

Town of Shaftsbury Community Center Development Committee meeting

May 2, 2024

In person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

1. Call to order

The meeting came to order at 4:30 p.m. Present were committee members Martha Cornwell (chair), Marlene Hall, Zoe Contros Kearn, Sarah Costin, Marie Watson, and Joan Dornhoeffer. Also present was Paula Iken, town administrator; David Kiernan, former Town Administrator; and webmaster/Zoom coordinator Jen Holley.

2. Conflict of interest

No one reported any conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Report on ARPA expenditures

Mr. Kiernan outlined expenditures to date – for the Cole Hall area, for the transfer station shed, for the stormwater system rehab design at the transfer station (well 6 for the landfill has begun to exceed surface water allowances for chloride), the North Shaftsbury community center roof, the Historical Society, and digital speed monitoring signs. The group discussed the costs listed. Mr. Kiernan reported that the total spent or committed so far is \$417,793.41. Remaining is \$607,206.69.

4. Summary of architect recommendations

Mr. Kiernan reiterated that the federal requirement is that signed contracts for the entire \$607K+ balance must be in place by the end of the year. The group discussed a summary document prepared by the architectural team. That handout is incorporated in these minutes by reference. Mr. Kiernan left the meeting.

Ms. Cornwell reported that the CCDC, the economic development committee, and the sewer feasibility committee missions all overlap and that therefore all three will need to work together going forward to make decisions and schedule actions.

She said that she and Select Board chair have been working to understand the town's obligations and options and have concluded that theretofore the Select Board hadn't fully understand those issues. She said she will have more to report after a full meeting of the Select Board.

She said she believes the ARPA balance does not after all have to be obligated by the end of 2024. She summarized the many tasks before the various committees, and the many improvements necessary for Cole Hall.

Ms. Contros Kearn offered to reach out to her mother, who works in architecture and is familiar with the needs of historic buildings.

Ms. Cornwell reported that some of the uses proposed for the community center would not after all be appropriate for the space, including elections and town meeting. Ms. Hall said the elections require storage space that isn't available now.

Ms. Cornwell asked committee members to consider what kind of uses they envision for the community center. The group looked at how traffic would circulate throughout the Cole Hall parcel and how a community septic might be accommodated.

Ms. Cornwell recommended that folks visit the Manchester Rec Center, the Arlington Commons, and the Lake Paran lake house for inspiration. She spoke about the need for food help in the Southshire, especially among elders and families.

Ms. Cornwell suggested thinking about Congressional funding for the community center.

Ms. Corwell suggested using ARPA funds to hire a grant writer. She encouraged committee members to send in any ideas about grants or funding.

Ms. Hall suggested we put the architectural project back out to bid, as the Town has spent \$50,000 so far and has very little to show for it. Ms. Cornwell described how hard it has been to get local bids, and that non-local bids often don't fit our needs. Ms. Cornwell said now that the committee has been formed, a clearer direction can be given our consultants. It will also help us get better estimates of costs.

The group discussed repairs to the electrical system.

The group scheduled the next meeting for May 29 at 4:30 p.m., after Ms. Cornwell and Ms. Miller have had a meeting with the architects.

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.