

Town Office Planning Committee – Statement of Work

June 14, 2021

Objectives

Recognizing a long standing and increasingly urgent deterioration of the current Strafford Town Office physical structure (TOS), the Strafford Select Board (Board) has initiated a planning project and appointed a Town Office Planning Committee (Committee). The charge to the Committee follows.

1. Study, update and specify essential requirements and desirable features for the TOS.
2. Identify and review any already existing plans/estimates dealing with renovation of the current TOS.
3. Review and evaluate potential sites for a new TOS, including town owned sites or sites that may be for sale.
4. Consistent with Open Meeting regulations, publicize all Committee decisions and activities. Conduct community meetings seeking high involvement from all interested parties.
5. Identify, explore and rank potential solutions, based on the requirements analysis, which may include renovation of the current TOS, adaptation or modification of another existing facility, or construction of an entirely new TOS. Recommend appropriate option to the Board.
6. Gather information to apply for a planning grant to develop a feasibility study for the recommended option.
7. Contract an architect/engineer to conduct the feasibility study.

Following a grant decision, and after review and adjustment of the Town Office Planning Committee membership a second phase of the planning project will begin.

8. Develop a funding strategy for the selected option.
9. Seek project funding.

Issues

Items that are likely to be the subject of concern, debate or dispute:

1. Need for a renovated or new TOS.
2. Features, size, and functions of a TOS.
3. Cost to the taxpayers of Strafford, both initial and ongoing commitments; source of funds.
4. Esthetics, appearance and design.
5. Impact on neighbors, parking, traffic.
6. Anticipated future development in digital records storage and capability for remote meetings/service.
7. Community engagement – a high level is essential; the grant application process will require this.
8. Impact on/or coordination with existing Strafford organizations and facilities
9. Regulatory concerns.
10. Environmental/sustainability considerations.
11. Anticipated funding opportunities may prioritize inclusion of community center(s) and enhanced emergency response capability.

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Timing

Grant application cycles strongly suggest that Objective 4 be reached by September 2021. The Board expects to receive a recommendation for the best option (Objective 5) by mid-August 2021. The Board anticipates seeking project funding in the first quarter of 2022, dependent on the feasibility study outcome.