

Dear Christine, Harry and Jody,

June 2023

During the last year two significant actions have taken place the (SMP Building Evaluation and the Resilient Energy Audit) to assess what needs to be done to upgrade the Community Center. The following are the Economic Development Advisory Committee's (EDAC) Work Group recommendations for your consideration.

Direct Action Items:

- A.** Implement the recommendations from the SMP Building Evaluation Report (summary below)
- B.** Implement the recommendations from the Resilient Building Group Energy Audit (summary below)
- C.** Apply to the CDFA and the State of NH for grant opportunities (summary below)

1. SMP Building Evaluation Reports 3/14/2023

Existing Conditions at the Warner Community Center

Originally built as the Old Graded School 113 years ago the building has since served many uses. The structure itself is in sound condition but would benefit from a building-wide renovation. Over the years various upgrades have been performed; attic insulation was blown in, a new hot water boiler system installed, and minor electrical changes performed as needed. (See the Resilient Buildings Group report for conditions and recommendations for upgrades).

Recommendations:

SMP recommends that the Select Board enters into formal agreements with all entities within the facility, listing tenant areas of use, terms, and outlining municipal requirements. To best manage the building, they recommend the Select Board consider relocating the Warner Welfare Department office into the Community Center. This move would allow Town staff to be on-site to oversee operations and be available to respond to tenant requests as needed. The services provided by this Department align with and would support many of the current occupants. An office can be added to the second floor across from the main entrance and adjacent to the Warner Community Action Program

For the Town to maximize the buildings use and gain access to various grant opportunities SMP recommends renovating the building as required to meet the ADA by:

1. Adding an elevator allowing all floors to be accessible.
2. Provide compliant restrooms.
3. Upgrade all the door hardware with closures, handles, and lock-sets.

There are several items of deferred maintenance that need to be addressed.

- The brick stairs at the front entry have deteriorated and failed. The brick needs to be reset into a new bed of concrete or an alternate stair system constructed.
- 3rd-floor water damage on the ceiling.
- Coordinate a building-wide door hardware upgrade.
- Provide an entry door lock system that coordinates with existing municipal standards.

- Wooden ramp to be removed and replaced with a code-compliant ramp or an elevator.
- Electrical system needs to be reviewed by an electrical engineer and updated.

Exterior improvements

- Add site lighting at the ramp.
- Update building signage listing building occupants.
- Provide way-finding signage inside and outside.

2. Resilient Buildings Group Energy Audit 12/16/2022

Resilient Buildings Group (RBG) conducted a site visit of the Warner Community Center building in Warner, NH on Friday, September 23rd. The Community Development and Finance Authority (CDFA) helped fund the Audit. During the audit, RBG examined the building's shell and all other pertinent building systems. The assessment shows that the energy performance of the building can be improved. The report/audit will provide an overview of the building's existing conditions and an initial outline of problem areas and recommendations for cost-effective ways to reduce energy use and costs.

Notable Issues

- **Heat distribution:** Occupants of the building reported the right wall and back walls of the pantry are noticeably colder than the rest of the building and has experienced moisture issues. The radiator serving this area is not working.

- **Outlets:** Occupants of the building indicated that many of the outlets are shared among various appliances, due to a lack of outlets throughout the building. This causes the breakers to trip frequently.

- **Occupant Comfort:** In several offices, there were space heaters set up in office and cubicle spaces.

- **Previous Weatherization:** It appears insulation was added to the attic around 2010.

- **Possible Roof Leak:** During our inspection, there is evidence of an active roof leak above the corner office of the home school.

- **Pantry Foundation:** Occupants reported that there have been repairs made to the foundation multiple times.

Energy Efficiency Measures

Three major areas of activity were examined for energy-saving opportunities: building envelope, mechanical systems, and electrical systems. (The proposed energy efficiency recommendations could qualify for the energy efficiency incentives offered by NH Saves).

Recommendations

B1 - Air Seal

M1- Replace Boiler

M2B - Air Sourced Heat Pump

E1 - LED Lights

E2 - Energy Star appliances

R1 - Solar PV - is possible but needs further analysis for the roof being able to bear the weight.
(Cost \$41,100)

The full Energy Report/audit needs to be reviewed to gain a full understanding of its

recommendations, but this document provides you with an overview of the issues and a projected cost as of the date of the report. Cost will increase overtime.

The projected cost of the above recommendations is \$158,950 (less \$41,100 if solar is not included)

3. Funding Opportunities

1. CDFA will provide a loan for energy improvements. It would be a low-cost loan of 3-4% or lower because we are a municipality. Over a period of years, the loan will "pay for itself". One of our subcommittee recommendations was for \$158,950 in energy improvements which would be in line with CDFA funding awards. No issues with who occupies the building as long as they were not all for profit. Rolling application dates. CDFA staff will provide further guidance on the application process.

2. CDFA will provide tax credits for an interior fit-up and other improvements. Funding is in the range of \$100,000 - \$500,000. The application process starts in March. The occupants need to provide a "community benefit" and *I asked specifically if selling used clothing fit that priority and they said no*. Their priorities were focused on civic activities - recreation - learning - services that benefit the community etc.

3. Community Center Funds - The application comes out this fall.

4. LCHIP could be available and should be coordinated within an overall plan.

It is our recommendation that the Town take a 2-step process:

- 1. Apply this year for the CDFA energy loan to reduce the Community Center's energy use, which will eventually lead to a cost savings.**
- 2. Apply to the CDFA tax credit program next year to improve the building's interior fit-up and exterior appearance/use/safety.**

Our next step is to gain your approval to continue with this plan and continue the dialogue with CDFA in order to decide the best approach in gaining Town approval.

The approval process has 2 options:

1. Complete the energy application before Town meeting and get preapproval of the loan from CDFA then go to Town meeting.

or

2. Present the proposal at Town meeting and then complete the application.

CDFA has some hesitancy to go through the process/paper work to get preapproval and then possibly have the Town say no at Town meeting.

We will need to talk with CDFA moving forward.

We await your guidance.

There are immediate issues facing the safety of the Community Center that need to be addressed, before funding is available: the interior railings are non-compliant, roof repair and the front entry should be replaced.

Thank you,

Charlie Albano, Harry Seidel, Neil Nevins, Mark Govoni and Anthony Mento