

TOPIC: Brookline Building Use Workgroup Meeting
Time: September 1st 2026 5:00pm Eastern Time
Location: Brookline Town Office, Brookline Vermont or Zoom meeting

Present in room

Stanley Noga
Emily Beer
Lyle Brooks
Mary Hickey
Fred Strasser
Andrea Seaton
Jessica Guerrero
Mike Desocio

Present via Zoom

none

1. Mary Hickey, chair, called meeting to order at 5:05pm
2. Changes to the agenda:
None
3. Review and approve minutes from the public meeting on 8/18/26: Stan wants a small amendment in the minutes, with those amendments Mary makes motion to approve minutes, Stan seconds the motion, the motion passes.
4. Scheduled members of the public:
None
5. Unscheduled members of the public:
None
6. Old business:
 - a. Summarize sentiments expressed at the public meeting:
 - i. Mary's takeaway was that there was no large groundswell or consensus on any one option. Andrea thought it was clear that the public was taken aback by the information we'd collected and how complicated this issue is, all the nuances we are looking into. Mike noticed lots of heads nodding when Pat Noga mentioned that we can wait on the vote, that we don't need to rush anything. Lyle's takeaway was that it seemed like most of the town doesn't want to sell the property and that the folks present at the meeting were most interested in the rental option.
 - b. Finalize plan for September 12 public meeting:

- i. We could hand out the summary of BBUW's work that Mary has made, we can also provide a hand out of Mike's financial model, both of these items will also be presented to the public at the meeting. Perhaps the committee can take a straw poll to see where the attendants are at- folks can raise their hand for which of the 4 options they want to happen as a "temperature check". Mary can add to the BBUW summary what each option would cost and what it would do to our taxes. The last meeting was the committee listening to the public, this next meeting will be the committee presenting our findings so far. Jess will present the BBUW summary power point since Mary and Fred cannot attend the meeting. Mike will present the financial models. David is available to facilitate the meeting again if we so desire.

7. Reports and updates:

- a. Emily Beer: Researched through Vermont League of Cities and Town who says we cannot have a multichoice ballot question, they are supposed to be a Yes or No referendum. They advised using a survey or poll that is non-binding to assess which of the four options is most popular and go from there. There's a possibility that if a town-wide survey is used to determine what the popular choice is, that the selectboard could then make a preliminary decision, then the townsfolk can (at a town meeting) endorse the motion or not, that way the decision can be easily traced back to doing what the majority of the townsfolk want. Mary wonders if the way to go could be using the Australian voting system to see if the town wants to move the town office to the school house - from there we could then have a more clear idea of which direction we need to focus our attention. Stan wonders about an approach that involves builders in the community coming together to remodel the school house into a multi-unit residence; it would make more people in the town invested in the building. Mary recently talked with someone from a Vermont housing agency who says that small developers don't really exist and that it's usually more of a ground up thing that evolves from a need. Fred wonders if putting the school on the market for rental to just see if there is interest while the town dives deeper into what we should do with the school would be beneficial. Mike thinks the town as a whole needs to decide what to do next so putting the school on the market without a vote doesn't align with that. Mary asks if there should be a referendum asking the town if they want to pursue renting out the school.
- b. Andrea Seaton: Contacted Grace Cottage's CEO to address a rumor that they may be interested in setting up daycare at the school house, she responded that they have not expressed interest and that Grace Cottage doesn't have the finances or the bandwidth to explore setting up a daycare facility.
- c. Stan Noga: Stan and Jess met up at the school house to measure the interior and exterior of the building to produce a floor plan which will aid out work as a committee. He thinks that if we do get someone to rent the school house that it'll most likely be a newer entity versus a well established business.
- d. Jessica Guerrero: Spoke with Jeremy and Ashley Bouchard of Grendel Builders in Brattleboro, all walked around the older portion of the school house and determined it would cost around \$55,000 - \$60,000 (if nothing went wrong) for a very basic renovation

as preparation for moving the town office to the school house. The same walkthrough happened with Gero Dolfus of Mindel & Morse builders in Putney, he estimated a bare minimum of \$75, for the basic renovation. The general scope of both of these renovations was intended to be very basic and include the following work; the demolition of the cabinets, demolition of mini kitchen, removal of old flooring, removal of vinyl floor trim and replacing with pine trim, installing of new subfloor and new sheet vinyl flooring, replacing damaged tiles of drop ceiling, subcontracting an electrician to verify all is up to code and functioning well, subcontracting a plumber to deal with any kitchen/heating issues that come up, and improvements to all walls either by skimcoating or overboarding with ¼ inch drywall. Does not include relocating the vault. This number also does not cover the cost of moving all the furniture, files, contents of the vault, and accessories of the town office.

- e. Lyle Brooks: Talked with someone who is willing to volunteer their time to help clean up the school building to make it more marketable.
- f. Fred Strasser: (see below)
- g. Mary Hickey: Mary and Fred talked to someone associated with a small scale developers support group, as well as talked with folks from Acorn Realty.

8. New Business:

- a. Create “to-do” with assigned tasks/deadlines
 - i. Everyone look over Mary’s print out and see if anything is missing, especially if there's anything to add in the “what we've done so far” column.

9. Meeting adjourned at 7:02pm