

FLAT IRON TASK FORCE
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 25, 2022 - 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance
 - a. Called to order at 7:00 pm by Larry Valett
 - b. 20 residents in attendance including Mayor Hushour, Councilmembers Domotor and Galletti

1. Approval of minutes
 - a. Minutes unanimously approved - will be signed and sent to Mayor

1. Mayor's Update
 - a. Engineering Assessment has started
 - i. First phase, walkthrough, has been completed
 - ii. Next phase is taking samples and sending to the lab for testing
 - iii. Expect to be finalized by December council meeting
 - b. Resolution has been drafted to restore/renovate Flat Iron Building - should be able to go to Town Council by December - need result of engineering assessment first
 - c. Went to MD Municipal League meeting (MML) - spoke with several mayors about the Demolition Grant, which is actually a restoration/renovation grant - feels there are some real possibilities with this

2. Chairman Update - Larry Valett
 - a. Clean up of building took place 10/22
 - i. About 2 dozen boxes moved to Bill Caves' garage so they can be reviewed/sorted by Historical Society to determine what should be saved and what should be recycled/trashed - many old records going back to the 1930's
 - ii. Also found large bins which look like town records going back to 1994 - can get David to look at these to see what needs to be retained
 - iii. Remaining things in the building need to be hauled away as junk
 - b. Reached out to Madison Bateman of Carroll County Times for follow up

- story on efforts to save the building; waiting to hear back from her - we have a PR update from Social Media Committee to share
- c. Spoke with Maria, Preservation Initiative Manager from Preservation MD on 10/14
 - i. Brought her up to date on what we've been doing
 - ii. Received ADA advice on restoration vs. rehabilitation
 - iii. Suggested we check county codes, and will connect us with an ADA lawyer

 - d. Larry Valett and Lee Haigwood met with Colin Doyle, structural engineer from Silman Associates on 10/18
 - i. They are on board to do pro bono work to help us
 - ii. Will be doing summary response report to some of the questions about the building
 - iii. Engineering assessment will give us the final word on the integrity of the building, Silman can help with designs and concepts to address ADA issues, as well as 4 key points:
 - 1. Bank building across from Arby's is being converted into a car wash by tunneling out the building and making it waterproof - we can use this concept and visualize for us for the walkway
 - 2. Moving the building is a possible alternative - will do summary of what this will entail - looking at preservation vs. adaptive re-use, and could be a cost benefit
 - 3. ADA requirements - will put together flow chart for adapted re-use vs. historic renovation; e.g., addressing stairs vs. elevators
 - 4. Replacing windows in historic preservation - what can be done
 - iv. All of this will give us good baseline on structural integrity and what can be done with historic preservation

 - e. Gave recap/summary of what we as a Task Force are doing
 - i. The building was perceived as a risk, not cost beneficial to move it, restoration was not cost effective, town use was not deemed practical until all aspects were mitigated - town council had concerns about safety, commercial, no cost beneficial use of the building
 - ii. We are offering restoration plan which would give 3 times the opportunities for grants - arts, historic preservation, adapted re-use
 - 1. Building does not cause imminent risk
 - 2. Pedestrian safety can be mitigated by walkway

3. We restore and give the town a building that they can lease out or whatever they need
4. Objective of plan for 3rd floor was for records storage, not broken furniture storage

- iii. Building remains as town property; we renovate and can then capitalize on it
- iv. Now underway with structural integrity assessment, which will address safety concerns
- v. This brings us to where we are today
- vi. Moving the building vs. walkway will both mitigate pedestrian safety issues
- vii. Once we have both the engineering assessment and summary response reports, we can then figure out next steps - what's required, what can we do, what will we do
- viii. Looking for real answers to respond to the town that the building is worth preserving; saving the building is the most cost-efficient approach
- ix. Since it is a town building, we need town buy-in, and be able to work collaboratively instead of arguing over details - all parties need to be flexible to find win-win solutions

- f. Discussed logo concepts presented by Lisa Carnes last month
 - i. Self-contained circle designs work better for social media - with American flag design in background
 - ii. More elaborate drawings better for marketing materials
 - iii. Brought designs up on computer and had some discussion of modifications
 1. Asked if drawing could have more triangular shape - drawing of building is accurate for 1902 rendering
 2. Back with Mt. Airy flag instead of MD or US - probably too busy
 3. Maybe use graphic of Christmas ornament from several years ago as model - detail could get lost in the process
 4. Will send out to task force again with numbers on each design for members to vote, as this should be a full task force decision
 5. Agreed that none of the logos are bad, just a matter of nuance
 6. Lisa can tweak as needed

3. Council Liaison Update - Lynne Galletti
 - a. No update, Mayor sufficiently updated

4. Subcommittee Reports

a. Fundraising - Diann Linton

i. Current financial status:

1. Sales of t-shirts, candles - \$571.78
2. Popcorn - \$9.00
3. Walking and bus ghost tours (August and October) - \$3733.54
4. Member donations - \$1242.32
5. Business/organization donations - \$5500
6. Restaurant fundraisers - \$615.61
7. Haunted Caboose donations - \$707.77
8. Go Fund Me Actual - \$2337.60
9. Total Raised to Date - \$14,717.62
10. Important to note: we had 121 people go through Haunted Caboose 10/21-10/22, 33 did not donate, received \$63 in donations beyond the suggested \$5/person, historical society members donated funds to cover cost of those who chose not to donate
 - a. Will also be open for free, for goodwill purposes on October 26 during Spooky Trail, no spooky people but will be sufficiently spookily decorated!
11. This is result of only 3 months of fundraising!
12. Will plan for committee to meet in November to discuss any further efforts needed

b. Government Outreach - Mayor Hushour

- i. Once we get through November elections, we have supporters lined up for eventual bond bill

c. Arts and Design - Charles Beck

- i. See possibilities for art displays and performance space, particularly on 2nd floor where there would be room for stage and audience space
- ii. Top floor could be used as studio space for artists
- iii. Bottom floor can have art on one side of the walkway
- iv. Barney had pitched idea of moving the building, which would then give 3 floors of useable space instead of 2
- v. Discussion ensued on use of building
 1. Civil Air Patrol approached us about the possibility of using 3rd floor as headquarters office for Emergency

Response Team

2. Question arose - why does it need to be useable for anything?
 - a. Can serve as monument
 - b. Counter to tearing it down is to make it have a practical use
 - c. Open floor concepts - need to relay usefulness to town to get buy in and goodwill
 - d. By historically restoring the building, it can serve a variety of uses with an open floor concept

3. Larry V then presented that he met with Rotary Club, who asked how they can help
 - a. Providing letter of support that this would provide useable meeting space would help
 - b. Can get similar letters from other service clubs in town
 - c. Can have special events there
 - d. Having combo of engineering report, subject matter expertise, and funds, this will all help with presentation to town council

- d. Engineering - Jim Molesworth
 - i. Handed out possible floor plans with blank worksheet for task force members to use for submitting other possible ideas
 - ii. Some thoughts:
 1. The rectangular portion of the building (12' x 47.5' x 3 floors) is what we have to work with to create value.
 2. The remaining portion, the bumped-out area to the east, is for stairs, foyers, rest rooms (currently 3—one on each floor), utilities, and maybe an elevator if it will fit?
 3. Questions that pop out when looking at the layouts:
 - a. The Task Force needs to determine the number of stair cases to the 3rd floor.
 - b. There are currently two providing safety and usage options.

- c. The south steps are only 2.5 ft wide and will need to be widened.
 - d. **The north door to the 2nd floor may require a ramp along the east (Park Ave) side.**
 - e. Interface with proposed stepped patio from the 1st floor.
 - f. **Is an elevator needed?**
 - g. Will it fit in the bump out if the rest rooms are redesigned/relocated?
 - h. If it won't fit in the bump out, locating it while including two sets of stairs and a ramp along Park Ave will be a challenge.
 - i. Is a stair lift an option?
 - j. Entry/exit code requirements for each floor and the building?
4. **Need to keep as many options open as possible, as the building's use can change over the years**
 5. Mary Hushour also reminded us that we need to keep the design as historically accurate as possible, as it needs to fit into the streetscape for grants and bond bills
 6. Vertical banner on side of building wall and railing outside of dress shop - railing banner would be horizontal, 2'x6' banner
 7. Need logo first
 8. Will save money if we already have the artwork done
 9. Can do vertical banner on building, but running a banner across the street would require State Highway approval
- e. House Movers moved the Main House to the current site of Mt. Airy Inn
 - f. Would be moving the top 2 floors to a newly built foundation - cost approximately \$500k
 - g. As a historic building, it can be better seen that way as well
 - h. Would possibly move a little off of Main St., and could make it more ADA accessible
 - i. Current Main St. Lane width is 8-9 feet, need 11 feet to be truly safe, and this would allow for that
 - j. Some utility challenges/considerations:

- i. West sidewalk has large duct bank
 - ii. East sidewalk is quite narrow
 - iii. Excavated site would allow for burying existing utilities, and to add utilities
 - iv. Need to address/control management of Park Ave. stormwater
 - v. These would be extra cost, but is something the town has been talking about for years
- k. First step would be to construct retaining walls - there is currently a failing wall along Park Ave.
 - l. Do renovation to fix this, and will have it last 50+ years
- m. Moving the building can widen the sidewalk and add parking spaces on east side of Main St.
- n. Keep building orientation the same - same face on Main St.
- o. Can be flat with 29' plaza in front
- p. Can add crosswalks at Main and up on Park Ave.
- q. Discussion:
 - i. When we get actual architectural designs, would help to maintain views of town from the 3rd floor
 - ii. Better to keep it as close to Main as possible
 - iii. Cost for street improvements with sidewalk and parking can be absorbed with SHA and ADA grants
 - iv. Estimated actual move \$500k, \$2-\$3 million overall for the project
 - v. Have to look at grants and bond bills, as building is a town building
 - vi. Worth doing if it helps to preserve the building
 - vii. Can go after restoration grants rather than adapted re-use grants
 - viii. Suggested Barney get cost estimates for burying utilities and moving power lines
 - ix. Would want minimal moving to increase accessibility and pedestrian safety
- r. Larry V working on new model to reflect this possibility
- s. Much discussion about how far back building should be moved and still maintain visibility
- t. Money is biggest concern with moving it - believe there is not a lot of difference in cost between this and walkway, but suggested that Barney get some cost estimates
- u. Group is mostly in favor of considering this - whatever works to save the building

1. Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2022, 7pm at Town Hall

1. Close/Adjourn - meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted by

Adele Connolly
Task Force Secretary