

In May, we reported that the Community Center Use Committee was waiting for approval of an occupancy permit from the State Fire Marshall's Office. We are very pleased to announce that a permit has been approved and it does not require the town to install a sprinkler system. However, there are some life safety improvements needed such as a fire detection and alarm system, fire rating improvements to some walls, and changes to door hardware. The approval also comes with some restrictions on the type of activities that can be conducted in the building, that is, the permit was issued based on a Committee proposed level of occupancy and types of activities for various parts of the building. The permit does allow use of the Multi-Purpose room for town hall meetings and other community related activities.

The Community Center Use Committee has a drawing that reflects these requirements and additional floor plan modifications that would, if implemented result in the building being used for town offices, community center, and commercial activities. It is now working to produce a project cost that can be presented to the town for consideration. The chosen way forward is to produce a set of contract drawing and specifications that are then advertised for bids. Project award would be contingent on approval at a town meeting. The advantage of this method is that the cost presented to the voters would represent what a contractor is actually willing to be paid for the work versus what an estimator thinks it might cost. We want to reassure you that when you see the bid requests in the Shopper's Guide, we will NOT be awarding the project before approval by the voters.

The process of converting the proposed floor plan into completed drawings and specs and then putting the project out for bids will take more time than we would like but the committee feels it is necessary to have the complete picture available to the town's people. We want to assure you the Selectmen and the Committee are working diligently and cooperatively to get the process completed.

Finally, in making their recommendations on how to use the building, the committee tried to minimize the long-term costs of ownership for the town. This includes renting out significant portions that are not needed for town purposes. This would include some long-term leases for the older class rooms as well as special event leases for the Multi-Purpose room. We are pleased that we have had a number of people express interest even though we haven't advertised or looked for tenants.

Sincerely

Baldwin Board of Selectmen