

barrett architecture
FRANK J. BARRETT, JR., A.I.A.

**A Progress Report On the Bradford Town Hall
To The
Bradford Town Select Board
With
Recommendations for Moving Forward**

November 13, 2017

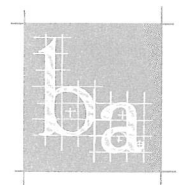
It has been a month since I last made a written report to the Select Board (SB) concerning the overall state of progress on the Bradford Town Hall (BTH) project, and at that time discussed with the SB options for moving forward (see report from the architect dated October 16, 2017). Since the time of that October report, I am pleased to say that much sure footed and steady progress has been made on several fronts, and as a result a much clearer path forward is now readily apparent. With this report, I wish to update the SB, and the public, on that progress, and then follow up with recommendations to you, as your architect, outlining the best way to protect the building, and for the most cost effective expenditure of public funds.

By the conclusion of this past week an important milestone had been reached. From my vantage point, it seems like we have made it “up over the hump” as it were. A point was reached whereby the overwhelming bulk of the architectural and structural drawings have been completed. This allowed me to spend much of a day doing a final review, checking, and coordinating the drawings of these two closely entertained disciplines - architectural and structural. As importantly it allowed our general contractor for the project, Trumbull-Nelson Construction Company, Inc. of Hanover, NH, to once again run estimates for the all-important first phase of the project that has been presented as Option Number 2. We have discussed over the past many months that the necessary structural repair of the historic building is going to be a significant, and expensive, part of this project. It is not only absolutely necessary work, but is also unavoidable. This is not to say that the building is not worth investing in – in fact quite the contrary. With what has now been designed by the project structural engineer, working closely with me, makes it abundantly clear that, assuming that 1) these structural repairs and upgrades are properly implemented, and 2) that in the years to come the Town of Bradford takes reasonably good care of the revitalized building, there is every reason to believe that hundreds of years from now this fine public facility will continue to play an important and vital role in the life blood of the community for generations to come. Therefore, I am pleased to share the following information, observations, and professional opinions with both the SB and the public at large.

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1. First, I continue to believe that as your architect I clearly made the right choice in having Tim Schaal, the project structural engineer, as part of the team handling this critically important, and expensive, part of the project. Tim has approached the building exactly as it should be handled: in a manner sensitive to and respectful of the historic building fabric, and trying to be as cost effective in his design solutions as possible. Needless to say this project does not fit the usual "production line" approach to structural engineering so often seen these days. This project has from the start required an approach far different than that.
2. Secondly, I continue to be very pleased with the decision that the SB made to bring Trumbull-Nelson (T-N) on board as the general contractor for the overall project. This project right from the start cried out for what I call an "olde tyme" type of general contractor with in-house skilled carpenters. This project is not, in any way, in need of production line framing and carpentry. Simply stated, Tim Schaal as the structural engineer and T-N are an excellent fit for this very unique project, and the important work immediately ahead of us.
3. As I shared with you several weeks ago, Tim's structural analysis has thankfully determined that the second floor "platform" of the 1863 part of the building is structurally in really good condition. This is the large open auditorium hall. However, Tim reminded me that the second floor "platform" area behind the original front 1863 building, in the 1906 addition which includes the stage area, does structurally require a lot of work. As does the first floor area in the 1906 rear portion of the building. Furthermore, he has reminded me that although the structural repair of the entire building could, if necessary, be phased, it is not recommended. In his and my collective opinion this would not be at all cost effective for the Town of Bradford, and it would negatively impact his overall approach to many of the structural issues that he had to resolve while doing his design work. Simply stated, Tim's approach to his work, from the lower level up through to the roof, was in part predicated upon the entire structural repair and upgrading being undertaken at one time.
4. With the state of the architectural and structural drawing such as they were by mid last week, Tony Instasi at T-N, the project manager for the job, was able to once again run an estimate for what I refer to as Option Number 2. This time it is a firm and complete estimate that can be thought of as the "final number" for this phase of the work. As will be noted from even just a quick glance of the structural drawings, there is a lot of framing material that will need to be carefully installed at the first and second floor levels, as well as within the attic space under the existing roof area. This framing material consists of common dimensional framing members (things like 2X12's), so-called manufactured lumber (things like Microlam and Parralam beams), structural steel beams and columns, and great amounts of metal hangers and fasteners. Tony, in the Town's best interest, as evidenced by his detailed estimate, has very completely and skillfully broken all of this work down, materials and labor, and for the materials received multiple and competitive prices. Because of the tedious complexity of the necessary carpentry work, it is only prudent and realistic that T-N's carpenters supply the labor, and that it is not sub-contracted out as might be done with a more conventional project. At this time, T-N's full estimate for Option Number 2 stands at \$509,325. It is important to realize that this number includes all of T-N's work to date on the project. Having this firm number in hand, based upon architectural and structural drawings that are at a minimum 90% complete is a significant milestone for this project indeed.



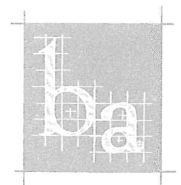
5. At this time, the mechanical, electrical, and pumping (MEP) and fire protection (sprinkler) engineering is well along, being handled by our consulting engineers WV Associates from Keene, NH. This past week, we had a very productive and well attended meeting with Richard Parks from WV. We covered a lot of topics, reviewed his work to date, and made good decisions and provided additional direction. I am expecting that their work will be complete by the latter part of this month. Then, while not part of this first phase of work, T-N can none the less obtain firm competitive prices for what will in time be a significant percentage of the overall project budget.

With these updates now shared, I would like to turn to the important and timely question of potentially phasing the work that is clearly defined as Option Number 2; and possibly proceed in a manner that has been identified in my October 16th report as Option Number 1. To that end, I offer the following thoughts for the SB's consideration.

Maintaining the momentum of any construction project is always an important factor that cannot help but to relate back to the overall quality of the work, the enthusiasm for the project by the various participants involved, and ultimately to the overall cost of the project. Simply stated, project mobilization and de-mobilization is disruptive and costly for any project. I do realize that I have stated that T-N understands and accepts the unique circumstances inherent in this project; and that I have reported to you that they continue to extend a willingness and a flexibility to work with the Town as necessary to see this project through to its full completion. That factor still holds true; however, T-N has expressed concerns to me as your architect relative to stopping, even temporarily, at the point of Option Number 1 and leaving the building in that that state for any period of time.

Now that T-N has been able to assemble a complete, detailed estimate and budget for all of Option Number 2, it needs to be understood that many of the hard numbers that we have now been presented with are based upon competitive prices from various suppliers who rightfully so expected the work to move along in an efficient and timely manner. A good example are the competitive prices that T-N received from three (3) structural steel suppliers. Two of those prices were quotes in excess of \$50,000; however, a third quote, from a steel fabricator based in Morrisville, Vermont, was \$47,200, a savings of about \$6,500. This supplier was hungry so to say, the schedule was a good fit for him, and Tony worked with him to get his price down and saved the project money in the process. The supplier even drove down from Morrisville last week to look at the building to better sharpen his price. But this is all based upon Tony being able to release the structural steel order this week, and not several or more months from now. It is my understanding that a similar dance took place concerning the so-called lumber framing package. In summary on this point of the final estimated price for the structural repair and upgrade of the building, and new interior partition framing, the following final numbers are interesting:

- Structural steel material and labor to install, by the supplier: \$47,200.
- All new framing materials: 49,602.
- All framing labor (3,109 hours): 161,602.
- Total cost of structural repairs and upgrades, and new framing: \$258,404.



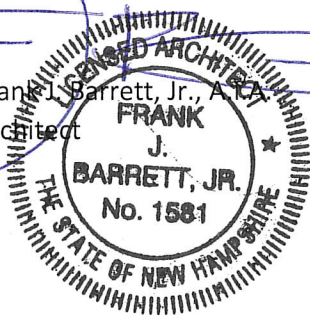
The third and final point that I believe is important, recognizing that at some point there might well be the need to take a break and for a period of time suspend construction work while additional funding is secured, is the matter of the logical point at which work is suspended. I firmly believe, as your architect who is thinking of what is in the best interest of the building, that the building, and therefore ultimately the town, would be ill served by suspending all construction work at the point of Option Number 1. There surely is no economy in doing this, and in fact will only raise the cost of the project. It only seems logical and right to complete all of the structural repair and new rough carpentry work, throughout the entire building, from the basement level to the attic and the roof, as per Option Number 2. Then if the building project needs to be suspended for some period of time, the building is in a sound and safe state, logically and clearly ready for the next phase of work to come. Based upon T-N's schedule, this phase would be finished at about the time of Bradford's annual 2018 Town Meeting; and winter is a good time to be doing this type of work inside the building.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the SB to immediately authorize the continuance of construction work on the building, as per the full scope of T-N's most recent estimate of \$509,325, and as referred to as Option Number 2. There is simply no benefit that I can see to waiting and not proceeding at full pace with the work now fully priced and fully defined.

I look forward to further discussing this matter at the SB's upcoming public meeting scheduled for the evening of November 13th. Thank for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Frank J. Barrett, Jr., A.A.A.
Architect



Handwritten signature: FRANK J. BARRETT, JR.
Date: 11/13/2017

