# SOUTH HERO TOWN HALL

A Community Building For The Next 100 Years.

#### Town Hall Study Committee

- → By popular vote on March 7, 2023 a committee was formed to investigate the feasibility of moving the Town Office to the Old White Meeting House Site.
- → The committee determined early on that the White Meeting House itself was not a viable option. They concluded that:

"the historic preservation path would be too expensive, place too many restrictions on the town office project, and push the timeline too far into the future".



#### Town Hall Study Committee

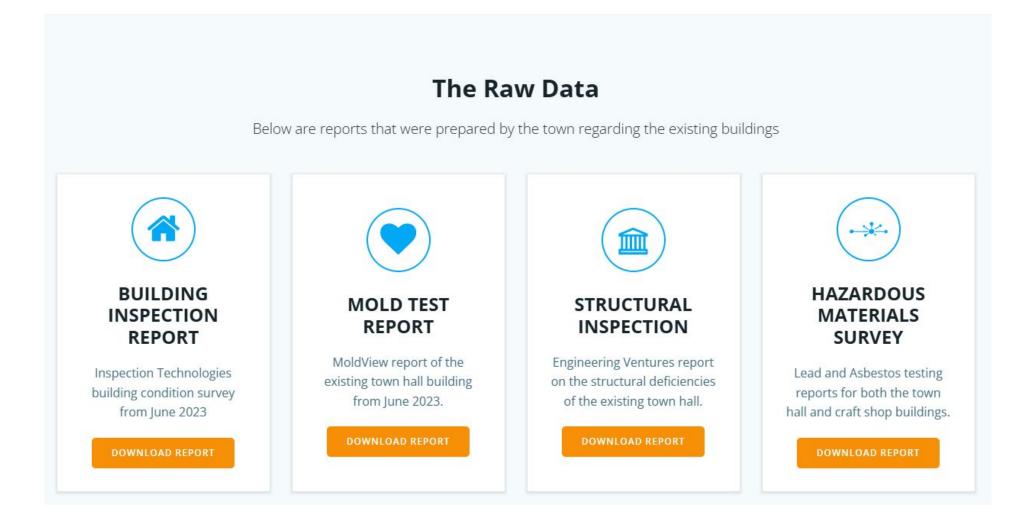
As part of their scope this committee completed various inspections of the current town office including:

- → Building inspection
- → Structural inspection by a structural engineer
- → Mold inspection
- Hazardous materials inspections (lead and asbestos)\*

\*completed by TOBC



### THESE REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE TOWN WEBSITE OR AT WWW.SHTOWNHALL.INFO



#### Town Hall Study Committee

- The inspections identified numerous structural deficiencies, a failing foundation, rot, mold, and moisture related issues.
- Additionally, the building has insufficient vault space for land records, and a lack of adequate office and meeting space. Also, the current town hall does not meet today's accessibility, life-safety, fire code, plumbing or electrical codes.





"Extensive building flooding causing evaporation/condensation issues is propagating excessive molds on the underside of the floor structure. The black colored mold is likely Stachybotrys species, the white mold is likely Cladosporium species, and the yellow mold is likely Aspergillus species. ALL areas of floor joists and Homasote (fiber board) attached to the floor joists are saturated wet, and moldy."



"Moisture rot is present on all visible floor joists at their ends bearing on the foundation. A lost sill plate may have allowed the floor joists to drop 2 inches; and the weight bearing ends, now sitting directly on the cement foundation, are beginning to shear off. This is a major structural concern as shearing floor joists may be pushing outward against the top of the right foundation wall and across the bottom of the right structural wall of the building."



"The step cracking includes mortar joints and through blocks; and continues through the structural concrete apron ledge. This is a structural concern. Step cracking is normally a sign of structural impairment from settling and/or lateral movement. It is your inspector's opinion that this is the result of rotting first floor floor joists shearing from atop the foundation and causing an outward pressure on the top of the foundation and on the base of the exterior structural walls."



#### **Town Hall Study Committee**

The Town Office Study Committee concluded that a new town office would be the best long-term solution. They summarized their conclusions in a recommendation to the Selectboard.

## New Town Hall Building Committee

Following the recommendation of the Town Hall Study Committee, the Selectboard formed a Building Committee.

The Selectboard asked for volunteers for this committee that would include:

"Community members with relevant expertise in architecture, construction, or project management"

#### **New Town Hall Building Committee Members:**

Kathleen Swanson, Chair Phil Scott, Vice Chair Nate Hayward, Secretary Anne Zolotas, Selectboard Representative Jill Lowrey Matt Reed

# The Charge from the Selectboard

"Oversee the planning, design, and construction of a new town hall that will serve the needs of the community for the foreseeable future"

- Identify potential sites for the new town hall and recommend the most suitable location to the Selectboard.
- Assess the current and future space requirements for municipal departments, public meetings, and community events...
- Develop an RFP to procure the services of an architectural firm to create a conceptual design and detailed plans for the new town hall.

# The Charge from the Selectboard

- Engage with the community to gather input on the design, features, and accessibility of the new town hall.
- Develop a project budget and explore funding options, including grants, bonds, and public-private partnerships.
- Oversee the bidding process for construction and recommend the most qualified contractor to the Selectboard.
- Monitor the construction process to ensure adherence to plans, specifications, and budget.







#### **Extensive Analysis of Each Site**

Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	the second second second second	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Portion of 353 US Route 2 fronting on the South side of Route 2 - Robinson Farm
Α	353 US Route 2	Island Acres Farm, LLC.	No	Yes	See notes	See notes	Probably	Yes	Currently for sale?	No.
									Requires Subdivision?	Yes, would need to be subdivided from the roughly 180+ acre parcel.
									Septic?	Would require locating and permitting a conforming system.
									Water?	Would require a drilled well, or seeking a water allocation from Fire District 4 if possible.
									Act 250 Site?	The property has been subject to Act 250 jurisdication due to the development of the storage units on Wally's Point Rd. This likely subjects future development to Act 250 jurisdiction. If further exploration of this site is desired seeking an Act 250 Jurisdictional opinion would be advisable.
									Conservation easement?	Subject to conservation easement. See: https://www.shlt.org/conservation. Can NOT be developed
									Go - No go	Dismissed due to conservation easement

# All sites documented in our meeting minutes, See <a href="http://southherovt.org">http://southherovt.org</a>

South	Hero Town office Build	ing Site ranking form - DRAI	T FOR DISCL	JSSION						
Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	Requires Subdivision?	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Portion of 353 US Route 2 fronting on the South side of Route 2 - Robinson Farm
Α	353 US Route 2	Island Acres Farm, LLC.	No	Yes	See notes	See notes	Probably	Yes	Currently for sale?	No.
									Requires Subdivision?	Yes, would need to be subdivided from the roughly 180+ acre parcel.
									Septic?	Would require locating and permitting a conforming system.
									Water?	Would require a drilled well, or seeking a water allocation from Fire District 4 if possible.
									Act 250 Site?	The property has been subject to Act 250 jurisdication due to the development of the storage units on Wally's Point Rd. This likely subjects future development to Act 250 jurisdiction. If further exploration of this site is desired seeking an Act 250 Jurisdictional opinion would be advisable.
									Conservation easement?	Subject to conservation easement. See: https://www.shlt.org/conservation. Can NOT be developed
									Go - No go	Dismissed due to conservation easement
Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	Requires Subdivision?	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Portion of 355 US Route 2 fronting on the South side of Route 2 - Lawrence Farm
в	355 US Route 2	Ralph W. Lawrence Jr	No	Yes	See notes	See notes	Maybe	No	Currently for sale?	No.
									Requires Subdivision?	Yes, would need to be subdivided from the roughly 26+ acre parcel.
									Septic?	Would require locating and permitting a conforming system.
									Water?	Would require a drilled well, or seeking a water allocation from Fire District 4 if possible.
									Act 250 Site?	Commercial development on a parcel over 10 acres would likely trigger Act 250 jurisdiction. Not certain if subdividing off a less than 10 acre parcel might avoid Act 250, or be seen as an attempt to circumvent jurisdiction thereby triggering it. If further exploration of this site is desin seeking an Act 250 Jurisdictional opinion would be advisable.
									Conservation easement?	No.
									Go - No go	For discussion
Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	Requires Subdivision?	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Existing town office and Island Craft shop parcels
С	329-333 US Route 2	Town of South Hero	No	No	See notes	Yes	No	No	Currently for sale?	No. Already town owned
									Requires Subdivision?	No
									Septic?	Would require locating and permitting a new system (best fix most likley). This would need to be done early in process to ensure new town office is not built over best soils. See attached state waste water rules relating to replacement structure.
									Water?	Would utilize the existing Fire District 4 water service.
									Act 250 Site?	No. Total land area is under 10 acres.
									Conservation easement?	No.
									Go - No go	For discussion
Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	Requires Subdivision?	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Portion of 353 US Route 2 fronting on the North side of Route 2 - Robinson Farm
D	353 US Route 2	Island Acres Farm, LLC.	No	Yes	See notes	See notes	Probably	No	Currently for sale?	No.
									Requires Subdivision?	Yes, would need to be subdivided from the roughly 180+ acre parcel.
									Septic?	Would require locating and permitting a conforming system.
									Water?	Would require a drilled well, or seeking a water allocation from Fire District 4 if possible.
									Act 250 Site?	The property has been subject to Act 250 jurisdication due to the development of the storage units on Wally's Point Rd. This likely subjects future development to Act 250 jurisdiction. If further exploration of this site is desired seeking an Act 250 Jurisdictional opinion would be advisable.
									Conservation easement?	This portion of 353 US Route 2 appears to be excluded from the conservation easement. Se https://www.shlt.org/conservation.
									Go - No go	For discussion

Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	Requires Subdivision?	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Former Pharmacy building and property
Е	330-334 US Route 2	330-334 US Route 2, LLC.	No	No	See notes	Yes	No	No	Currently for sale?	No.
									Requires Subdivision?	No
									Septic?	Existing system is less than required for a Town Office
									Water?	Would utilize the existing Fire District 4 water service.
									Act 250 Site?	No. Total land area is under 10 acres.
									Conservation easement?	No.
									Go - No go	Dismissed due to insufficient wastewater capacity, parking limitations, currently leased, and unsuitability for conversion into a town office, also not presently for sale
Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	Requires Subdivision?	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Old Red Fire Station and portion of future park land
F	318-320 US Route 2	Town of South Hero and land to be granted by BLA to town	No	No	See notes	Yes	No	No	Currently for sale?	No. Already town owned, and to be donated
									Requires Subdivision?	No, Existing parcel and added land via BLA
									Septic?	Septic capacity has been proven via test pits and completed hydrostudy. Will require a wastewater permit.
									Water?	Would utilize the existing Fire District 4 water service that currently supplies the old red fire station.
									Act 250 Site?	No. Total land area is under 10 acres.
									Conservation easement?	No.
									Go - No go	For discussion
Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	Requires Subdivision?	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Open parcel fronting on US Route 2, East of post office
G	275 US Route 2	Lavin, Martin and Patricia	No	No	See notes	See notes	No	No	Currently for sale?	No. Under contract for sale
									Requires Subdivision?	No, already subdivided
									Septic?	The seller previously permitted wastewater for a multi unit housing project with multiple mound septic systems. A buyer would need to repermit for their intended use and pay for the system. The location of the previously permitted septic mounds are approx. 3,000 feet south of this parcel. Less desirable due to required length of force main that would be required
									Water?	Would require a drilled well, or seeking a water allocation from Fire District 4 if possible.
									Act 250 Site?	No. Total land area is under 10 acres.
									Conservation easement?	No.
									Go - No go	Dismissed due to the fact that is is under contract for sale. Permitted for a mini-golf course.
Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	Requires Subdivision?	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Open parcel fronting on US Route 2, West of Island Racing
н	275 US Route 2	Lavin, Martin and Patricia	Yes	No	See notes	See notes	No	No	Currently for sale?	Yes, listed for sale for \$200,000.
									Requires Subdivision?	No, already subdivided
									Septic?	The seller previously permitted wastewater for a multi unit housing project with multiple mound septic systems. A buyer would need to repermit for their intended use and pay for the system. The location of the previously permitted septic mounds are approx. 3,000 feet south of this parcel. Less desirable due to required length of force main that would be required
									Water?	Would require a drilled well, or seeking a water allocation from Fire District 4 if possible.
									Act 250 Site?	No. Total land area is under 10 acres.
									Conservation easement?	No.
									Go - No go	For discussion

Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	Requires Subdivision?	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Open parcel fronting on US Route 2, East of Island Racing
1	269 US Route 2	HSE Realty LLC.	No	No	See notes	See notes	Probably	No	Currently for sale?	No
									Requires Subdivision?	No, received local subdivision permit (deferred lot)
									Septic?	No wastewater is permitted
									Water?	Would require a drilled well, or seeking a water allocation from Fire District 4 if possible.
									Act 250 Site?	This property has been subject to Act 250 jurisdication due to the development of the Island Racing project. This likely subjects future development to Act 250 jurisdiction. If further exploration of this site is desired seeking an Act 250 Jurisdictional opinion would be advisable.
									Conservation easement?	No.
									Go - No go	For discussion
Site	Address	Ownership	Currently for sale?	Requires Subdivision?	Septic	Water	Act 250 Site	Subject to conservation easement		Open area fronting on US Route 2, part of South Hero Highway Garage land.
J	286 US Route 2	Town of South Hero	No	No	See notes	See notes	No	No	Currently for sale?	No. Already town owned
									Requires Subdivision?	No
									Septic?	No wastewater is permitted. Very unlikely to be permitted. Most of the parcel is disturbed soils and bordered by stream. The existing highway dept. building is served by a holding tank only.
									Water?	Would require a drilled well, or seeking a water allocation from Fire District 4 if possible.
									Act 250 Site?	No. Total land area is under 10 acres.
									Conservation easement?	No.
									Go - No go	Dismissed due to likely lack of septic and that this would hamper operations of the Highway Dept.

<b>Location A</b> - East of the existing Town Hall located at 329-333 US Route 2 (The Existing Town office and Island Craft Shop Parcels).							
<b>Location B</b> - North of The Old White Meeting House located at 318-320 US Route 2 (Old White Meeting House parcel, old Red Fire Station Parcel, and adjacent future park land).							

	List of attributes (see attached detailed explanaitons)	Phil	Scott	Kathleen	Swanson	Anne 2	Zolotas	Nate H	ayward	Matt	Reed	Jill Lo	Jill Lowrey		ALS
Attr. #	Location:	Α	В	Α	В	А	В	Α	В	A	В	А	В	Α	В
1	Land Area:	3	5	5	0	3	2	0	0	5	0	4	2	20	9
2	Septic:	3	3	3	3	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	8	12
3	Costs:	4	5	0	0	2	2	1	2	0	0	4	2	11	11
4	Disposition of Old Red Fire Station Building:	3	2	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	3
5	Disposition of Old White Rescue Building:	2	2	4	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	5
6	Building setback from US Route 2:	4	3	4	1	3	2	2	0	4	0	4	1	21	7
7	Open land / Green Space:	3	4	0	0	2	2	0	0	3	0	3	0	11	6
8	Maintaining viable foundation and buildable footprint of the existing town office:	2	3	5	2	3	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	10	9
9	Required permitting:	2	1	5	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	10	7
10	Required cooperation:	2	3	2	4	3	2	2	1	0	1	4	2	13	13
11	Disruption to everyday business during construction:	2	3	2	3	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	8	10
12	Expandability: If we need to grow beyond the anticipated footprint in the future what is the expansion potential for each site:	3	3	4	2	2	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	11	9
13	Synergies:	4	3	4	1	4	1	0	1	0	2	2	1	14	9
14	Historical location:	1	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2
15	Creation of a Town Center:	5	3	3	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	2	10	10
16	Building postioning relative to overall lot:	5	3	3	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	12	8
17	Building size and park compatibility:	4	3	0	0	4	1	1	0			0	0	9	4
	TOTAL Score:	52	50	48	23	39	26	7	6	14	12	28	17	188	134
	Percentage:	51.0%	49.0%	67.6%	32.4%	60.0%	40.0%	53.8%	46.2%	53.8%	46.2%	62.2%	37.8%	58.4%	41.6%

To: South Hero Select Board From: New Town Hall Building Committee Date: July 11, 2024 Subject: Recommendation for New Town Hall Location

The New Town Hall Building Committee, established by the Select Board, is pleased to submit its recommendation for the new town hall location.

#### Following the Select Board's Charge

As outlined in the Select Board's directive, the Committee undertook the following tasks:

- 1. Informed the community about the criteria used to evaluate potential town hall sites.
- 2. Identified potential sites and recommended the most suitable location.

#### **Public Engagement and Site Selection**

The Committee held seven meetings and actively solicited public input. After considering 12 initial sites, the Committee narrowed the selection down to two finalists. Sites were eliminated due to various factors such as reserved development rights, unsuitable soil conditions, pending sales, and substantial infrastructure costs. For a detailed understanding of this process, please refer to the meeting minutes available at:

4.30.24-Minutes-New-Town-Hall-Building-Committee-APPROVED.pdf.

#### **Unanimous Recommendation for Site A**

To objectively evaluate the remaining sites, the Committee developed a site attribute rating system. This system incorporated factual information, public comments, and committee members' perspectives, all documented in a comprehensive spreadsheet. Following multiple discussions and refinements, committee members individually rated the attributes of both sites. Based on this comprehensive evaluation, the Committee unanimously recommends Site A, located at 329 and 333 US Route 2, as the optimal location for the new town hall.

#### **Supporting Documentation**

We have attached the individual committee member ratings, the site attribute list, and additional supporting exhibits for your review.

#### **Committee's Request**

The New Town Hall Building Committee strongly encourages the Select Board to consider this recommendation at your earliest convenience.

# **Request for Proposals (RFP)**

- The Committee advertised for Design Firms to submit proposals for preliminary design and construction costs.
- Phase 1 was limited to \$20,000 to be paid for by grant money.
- This proposal was advertised on the Vermont Bid Registry
- We received 4 Submissions:
  - Wiemann Lamphere Architects
  - AES Northeast
  - Scott and Partners
  - Cross Consulting
- At that time, David Roy of Wiemann Lamphere Architects and Matthew Reed of AES Northeast were on the TOBC, both recused themselves from all discussion and evaluation of the proposals
- AES Northeast was selected based on experience and cost.

# THE PROPOSED NEW BUILDING DESIGN

EW CONCRETE PAD

FUTURE PARKING

SHOWN DASHED

# Restoring the Site

- → Removes both failing buildings, the Town Office and Former Rescue Building (Craft Shop).
- → Restores redundant asphalt apron to vegetated and pervious area
- → Restores Street trees that existed up until the late 60s
- → Site allows for easy phasing of construction
- → Moves parking to the side of the building.
- → Allows for parking expansion

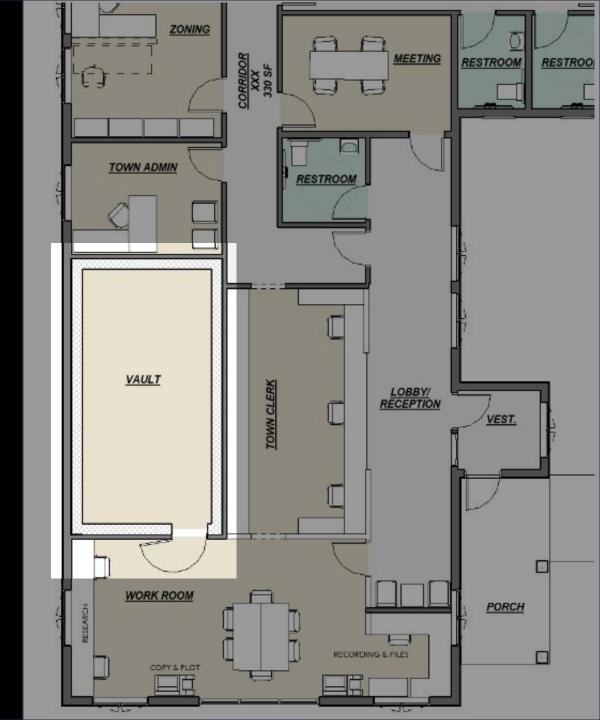


- → Front entry vestibule arrives directly at the Town Clerk Desk
- → Minimize disruptions to Treasurer, Zoning, and other departments when new residents don't know where to go.
- → Vestibule with direction change to reduce wind blowing through aligned doors



#### Increased Vault space

- → State statutes requires the storage of physical land records
- → We are very closing to filling our map storage and will need additional space for a new map cabinet
- → Current vault doesn't have enough room to meet accessibility requirements



#### Increased Vault space

#### **Public Amenities**

- → The Current town office doesn't have a quiet or private space to discuss private or sensitive matters like updated assessments, delinquent taxes, new development projects, etc. the new design provides this directly off the main lobby
- → The new design also maintains a restroom directly off the lobby for visitors.



#### Increased Vault space

#### **Public Amenities**

- → The Current town office doesn't have a quiet or private space to discuss private or sensitive matters like updated assessments, delinquent taxes, new development projects, etc. the new design provides this directly off the main lobby
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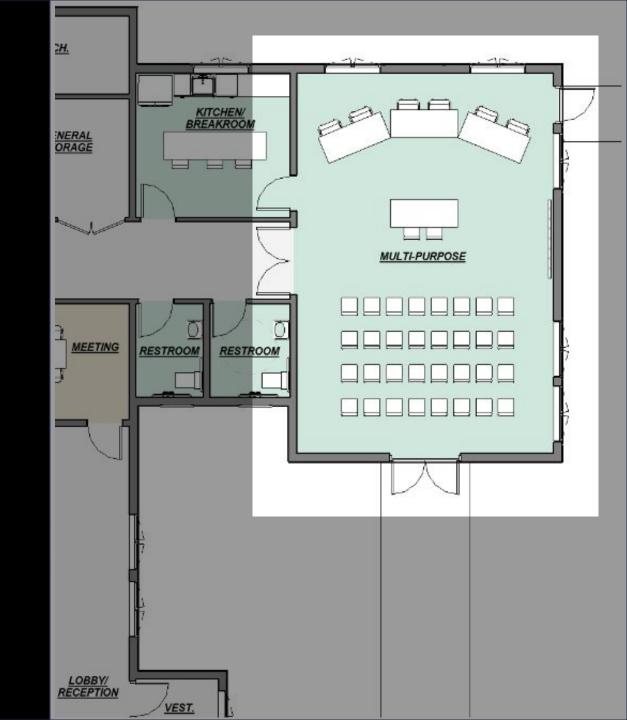


Increased Vault space

Public Amenities

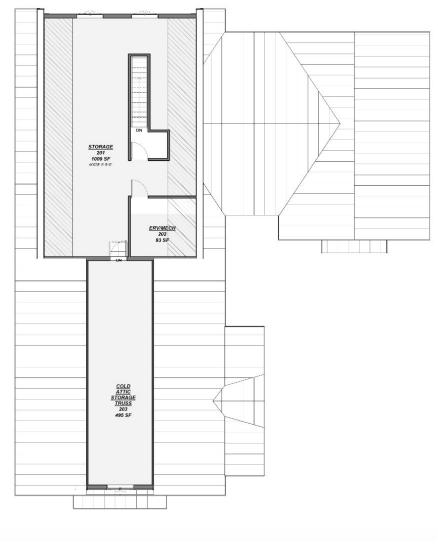
#### **Meeting Space**

- → Meeting space wider and allows for better interaction between the Board member and community
- → More audience capacity
- → More Flexibility
- → Similar in/out circulation for voting



#### The Big Picture





# Why doesn't South Hero buy the old pharmacy building and refurbish it?

#### **Renovation To-Do's**

- Replace Roof Membrane
- Replace 3 HVAC Rooftop units
- Replace Windows
  - Blacked out Storefront
  - Seal-Failure of upper windows
- Add new windows on side and rear for offices and meeting room
- Replace vinyl siding
- Replace lighting and Flooring
- Cut floor slab for new bathrooms, or pump overhead.

#### **Non-Tangible Benefits**

- Purchasing pharmacy removes property from tax base
- Leaves town with no funds to cleanup/redevelop current town office property.
- Building is already 20 years old, poorly insulated, and may lead to other upkeep and maintenance issues much sooner than new construction.
- Act 250 Permitting required may delay construction by 9-12 months, allowing for further cost escalation by inflation.

#### **Financials:**

\$800,000 Land Purchase: 12 Months rent to hold during permitting: \$120,000 (Assumes \$20/sf NNN) Septic Easement Acquisition \$75,000 (Based on Senior Housing): Septic Force Main: \$25.000 Transfer Tax / Legal Fees (two parcels): \$30.000 **Design Fee Savings:** (\$73, 144)**Construction Cost Savings:** (\$1,068,748)Demolition of Town Hall: \$80,000 Total: \$73,608 More Expensive

## Costs and how it would be paid

Town Hall example 30 year bond cost per \$100k assessed value \$37,94 Per Year Town Hall example bond cost for a \$500k home \$1889,70 Per Year

Net change to taxes for a \$500k home

\$62.54

Per Year

# **Bond Options**

New Town Office Bond (based on 2.875mm bond)	10 year bond	15 year bond	20 year bond	25 year bond	30 year bond						
Net Interest Cost:	2.81%	3.14%	3.40%	3.57%	3.68%						
Annual principal and interest (1st year of P&I)**:	\$364,331	\$278,956	\$239,162	\$215,725	\$199,857						
Date of 1st principal payment:	11/1/2028	11/1/2028	11/1/2028	11/1/2028	11/1/2028						
Annual Bond Principal Reduction (same each year):	\$287,500	\$191,667	\$143,750	\$115,000	\$95,833						
Total Interest over Bond Term:	\$471,772	\$752,498	\$1,060,133	\$1,370,413	\$1,674,955						
Cost per \$100,000 of tax assessed value in 2028:	\$69.16	\$52.95	\$45.40	\$40.95	\$37.94						
Cost for a \$500,000 tax assessed value homein 2028:	\$345.81	\$264.77	\$227.00	\$204.76	\$189.70						
Annual net cost increase (after retirement of Emergency Services Building Bond and Start of Town Office Bond)											
Per \$100,000 of tax assessed value in 2028:	\$43.73	\$27.52	\$19.97	\$15.52	\$12.51						
Cost for a \$500,000 tax assessed value home in 2028:	\$218.65	\$137.62	\$99.85	\$77.60	\$62.54						

The final bond payment for the Emergency Services building will be on November 1, 2027

#### Please vote on March 4th.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1JWiulfhTwykWprMD\_IxZ\_U1Zaz8gG3oa6Vbgu4gEhFY/edit?usp=sharing