

*Phyllis*

TOWN HALL STATUS  
FEB.9, 1998

Septic system: It has been reported by Ruth and Phyllis that Terry Heinholdt stated the building currently has a 500 ga. steel tank. The last reported pumping was done 3 yrs. ago. The committee has a confirmed appointment with the Board of Health on Thurs. FEB. 12 AT 9:45 PM.

Sprinkler system: According to Janet, an estimated cost for a proposed 3 floor sprinkler system is in the range of \$40,000. This estimate is per Coswell Systems. Fire Chief Baker indicated to Janet that if the use of the building were to remain the same, a sprinkler system may be not be required, however it would obviously add an element of protection that needs to be considered.

Utilities: Usage for the following have been established-

HEAT                      Radio Oil Co. 5053.6 gal. #2 fuel oil for calendar year 1996  
  
                                    x .79 = \$3992.34  
                                    = average \$332.70/mo.

ELECTRICITY              Sterling Municipal Light Dept. 24,000 KWH for calendar year 1996  
  
                                    = \$3,150  
                                    = average \$262.50/mo.

WATER                      Sterling DPW water usage

QUARTER	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	TOTAL
1994	7,100	8,100	8,100	8,100	31,400
1995	9,200	10,500	8,300	9,500	37,500
1996	8,000	7,400	7,400	7,000	29,800
			Grand Total		98,700

Average=32,900/year  
= average 2741 gal./mo.

After careful consideration and extensive research, The Building Needs Committee has concluded that the Town Hall building is of no beneficial use to the town as a Police Station. This determination was made on the basis of a thorough study by the Committee, spanning more than one year, and involving various professional assessments. Studies were paid for with funds allotted to the Committee in Article 34, May 17, 1997 Annual Town Meeting, and portions have been funded in part by a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Conclusions have been based on the information outlined in this report.

#### Preservation Partnership Study

In the fall of 1995, a feasibility study with preliminary drawings of the town hall as a police station was completed by The Preservation Partnership, the architectural firm employed to design the renovation of the Mary Ellen Butterick Municipal Building. With the only means of secure and code meeting cells and communication center being obtainable by the addition of a 4800 sq. ft. addition to the building, it is apparent that the existing framework of the building would not meet the requirements of a Police Station. The consideration for such an expansion is difficult to justify due to a number of factors.

First, given the small lot site that the building occupies, an expansion of the building would negatively impact the already limited parking situation. Parking spaces specified by the architects drawings, along the north side of the building, would extend into Maple St. Also, the existing plot plan does not allow for the citing of any garage space, certainly hindering the ability for future growth of the police department on that site.

Secondly, given that the structure is listed with the National Register of Historic Places, and an integral part of the Sterling Center Historic District, such an expansion would be required to comply with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Designed to encourage the maintenance of the exterior of a historical building, the cost of compliance is typically greater than that of similar new construction.

Finally, the second floor of the building has no value under this scenario, and would not be put to any use.

#### WPI's Civil & Environmental Engineering Program Study

Beginning in July 1997, The Building Needs Committee entered into a Major Qualifying Project agreement with WPI. The study was initially undertaken to review the potential for expansion of the public safety departments at their current location, however during the course of their research, the group compared the alternative solutions to such an expansion. In doing so, WPI queried the BNC, department chiefs and the Board of Selectmen as to the weight certain issues had in the overall scope of their undertaking. The results of that survey are attached. In factoring the answers received to their survey, the WPI group rated the Town Hall as the least desirable solution compared to either an integrated facility

at the present site, or a police station at an alternative site. They cited poor performance criteria (scoring 5 on a scale of 1-25) on the issues of space, functionality, town and department growth and maximum functionality level. It should be noted that functionality was the survey group's highest ranking criteria. Also failing to score above a 10 were location, operational and construction costs, overall safety and meeting codes.

The feasibility study concludes "Sterling should focus on finding a method where requirements will be met in the future if they are not met now. The old town hall will always be limited because of the space and land restraints previously discussed."

Based on the findings of these studies, The Building Needs Committee recommends that the Town Hall be put to an alternative use, and will continue to pursue that goal.