

The Future of Whately's Town Hall - Renovate or Build New?

By the Building Committee and Selectmen

What should be the future of our Town Hall? That is a big question that the Building Committee and Selectmen have been wrestling with for the last few months, and comes down to fundamentally the following questions: 1) should the current Town Hall be renovated or should a new Town Hall be constructed? 2) What's wrong with our current town hall and town offices?

As you read in the May 2012 Scoop, the CPC (Community Preservation Committee) funded a feasibility study, which has been completed by Margo Jones Architects. Please treat this scoop article as an interim report to the town on this feasibility study informing you of what we learned so far and what our next steps should be. But most importantly, we encourage everyone reading this to attend tours of our current Town Hall and Center School offices (6-7pm) and to participate in the public forum that follows at 7pm on September 24, 2012 at Town Hall.

Our first question - "Is town hall worth renovating?" is an important question. A study done by structural engineer Michael Rainville in 2009 gave us the first indication that the Town Hall structure is basically sound, and renovation would be a worthwhile activity for Whately. The Margo Jones feasibility study supports that conclusion and has offered several options for renovation.

So, what's wrong with our current Town Hall and town offices? There are many issues and deficiencies which can be summarized as: administrative inefficiencies, building code deficiencies, ADA noncompliance, high energy costs and environmental hazards. These deficiencies have been neglected for many years, are getting worse, and will not go away. It is time that they be addressed to protect the health and safety of the town's employees and to provide the most efficient services that our residents deserve. Each of these issues will be discussed in more detail in this article and at the public forum.

The first issue that comes to mind is inefficiency. Our current town government offices are split between the current Town

Hall and Center School. This is inefficient in many ways, 1) Our town employees are less productive due to the separation between two buildings 2) People may find it necessary to do business in two separate buildings, possibly going to the wrong place, costing us all time and energy 3) Duplication of resources like copiers, internet access, telephones and other office equipment.

Our current setup is not energy efficient so we are paying to keep two old energy inefficient buildings operating. Yes, we have done energy audits, and yes we have made all the improvements with short term payback that can be done to the existing buildings to save on energy costs but much more can and needs to be done. To make these buildings more energy efficient and further reduce energy costs, we would need to do major renovations.

The second issue we face is that we do not have sufficient space for our current and future needs. We do not have sufficient storage and filing space for all the town's documents. We do not have proper environmentally stable storage for our historic town records. We do not have adequate meeting space for town boards. Right now, we barely have enough office space to meet our current needs. That which we have is not well laid out to serve the public, and we could not provide office space should we need to hire, say, a part time planner.

In addition, our current spaces are either not handicapped accessible at all (Center School) or have non-ADA-compliant structures that were intended as interim solutions to the problem of wheelchair access (Town Hall). One reason that the meeting space issue is so dire is that our Town Hall second floor is not usable in its current state, due to the lack of elevator access and unacceptably expensive electric heat as the only option in the winter.

The electric and plumbing are well out of compliance with building codes, even those going back years and years. There are also environmental hazards associated with rodent infestation, lead paint, asbestos and inadequate sewer facilities.

Some would ask "Why do we not just move

everyone from the center school into the current town hall and just make do? Haven't we done that in the past?"

You may be surprised to learn that Whately has actually never done that. Before about 1990 when the elementary school opened and the Center School became available, town business was done from the homes of town employees. Our current system may be more efficient than doing business from the homes of town employees, but it would be untrue to suggest that the ways of the past will meet the needs of our town in the coming years, much less 20 or 30 years from now.

So, given that our current facilities are not meeting the needs of our town, we decided to move forward to gather information that would help us determine the cost to renovate our current Town Hall compared to building new. And as you might expect, we needed professional help! Margo Jones Architects (MJA) helped us quantify our space needs for town offices and provided estimates for what a renovated town hall would absolutely need. We would like to recognize valuable input from the Historical Commission as we reviewed the materials from MJA.

While the details of the plans produced by MJA would be too much to include in this article, there are three important things the committee learned.

1) Our needs for space, plus required upgrades to current code and ADA, cannot be met in the current Town Hall footprint. In other words, any renovation to the town hall should include a new addition so that we can meet our office, meeting and storage space needs.

2) The estimated cost of building a new structure on land currently owned by the town is not significantly different than the estimates for renovating the current Town Hall.

3) Opportunities to fund some of the cost of renovations via grants exist, but there are no grant opportunities to pursue for building new at this time.

In summary, there are two options that would meet our current and future needs: (1) renovating and adding to our current town hall building or (2) building a new town hall building. Both the costs and benefits are significant. Which alternative would you prefer?

NEXT STEPS: WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The Building Committee and the Selectmen need feedback on the options for a Town Hall. The first and most important opportunity for you to learn about the various options we could pursue would be to *attend the public forum on Sept 24, 7pm at the Town Hall*. Details of the options being considered will be presented and your suggestions and concerns will be heard. We also plan to have members of the Building Committee at the Historical Society's Fall Festival on Sept. 30 to give people another opportunity to ask questions and give suggestions. We plan to conduct a straw poll at the November election (Nov. 6, 7am-8pm) to gauge which option people support.

The feedback from the forum, the fall festival and the straw poll will help the Building Committee and the Selectmen settle on one option to pursue. We plan to have another public forum to discuss that option in the early spring prior to town meeting.

Once we have narrowed the options to a single proposal, the next step will be to seek funding for the preparation of a final design and bid documents at annual town meeting (April 2013). Bid Documents are detailed specifications that tell potential builders what needs to be done so they can make accurate cost estimates and "bid" on the project. Assuming that April 2013 town meeting votes funding for bid documents, we would seek to have them done as soon as possible and then 'go out to bid' so that we would have a solid cost estimate to bring to the annual town meeting in April 2014 for a vote.

But that's not the last step. Assuming there are no snags in the timing of the steps outlined above, a vote at the April 2014 town meeting would simply mean that the town will have the right to vote to approve the funding of the project – this would truly be the final approval by the town. We would expect, should all the stars align and the steps outlined above are completed on schedule, that a vote to fund a Town Hall project would go on the town election ballot in June 2014 for an up or down vote as a debt exclusion override.

SO – one final plea – if you want to participate in the conversation about the future of our Town Hall, NOW IS THE TIME to mark your calendars for the Town Hall and Center School tours (6pm) and public forum (7pm) on Sept 24. The real conversation starts now!



The WHATELY SCOOP

Certified News for the Town
with the Milk Bottle...

Volume 10 Number 1 September 2012 Whately, Massachusetts

Whately Historical Society News

by Dee Bardwell

This event affords viewers another look at our theme "SCHOOLS-Yesterday and Today. Many pictures of early schools and classes are on display. Entertainment will be the Swift Kicks Band, back by popular demand. Tag and Craft spaces are available, as well as our famous apple pies. Fall Harvest items will be on sale. Hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hotdogs, desserts, and free ice cream round out a great day spent with friends and neighbors. Questions? Call 665-3837.

2013 Cultural Council Applications due October 15, 2012

by Neal Abraham, Cultural Council Chair

The Whately Cultural Council invites applications to enhance and enrich the cultural opportunities for its residents and to support and strengthen the artistic, creative, and cultural individuals and communities in the

*Whately Historical Society's
Fall Festival
September 30th
10am-2pm
Whately Center School
Food - Music - tag & craft tables
Museum will be open*

Whately Board of Health Looking for Flu Clinic Volunteers!

by Michael Archbald

Our sixth annual cross-town Flu Clinic has been scheduled for Saturday October 21st, from 10am to 1pm. This is an opportunity to connect

These businesses have made donations to help cover the cost of printing & mailing the Scoop
Julie's - North Street, Whately **Pro Pel Plastech**, Long Plain Road Whately

INSIDE: See the ads from our many other generous sponsors who make this newsletter possible. THANK YOU ALL! Want to see your business listed here? Details on page 7.

Please See Page 7 For the Annual Reader Survey and Appeal for support

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with other Emergency Responders involved in Public Health from our neighboring towns. As in the past, this year we'll be operating a flu clinic for the general public and simultaneously running a public emergency drill to test our systems. It is vital that we maintain the valuable connections we've made over the past six years with our partners in Conway, Sunderland and Deerfield. Whately has consistently made a strong showing with our plethora of professional health care providers. See you there!

Whately Grange News

by Dee Bardwell

Whately Grange meets the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of most months at 7:30 at the Town Hall. Our meetings have a variety of purposes. Some are educational, business, entertaining, and others combine all of the above.

Since 1940 the Grange has provided service to Whately in different ways. When disaster strikes members join forces to aid in any way necessary. If a member announces a need in town the Grange lends support

financially or physically or both.

The Grange is a fraternal organization and many friendships have been made that remain stronger than family ties.

September begins our new year and we invite any who are curious about us to attend a meeting to learn more. All meetings are open and welcoming. Should you wish to discuss this further you may call 665-3108. We look forward to adding to our membership so that we can continue our community service.

September events:

13th - Share an antique

20th - Public Chicken Pie Supper with a handmade quilt to raffle

27th - Games Night

Greeting from the Friends of the Library

by Susan Boone

There are some great events coming your way from the Friends of the Library. Our annual used book sale will be on September 30th from 10-2. We'll be accepting donations until the 19th. Please drop them off inside when the library is open. Just to tantalize you, so far we have lots of fiction if you want escape reading this winter and if you're planning a great escape there are lots of travel books. We're very excited to have Vermont author, Archer Mayor, at the library on Tuesday, October 16th at 6:30. He will be talking about his latest Joe Gunther mystery, Paradise City, which takes place in Northampton. The book will be released on October 2nd. We're hoping to have a series of programs related to nutrition and cooking this winter and spring and we'll start replacing the chairs downstairs in the library so we can



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provide more comfortable seating for you. All of this is funded by friends like you. We thank you for your generous support.


National Preparedness Month

By: Lynn Sibley

On behalf of the emergency management volunteers and professionals throughout the region, I would like to encourage all citizens of Whately to take part in this year's National Preparedness Month. National Preparedness Month is an annual campaign to encourage Americans to take steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, schools, organizations, businesses, and communities. Whether participating in a local emergency drill, putting together a go-kit for your family, or taking the time to review how to respond to a natural disaster, this is the perfect opportunity to make sure you are prepared.

The Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council (WRHSAC), has organized a month's worth of events designed to make preparedness a part of everyone's daily lives, in collaboration with the American Red Cross; Public Health Preparedness Coalitions; the Medical Reserve Corps; municipal officials in cities and towns in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and

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Hampshire Counties; along with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Emergency volunteers will also be hosting booths at the 3 County Fair in Northampton, Third Thursday in Pittsfield, the Big E in Springfield, and the Franklin County Fair in Greenfield, and are available to answer questions about preparing for emergencies. There are also a host of in-person and virtual events in which you can participate and learn more about preparing.

For more information, as well as a full calendar of September's events, please visit the Western Mass Ready website at www.westernmassready.org, and follow the month's events on Facebook, <http://www.facebook.com/WesternMassREADY>, and on Twitter @westernMaREADY.

From the Whately Public Library

by Tiffany Hilton

C/WMARS Update – Whately is joining the Central/Western MA Automated Resource Sharing network of over 150 area libraries. The library staff is receiving training on new software and we've begun new library card registration for patrons who don't already have a C/WMARS card at another library. We thank you for your patience in this long transition and look forward to offering you online access to our catalog, your library account, and to downloading electronic audio-books and e-books soon.

Book Sale - Sun, Sept 30, 10am-2pm

Archer Mayor – Author Talk Tues., Oct 16, 6:30pm - Local, best-selling author releases his new book in October. Paradise City: A Joe Gunther novel brings his detective to Northampton, MA to solve a crime. Join us for

this special event sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Monday Movie Times - Sponsored by the Friends of the Library. - The Hunger Games, PG-13, Sept 10, 3 & 5:30pm; Salmon Fishing in Yemen, PG-13, Oct 22, 3 & 6pm; Moonrise Kingdom, PG-13, Nov 19, 3 & 6pm

Handmade Holiday Fair - Sun, Dec 9, 12-4pm - Come see what your Whately neighbors are busy making at the Library Holiday Fair. Gift items will include hand knit and sewn items, gifts from Stockbridge Herbs, honey, pottery, wooden toys, and more. Interested vendors should contact Tiffany at whatelypubliclibrary@gmail.com or 665-2170.

Visit www.whately.org/library for more information.

HELP WANTED on CH 15

By Joyce Palmer Fortune, Whately Cable Com.

Can you imagine what your Tuesday nights would be like without the selectmen live on your channel 15? OK, technically it's just the 2nd and last Tuesdays of the month, but still - we know folks in Whately are interested because we get phone calls when we aren't LIVE on ch 15 for Selectmen's meetings. *And when we are not on, it is almost always*



because we do not have a volunteer or an intern available on that particular night to set up, run the camera and record the meeting for video on demand.

This is a shame, because setting up and using the equipment is fairly easy, and we even offer a small stipend (\$25/meeting) for those who complete training at FCAT and regularly help record and broadcast public meetings.

Also, folks have told us they would like to see more public meetings on ch 15. That's very understandable - it helps make our local government more transparent and makes it easy to be well informed about what's going on in town. If there were some more folks willing to help with the technical setup and operation of broadcasts, we all win.

INTERESTED? All ages welcome - we have had interns as young as 14 and volunteers as old as, errr, ummm, well.... let's just say eighty-something. Call Joyce at 665-6739 or Doug Finn at FCAT 665-0012.

Watermelon Wednesdays Summer 2012

by Paul Newlin

Here's the lineup for the rest of the season

September 12, Boxcar Lilies: Folk & originals
September 19, Bee Eaters & Tony Trischka: Americana chambergrazz

Call Paul at 665-741 for more information or see: www.watermelonwednesdays.com

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Bulky Waste Day by Fran Fortino

Whately residents and others from surrounding towns filled 3 huge roll-off containers full of bulky items, including, old rugs, furniture, mowers, metals, TV's and computers, sinks and toilets, BBQ tanks, tires and more at the May 12 spring bulky waste day. If you missed it, our next bulky waste collection will be Saturday, October 20, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the transfer station.

Thanks again to town staff Tyler Mankowsky and our terrific bulky day volunteers: Montserrat Archbald, Chris Boutwell, Vic Covalski, Bob Gaffney, Dana Robinson, Kathy Sylvester and Ronnie Williams for making this a great success. If you would like to volunteer for the Oct. 20 bulky day, please contact Fran Fortino at 665-4561.

And some Reminders...

Whately is a leader in terms of tons of recycling and composting done by our residents. On behalf of the volunteer Whately Waste Management Committee and the Transfer Station staff, we want to thank you and remind you to PLEASE crush and separate cardboard into the near end of the paper recycling rolloff at the transfer station.

Please crush your containers too! It saves space for more recyclables per haul and of course, money.

Hazardous waste - preregister

The annual household hazardous waste collection is Saturday, September 22, at GCC Main Campus and the Orange Transfer Station. This event provides an opportunity to safely dispose of hazardous items like leftover oil-based paints, stains, thinners, household cleaners, pesticides, pool chemicals, motor oil, antifreeze, fluorescent lamps, automobile batteries, and other household chemicals. For a complete list of acceptable items, please see the website: www.franklincountywastedistrict.org/hazwasteday.html.

To participate, residents must pre-register by September 14th, which you can do online or by phone: 772-2438.

National Drug Take-Back Day

Don't flush prescription drugs! There will be another National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on Saturday, September 29, 2012, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This event is hosted by area police stations. To find a local drop-off site, check: www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/



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Dr. Rebecca Jones

Thank You
to everyone who helps produce the Scoop and

Town Clerk News

By Lynn Sibley

As we approach this very busy election season I would like to remind you of the State Primary on Thursday, September 6th and the General Election on Tuesday, November 6th. Both elections will be held from 7 a.m. – 8 p.m. at the Town Hall. The deadline to register for the September 6th election has passed but the deadline to register for the November election is October 17th. The Town Clerk's office will be open on Oct. 17th from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. and 7 – 8 p.m. If you have already registered in Whately, there is no need to register again unless you have moved within Whately.

I would like to remind those voters that have not sent back their census form that was sent in January and again in late February or their confirmation mailing that was sent in May, you have been placed on an inactive voter list. In order to vote, you will need to bring ID showing your Whately address and complete an Affirmation of Current and Continuous Residence form. This ID can consist of a driver's license, current photo id, current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other document showing the voters name

and address as they are registered to vote. In order to avoid delay at the election, send back any of the above forms or call the Clerk's office for further instruction at 665-4400.

Tax Payment Schedule

By Lynn Sibley

This is a reminder that taxes are due quarterly on August 1, November 1, February 1 and May 1. Tax bills were mailed the end of June and included an August 1 and November 1 stub. There will be no additional mailing for the November payment. August and November's payments are based on last year's property values. February and May will have adjusted values and are considered "actual" bills. Any abatement requests must be made by February 1st to be considered by the Assessors.

Wildlife Sightings

by Marianne Simon

The resident great blue heron has been in my sights several times this summer. I saw two of them, for the first time, flying very high near the beaver pond several weeks ago. They rose up together and then flew off in opposite directions. Then a few days ago, walking by the same beaver pond, I saw a single heron fly out of the water and into some trees nearby. Also, at the tri-town beach, a heron flew into the high grasses at the far edge of the lake, and stood very still, watching for a fish to appear. What a splendid sight he/she is!!

Several people had seen the beavers swimming in the pond, which has now shrunk considerably and is quite overgrown and

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Michael Archbald, RN- Owner

muddy, as well as being decorated with many dead trees and bushes. It was at its peak of beauty in May and sadly has deteriorated since then.

Other residents on Westbrook Road have reported seeing a bear in their yard, foxes and other wildlife passing through their property. I hope we will continue to live amiably with the original residents of our woods, fields and streams, and not crowd them too much, or interfere with their habits and habitats!

THIS JUST IN: Very recently, three members of the highway department saw a bald eagle sitting on top of the cell tower! Probably the newest way of eavesdropping on your phone calls!!

Share your wildlife sightings -
mpsimon70@comcast.net

The Whately Scoop needs help following up on the small amount of fundraising we do to keep this newsletter free to all. If you have even a small amount of time to help out, it would be greatly appreciated.

The deadline for submission to the Dec. 2012 issue of the Scoop is Nov. 30 2012. Please email your literary contributions to jpfortune@comcast.net.

If you know of any local businesses that you would like to see advertising in the scoop, LET THEM KNOW!, and give them the following contact information: Joyce Palmer Fortune, jpfortune@comcast.net, 665-6739.

Annual Reader Survey and Appeal for support for the Scoop

THIS NEWSLETTER is provided free of charge to all residents of Whately. If you would like to see it continue, please consider a donation to help with our cost.

About 75% of our main budget - printing and postage for the 4 pages of a typical issue - is covered by the local small businesses who advertise in these pages - please tell them you appreciate their support when you use their services. (When a special page is added to the front of the scoop for a particular civic group, those groups make an extra donation to cover the extra cost.)

The rest of our cost is covered by small donations from individuals, and *this is your chance to be one of those individuals*. Please consider donating money and/or time to help keep the scoop going.

Name, address &/or email &/or phone: _____

Here is my donation of \$_____: (please make checks payable to "The Whately Scoop")

____ I would like to be on "the list" so I can help prepare the scoop for mailing (Email please)

____ I would like to be on the notification list so I can write articles for the scoop (Email please)

____ I would like to contact local businesses on behalf of the Scoop.

I would like to see articles about _____ in the scoop and more coverage of _____ on our public access channel 15.

Other thoughts you would like to share? _____

Please detach and mail to : *The Whately Scoop, 152 Westbrook Road, So. Deerfield RFD, 01373*
Thanks in advance for your generosity.

TOWN DIRECTORY

<i>Department</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Phone</i>
Assessors	Town Hall	665-3470
Board of Health Health Agent		268-8404
Animal Control		665-8027
Emergency Mgmt	Center School	665-4400
FAX for Center School		665-9560
FAX for Town Hall		665-5064
Fire Department		665-2230
Burning Permits		625-8200
Highway Department		665-2983
Inspection Services:		
Building	Courthouse	772-2026x123
Plumbing & Gas	Courthouse	772-2026x125
Wiring	Courthouse	772-2026x126
Police (non-emergency)		625-8200
Schools:		
Whately Elementary		665-7826
Frontier Regional School		665-2118
Franklin County Technical		863-9561
Selectmen/Center School		665-4400
S. White Dickinson Library		665-2170
Town Collector/Treasurer	Town Hall	665-2595
Town Clerk	Center School	665-0054
Town Accountant	Town Hall	665-2595
Water Department	Center School	665-3080

Assessors - Tue 9a – 8p. Wed. 9a – 4p
Library - Mon Tue Wed 1p. – 8p; Sat 10a – 3:00p
Selectmen - Mon Tue 9-6– Wed Fri 9a – 4:00p
Town Clerk – Mon noon-7:00p; Tue-Fri 9:00a -4:00p
Treasurer/Town Collector -Tue & Thu 8:45a-2:45p Mon. 3-7p
Transfer Station - Tue., Noon-5p; Sat. 7a-5p

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR TOWN BOARDS

Assessors- Most Tuesdays, 7:00-9:00p, Town Hall
Board of Health-2nd Tues, 7:00p, Center School
Conservation Commission-3rd Weds, 7:00p, Town Hall
Council on Aging - 2nd Tue, 4:00p Library
Franklin Tech School Com. 2nd Weds, 7:00p, Tech School
FRS School Committee - 2nd Tues, 7:00p FRS
Historical Commission -3rd Monday, 7:00p, Town Hall
Library Trustees - 2nd Tuesday, 7:00p, Library
Planning Board - Last Tuesday, 7:00p, Town Hall
Recreation Commission –2nd Mon, 7:00p,WES/Herlihy
Selectmen - 2nd and last Tues, 7:00p, Center School
Water Commissioners - 1st Tues, 7:00p, Center School
Whately School Committee -1st Monday, 7:00p WES
Zoning Board of Appeals - 1st Thurs, 6:30p, Town Hall
Historical Society 1st Thursday, 7:00p, Center School

Note: This schedule is provided for informational purposes only. Meetings are also posted on the Whately Bulletin Board, Channel #15 for cable viewers in town and at the town's website, www.whately.org. Please check at the Town Offices for official notification of meetings and hearings.

If you misplace your copy of the Scoop - do not despair! You can always find it on the Whately Library's website (www.whately.org/library)

Postage cost for this issue provided by the Whately Historical Society; Printing cost provided by generous readers and local businesses, Thank You All Very Much!



The WHATELY SCOOP
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 with the Milk Bottle...

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As summer winds its way to fall,
 Lazy days will cease their call.
 Swimming holes will be too chill
 And birds will try to eat their fill
 To ready for their southern flight
 As day turns early into night

Schools will open up their doors
 And kids will run along their floors

To meet their friends and see what's new
 And show off all the ways they grew
 While teachers work with all their might
 To see that children get it right

Seasons change, and so do we
 And that's the way it has to be
 So like the seasons, keep on going
 And let the changes keep on flowing