town of Stow. The building is in severe disrepair and is currently is not being actively used due to its condition.

In 2018, the Town Hall Restoration Committee (THRC) was formed by the town to define what restoration would be required to restore the Town Hall and to have a functional building for use by the town and Stow residents. Using CPA funds authorized by two town meetings, the THRC initially focused on defining the scope of this project and is now moving into the final design phase, which is expected to end in Q2, 2021 with bid-ready construction documentation.

In addition to restoring a truly iconic historic town building, the committee sees its mission to include upgrading and improving the building in order to increase its usefulness to Stow residents. The main hall is a unique space that has been and will be used by organizations and individuals for a wide range of activities including celebrations, dancing, meetings and other events such as candidate night. In addition, we expect some town entities to need space in the building; Stow Historical Commission and Stow TV have requested space.

List Departments/Boards you have spoken with:

The THRC has members from the following town committees: Finance (vacant), Capital, CPC (vacant), Historical Commission, Select Board and a representative from the Building Department. The Committee has engaged regularly with these boards with progress reports made by their THRC representative. As the work progresses through the design phase, the Committee will continue to communicate and meet with town committees as well as hold several public meetings designed to update and solicit input from Stow residents. **The THRC met recently with CPC to discuss bonding.**

Total Estimated Cost (include estimate sign cost)	CPA Funds Requested	Other Funding Sources
\$ 4.8 M	\$ 4.8 M	TBD see below for details

The committee is requesting CPA funds to pay for the total estimated construction costs. THRC acknowledges that this funding request is a significant amount in terms of total dollars requested as well as the percentage of CPA funds currently available. However, the committee recognizes that historic restoration projects are generally not a high priority in municipal capital budgets. Therefore, the primary, perhaps sole, source of funding for this project is CPC, which is the only town organization with a mandate to fund historic preservation projects.

To reduce the use of CPA funds, THRC is exploring other applicable funding sourcing. The committee is currently exploring the grants and funding sources listed in the table below. THRC is also working with State Representative Kate Hogan to identify other funding sources.

The list below are the current options that the committee is exploring for funding.

Name of funding source	Application date	Estimate of funding	comments
ADA improvement - design	complete	<50K	
ADA	October 2021	100K	This is an estimate
Green Communities			
Stow TV	Project completion	100K	Depends on Stow TV receiving funding from Cable TV
MA preservation project fund	March 20 th 2023	100K	Window restoration could be funded this way after the building restoration. Getting on the national register is dependent on project completion

However, the committee cannot rely on any awarded grant to cover anything more than a small portion of the construction costs. The Committee recognizes that there is no guarantee that the town hall project will be awarded any funds from these organizations or that the funds will be received in a timely fashion to pay for construction costs when due. THRC hopes to receive some funding to reduce the project's reliance on CPA funds but cannot realistically consider these potential grants in determining how to pay for the Town Hall's restoration project.

The committee is also considering ways to generate donations from Stow residents and private organizations. As part of that effort, the Committee has explored the creation of a Friends of the Town Hall to support the restoration fundraising effort with PR and fundraising. Unfortunately, the Committee has, thus far, been unable to find individuals willing to take on the task of creating a Friends organization and building support for the Friends and the restoration project. Due to the uncertainty of non-town sourced funding, the Town Hall Restoration Committee has no choice but to request for CPA funding to cover the full project cost.

COST ESTIMATE SUMMARY via RESTORATION COST CENTERS

\$1,700,000	COST CENTER 1 / BUILDING SYSTEM UPGRADES: Insulate Building, Reinforce Roof, Restore Windows, Replace Mechanical & Electrical Systems, & Related Upgrades
\$800,000	COST CENTER 2 / ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: Meet Current Accessibility Code, Add Elevator, Add Ramp to Stage, Widen Doors, & Upgrade Fire Alarm System
\$500,000	COST CENTER 3 / IMPROVE SUPPORT FACILITIES: Improve Meeting Rooms, Provide Event Lighting, Replace AV Systems, Kitchenette, Storage, & Related Items
\$1,200,000	COST CENTER 4 / RESTORATION & REPAIRS: Remove Exterior Ramps at Both Levels, Remove Fire Escape, Restore Site, Address Water Infiltration, & Repair Stone Walls
\$4,200,000	ESTIMATED COST OF CONSTRUCTION**
\$600,000	RELATED PROJECT COSTS: Contingency, Owner's Insurance, Testing, Miscellaneous Project Expenses, Arch./Engr. Fees for Bidding & Construction Administration
\$4,800,000	ESTIMATED PROJECT COST FOR RESTORATION**

**Cost Escalation Included / Assumes Project Approval at ATM 2022 with June 2022 Construction Start

COST ESTIMATE SUMMARY via BIDDING ALTERNATES

\$3,665,800	BASE BID of ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST**
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\$365,000	ALTERNATE NO. 1: Add Great Hall Audiovisual Systems for Integrated Screen, Projector, and Speakers
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\$49,400	ALTERNATE NO. 2: Add Great Hall Event Lighting & Associated Controls for Improved Use
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\$23,900	ALTERNATE NO. 3: Upgrade Exterior Illumination of Front Façade in lieu of Existing Flood Light
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\$95,900	ALTERNATE NO. 4: Improve Accessible Parking on Crescent Street & Accessible Route to Entrance
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\$4,200,000	ESTIMATED COST OF CONSTRUCTION with ALTERNATES**
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\$600,000	RELATED PROJECT COSTS: Contingency, Insurance, Testing, A/E, Misc. Expenses
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\$4,800,000	ESTIMATED PROJECT COST FOR RESTORATION**
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**Cost Escalation Included / Assumes Project Approval at ATM 2022 with June 2022 Construction Start

REVIEW of MISSING ELEMENTS in ESTIMATED COSTS of the PRIOR STUDY

\$2,392,000	BASE COST ESTIMATE FROM PRIOR STUDY
\$232,000	ADD ALTERNATE: Provide LULA Elevator vs Vertical Wheelchair Lift (See Note 1)
\$34,000	ADD ALTERNATE: Provide Spray Foam Insulation vs Blown-in (See Note 1)
(\$75,000)	Delete Estimated Cost of Fire Suppression System (Not Required by Code)
\$77,000	Add Construction Escalation Costs Due to Adjustments from Prior Schedule

\$2,660,000	ADJUSTED COST of RECOMMENDED SCOPE from PRIOR STUDY
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\$439,000	Roof Reinforcement Required for Insulation (See Note 1)
\$59,000	Exterior Location of HVAC Equipment Required (See Note 1)
\$123,000	Restrooms to Support Occupant Load Expanded (See Note 1)
\$15,000	Reconfigure Balcony Area for Safety (Missing in Scope of Prior Study)
\$28,000	Replace 1st Floor Ramp to Ell with Accessible Walkway (Restore Sideyard)
\$180,000	Reconfigure Entrance Forecourt Layout (Remove Remnant Driveway)

\$3,504,000	PRIOR STUDY'S COST + OMITTED REQUIREMENTS
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\$661,000	Prior Study's Preliminary Contingency + Owner's Expenses
\$535,000	Prior Study's Owner's Project Rep + Arch/Engr Fees

\$4,700,000	ADJUSTED PROJECT COST of PRIOR STUDY
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NOTE 1: Items noted above were all recommended in the prior study but were not included in the Prior Project Budget.

COMPARISON of ESTIMATED COST from PRIOR STUDY to PROPOSED PROJECT
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\$4,800,000	Estimated Budget of Proposed Project
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\$4,700,000	Adjusted Estimated Budget from Prior Study
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\$100,000	REALISTIC DIFFERENTIAL COST of STUDY vs PROPOSED PROJECT
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NOTE: The Prior Study proposed an inaccurate budget total as a result of excluding several recommended project features, portraying an inaccurate project cost that was less than required for the restoration. The "Adjusted Estimated Budget from Prior Study" incorporates those missing items into the former budget.

FAQ DRAFT for TOWN HALL RESTORATION PROJECT

24 Nov 2021

by Don Mills / Mills Whitaker Architects

for review and comments by the THRC

How will the restored building be used and why do we even need it?

The Town Hall has been and will be used for a wide range of community events and its restoration will make it even more functional for local meetings, performances, clubs, receptions, parties, workshops, dance classes, and the like.

Why do we need another place for community events when we already have Pompo?

Pompo is frequently overbooked and does not have the character and charm of Town Hall, and private spaces at other local venues are not always available.

Why not just tear the building down and build a park or sell it as-is to a developer?

This is an important and visually prominent historic building in Stow that was the Town Hall from 1848 to 1989 and has unique qualities for a variety of community events.

Why not just keep the building as-is instead of spending money on improvements?

The facility is uninsulated, drafty, expensive to heat, has no air conditioning, and is worn down which severely limits interest in using it and restricts it from year-round use.

What will be done to make the building more comfortable, and will it be energy efficient?

The oil-fired hot air furnaces will be removed and a state-of-the-art electric air source heat pump system for heating, cooling and energy-recovery ventilation will be installed, making use of the reduced rates from the clean municipal electrical utility grid.

Why not just do minimal improvements to keep the building in reasonable condition?

If more than \$126,000 is spent on improvements over a three-year period, code requires the building to be made fully handicap accessible.

Why does the building need to be made handicap accessible? Isn't it already accessible?

While there are ramped entrances into both floor levels now, the building does not conform to current accessibility regulations as mandated by the building code.

Why does a historic building need to be handicap accessible? Aren't there variances available?

Yes, and while the project did receive several variances from the Architectural Access Board, a substantial amount of accessibility work is still required by code.

Why does there need to be an elevator between the two floors?

Since the two floors are part of the same building and contain a stairway between them, handicap access between floors is code mandated so that someone in a wheelchair does not have to go outside the building to go from one floor to the other.

What sort of improvements are proposed for the Great Hall and how will it affect its character?

The project will make the stage handicap accessible, integrate audiovisual systems, improve lighting for meetings and performances, improve room acoustics, restore windows, and relocate chair/table storage into a small adjacent room off the foyer. The room character will be restored, and the community quilt will retain its prominent place.

Why will the restrooms be downstairs when the main activity space is upstairs?

The upstairs currently has two restrooms that are inadequate to meet plumbing code, so expanded restrooms will be provided downstairs to allow room for a side lobby and catering pantry on the first floor adjacent to the main hall.

How will the cost of this restoration affect my taxes?

Funds from the Stow Community Preservation Committee are being requested for this project, and those funds are from taxes that are already collected annually by the town.

Are there grants available for funding this project instead of using our tax dollars?

There are some limited grants for historic restoration and accessibility improvements that are being considered and can be sought if the project receives town approval. If the CPC funds and successful grants are not adequate, override funds will be needed.

Why not phase the project over time to minimize cost and disruption?

Phasing a project over time increases the overall cost and extends the disruption to its use since it would likely be out of commission during each phase of the work. Also, the proposed work involves integrated improvements that are best done simultaneously.

Why spend money on this building since there is no parking for events?

There are a few parking spaces on Crescent Street, and more at the Town Building and former Fire Station. Safety improvements to existing crosswalks are recommended.

Will the restoration destroy the historic character of the building given the magnitude of work?

The work complies with the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties" and the Massachusetts Historical Commission reviewed the project and determined that there will be "no adverse effect" to the building's integrity.