

MUNICIPAL BUILDING AND FACILITY ASSESSMENT

DRAFT August 7, 2007

1.0 Project Overview and History – Following the completion of the of the Town Center Action Plan published in March of 2005, the town center planning committee recommended in Section 9.3 of the report that the Board of Selectmen fund a comprehensive “Municipal Facilities Program and Space Needs Study” to examine all town owned buildings within town center, with a special focus on identifying new community uses for the old Public Library located at the corner of Fairbanks Street and Old Littleton Road.

At the Spring annual town meeting \$5000 was appropriated for the purposes of retaining professional assistance to support these efforts. On June 6, 2006 the Harvard Board of Selectmen assigned the task of creating a Municipal Buildings Task Force to a subcommittee of the Town Center Planning Committee to perform the following project:

1.1 Scope:

Three public buildings in the Town Center will either be vacated or potentially underutilized in the near future. The Town needs to develop and examine alternative uses for these buildings with the objective of placing recommendations as to their future use, reuse, or

The buildings are:

1. The Hapgood Library
2. The Hildreth House
3. The Town Hall

It is expected that uses for all three buildings will, in effect, be considered simultaneously because some potential uses may be viable in more than one building. The Library would however be a natural top priority for consideration because of the imminent relocation to the new library.

The Board of Selectmen (“BOS”) request that the Town Center Planning Committee, and specifically its Municipal Buildings Task Force, (“MBTF”) work directly with the BOS to achieve the objectives defined in this document.

The concept is for the Board of Selectmen to work closely with the MBTF in order to achieve aggressive deadlines and agree on key points so that the project can be completed as efficiently as possible. Frequent reports to the BOS along with formal and informal communication is encouraged to this end.

1.2 Tasks:

The MBTF will, with the aid of necessary professional assistance (as agreed in advance with the BOS) evaluate each building in order to determine:

1. The current physical condition of the building including:
 - a. Building Envelope
 - b. Building Systems (HVAC, etc.)
 - c. ADA Compliance
2. An assessment of the current and future needs of municipal employees and town boards.
3. A determination as to any restrictions in building use based on the terms of its gift or deed to the Town.
4. Possible uses for or disposition of the building and its property.
 - a. Initially the BOS is considering the following uses and disposition.

- i.. Hapgood Library: Community center (senior, teen and other age groups) municipal offices, housing, and meeting space.
- ii. Hildreth House: Community center, sell, tear down and build housing.
- iii. Town Hall: Community Center, municipal offices, and meeting space.

b. If the MBTF, after its interviews and investigations, feels that additional uses are possible, these suggestions will be reviewed with the BOS at an early stage to ensure congruence prior to the expenditure of time and money analyzing the option.

5. Recommended preferred use for each building

6. An estimate of what kinds of repairs and/or refurbishments would be required in order to make the building feasible for the recommended use/s.

1.3 Deliverables:

The MBTF will prepare a final report listing all of its activities for review on the Town website and at the ATM.

2.0 Space allocation and building footprint comparisons

At the beginning of this project, a thorough search for existing plans and building records was performed. Unfortunately, with the exception of the Old Library, few if any plans were found. This can likely be attributed to the lack of a methodical and accessible filing system for the records of public buildings which has resulted in the loss, misfiling or damage of the original documents. Fortunately for the MBTF, Library Director Mary Wilson was able to provide a set of plans from the renovation of the library that was performed in the late 1980s. Lacking a complete set of accurate plans for each building, the MBTF set out to perform field measurements of the Hildreth House and Town Hall. This data was then translated into scaled plans by Doug Coots AIA, Harvard Resident and principle at Bergmeyer Associates with the assistance from the staff of Bergmeyer Associates. As carefully as these plans have been prepared, the information contained in them should not be used as the basis for developing construction documents and are for preliminary design purposes only.

The following illustrations of the floor by floor comparison of each building provide a comparative assessment of gross building square footages and can be used as a tool to compare each of these buildings side by side. All drawings have been prepared at the same scale and have been color coded as to their current use into the following general categories:

- **Circulation** – Stairways, hallways, foyers etc
- **Mechanical/Storage/Bathroom** – Building systems, bathrooms, closets etc.
- **Office Space** – smaller, subdivided spaces that currently serve as offices or would likely be reused as such without alteration to the existing interior walls
- **Meeting/Assembly Space** – Large open spaces that could serve as meeting spaces or subdivided with temporary partitions such as cubicles.
- **Lost square footage due to Structural components** – This is the square footage of floor area lost to walls, chimneys and other structural elements within the perimeter of each floor.

2.1 Summary of building footprint comparisons

The survey plans provide a detailed breakdown of square footages for each floor. Looking at each building and how they are utilized gives us the ability to make objective comparisons of each structure regardless of their current use. For example, Hildreth house is a former residence and offers a surprising amount of gross square footage of floor area, however its interior is divided into small spaces or rooms of average size of approximately 150 square feet and upwards of 300 square feet. By comparison, the Town Hall and Old Library each contain over 7000 square feet and 8000 square feet (respectively) of available interior space, with a balanced amount of open meeting space and smaller rooms that has been categorized as office space. The following table examines how each building is currently subdivided by permanent partitions. (Cubicles and temporary offices have been ignored for the purposes of this comparison) from a gross square footage perspective that combines all floors for each building.

2.1.1 Table of available square footage by category

Interior Specifications (Sq.Ft)	Hapgood Library	Town Hall	Hildreth House
Circulation/stairs/hallways	1166	1230	997
Mechanical/bathroom/storage	1486	247	1615
Office/meeting rm space	3113	1117	1533
Meeting/Assembly space	2504	4478	655
Loss to structure	542	196	307
Gross Square Footage per bldg	8811	7274	5107

Note – Architectural scaled plans to be inserted into report here

2.2 Building Envelope and Mechanical System Conditions.

During the course of the survey and in conjunction with the various inspections the condition of the exterior and interior of each building was documented. In the case of Hildreth house a more complete survey was performed by David Bittermann AIA Conservation Architect dated October 11, 2004 and is available on the Town of Harvard Website in its entirety. A brief report and photographs represent a general survey and condition assessment of the interior, exterior and the associated mechanical systems for each building. Due to the historic nature of these buildings, a more complete survey, similar to the one prepared for the Hildreth House, should be performed to document Town Hall and the old Library building as part of any renovation or alteration or repair of these buildings.

2.2.1 Hapgood Library – Fairbanks Street

In the late spring of 2007 the Hapgood Library building located on Fairbanks street closed its doors while the renovated and expanded Old Bromfield building located on Massachusetts Avenue was christened as Harvard's new town library. Site limitations, lack of land area for expanded parking and septic as well as the inability to expand the building beyond its current footprint were the catalysts for the relocation to Old Bromfield. Despite the closing of the library at this location, the Hapgood room located in basement with access from the rear still has an active roster of committees and organizations that use the space for regular meetings. It was the anticipated vacancy of this building that has provided the town a unique opportunity to re-use and revitalize our municipal buildings within town center and meet the growing demands of Harvard's civic and volunteer community.

2.2.1.1 Library Exterior Envelope

It should not be surprising that the Library exterior is in very good condition. A brick structure, with a robust field stone foundation has had a good tenant in the library. Persistent water penetration in the foundation was remedied in the late 1980's with extensive work done to the exterior of the foundation and the addition of perimeter drainage. The landing at the rear of the exit stair from the first floor needs to be repaired. There still appears to be a minor incursion of water from the exterior in the basement area in the north east corner, but the likely culprit is from aged or poor flashing on shed roof the north side of the building located over the egress stair well. The slate roof appears to be in relatively good condition, with a few loose shingles, however an extensive roof survey was not performed and only observed from the ground and attic areas. The attic space over the former children's section that contains the lay light did exhibit signs of intrusion by paper wasps and the errant chipmunk. Chunks of mortar continue to work their way out of the terra cotta roof sheathing located over the children's section but were not recognized as a serious problem by GPR in their report (*See Section 2.5*)

2.2.1.2 Library Interior

As noted previously, the only evidence of water damage was in the basement area near the exit stair, while the remainder of the visible foundation presented no apparent issues and was free of cracking. A significant crack in the interior plaster finish in the area of the vaulted ceiling was located on the first floor reading room in the front right (south) corner of the building. GPR surmised that this may be the

result of the temperature differential between the exterior masonry and the supporting structure of the vaulted plaster finish.



Crack in interior plaster finish

Typical Water damage to paint on basement bricks



2.2.1.3 Library Mechanical Systems

Upon departure of the Library staff, the building has largely been unoccupied during the warmer months (except for the Hapgood meeting room). As the cold weather approaches a plan must be implemented to address the issues that freezing weather brings. The systems in the building were inspected prior to the closing of the library and appeared to be in good working order. Only the elevator machine room was not inspected as it was locked. Unlike the two other buildings, insulation was not observed, however no wall cavities were opened or exposed so it was not determined what insulation is present in the perimeter walls of the building. It appears that all the windows were re-glazed with double insulated glass, the date of the repair was not determined.

The most significant issues to be addressed with the building is the underground fuel oil tank on the north eastern corner of the building and the inadequate and fragile septic system located next to the buried fuel tank. A plan for the careful removal of the underground fuel tank is warranted and should be performed as soon as it is practical. On the interior, the oil fired boiler has non-code compliant fittings leading from the underground oil tank and a floor drain in close proximity to fuel lines as they enter the boiler – leaving the system vulnerable to leakage and the possibility of sub-slab/groundwater contamination if there was a release of hazardous materials in the boiler room.

As for the septic system, due to the current lot configuration, there is no land available to perform a repair the septic system and no chance of expansion to meet the requirements of Title 5 if a change of use is proposed for the building. The only solutions to the septic problem is to create a shared system with an

adjacent property owner or connect it to a limited town center sewer system (which is currently being investigated by the Town Center Planning Committee and the Board of Selectmen).

2.2.1.4 Hapgood Library Mechanical Systems inventory

Heating system	Oil Fired Boiler - tank buried outside NE corner needs to be removed. Fittings on supply lines not to code, floor drain is potential contamination risk if an oil spill were to occur.
Air Conditioning	Window AC units, dehumidifier units in basement
Domestic Hot water	Runs off boiler (verify)
Drinking water	Town Water supply - no issues reported
Cooking facilities	None
Bathrooms	Basement - 2 unisex (only one is partially HP accessible)
Septic	80 gpd, located on NE corner of lot
Lighting	Fluorescent and incandescent mix
Elevator	Yes - Basement, 1 st floor and mezzanine (not 2nd floor)
Fire Protection	Alarm Panel outdated, exit signage and emergency lighting inadequate, heat detectors not sufficient, no sprinklers, exterior exit stairs blocked or in need of repair.

2.2.2 Town Hall – Ayer Road

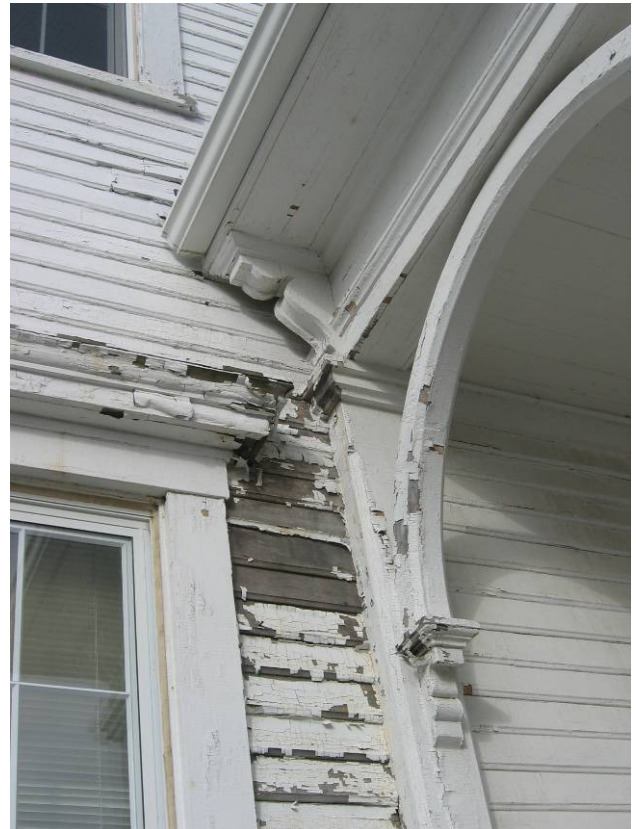
Tucked in behind the Unitarian Church at the north end of the town common, Harvard's town hall is surrounded by a sea of asphalt. A combination of street, driveway, parking area and emergency vehicle access-way the site on which the building sits presents a safety hazard to the pedestrian trying to access the building or read the public notices posted outside the front door. It is currently the location of the Town offices playing host to the town clerk, treasurer, tax collectors, assessors, finance director, town administrator, building inspector the offices of the Selectman, the board of health and all the land use boards of Harvard. It also serves as the mail depot for all town boards and committees in Harvard. It should also be noted that the functions of the town clerk are dependant upon an adjacent structure, the old Ambulance building, a portion of which houses the town vault which is currently full and cannot be expanded to accommodate more documents (*See Section 6.1.1*).

2.2.2.1 Town Hall Exterior Envelope

The exterior is of wood construction and currently carries a monochromatic color scheme of white on the siding and trim. Peeling paint is evident in numerous locations due to continued exposure to water/snow/ice and improper flashing as roof intersections – primarily at the front porch area, where an incomplete repair on the roof was performed a number of years ago. Several foundation window wells and portions of the sill are at risk to decay due to the build up of organic materials and mulch around the perimeter of the building. Blown cellulose insulation was observed in the attic areas and under the stage area, but no insulation was observed in the basement areas – with daylight visible from exterior while traversing the crawl spaces. Exterior wall cavities were not inspected and were not accessible. The painted iron exterior fire escape has been condemned (*See Section 4.0*) due to broken stair treads and questionable structural integrity. Windows have recently been replaced throughout the building with double

insulated glass, however their type and installation does not appear to have been approved by the historic, despite being located in the historic district.

Roof repair and siding damage at front porch area



2.2.2.2 Town Hall Interior

The building is a two story structure, with a minimal basement area that serves as the boiler room. The remainder of the structure does have a crawl space that is accessible from three locations and was accessed and inspected during the course of the survey by the MBTF. Along with Hildreth House, Town Hall is suffering from prolonged neglect and its available square footage underutilized. The ground floor was renovated in the late 1980's to its current configuration and the rear of the building was reconstructed upon the departure of the police department in 2005 to provide a new meeting room space, HP accessible bathrooms, a new mailroom and access by the public from the rear of the building. Unfortunately during the most recent renovation, not all the structural defects in the primary framing member in the center of the meeting room that support the stairwell (and stage area above) were corrected. The inspection by GPR (*See Section 2.5*) also revealed a significant structural weakness bearing wall along the north side of the foyer that is the result of the removal of foundation materials located in the basement/boiler room.



This photo was taken of the corner of the concrete block bearing wall that was removed in the southwestern corner of basement, leaving the primary support member from the upper floors unsupported. A large crack in carrier beam is visible at the top of the photo between joists where the wooden beam has failed. This has caused notable deflection in the upper floors in that area and continued cracking in main stair walls.

The second floor of the town hall currently provides for the offices of the Building inspector, the network hub for the computer system, the office of the board of selectman, all the land use boards, board of health and document storage. The first two offices are located in two small room at the landing of the main stairwell and beneath the balcony for the assembly hall and stage area that occupy the remainder of the second floor of the building. Temporary "rooms" were created within the assembly hall to create the one office for the selectmen and one for the land use boards. The remainder of the space is used for storage of documents, large scale drawings, building permit applications, fire department records and a myriad of other documents. Some documents are in locked file cabinets, while others are not.



View of the hallway created by the temporary office structures in the assembly hall located on the second floor

The assembly hall has a stage, complete with monolithic pocket doors to conceal the stage area, fire curtain, back stage area that provides access to a rear stairwell that exits into the meeting room below and a Steinway baby grand piano that was gifted to the town many years ago. Once the site of town meeting, lectures, contra dances and other civic and community events, it has succumbed to cobweb, layers of dust and piles of boxes.



The balcony area now houses the town's radio communication equipment see along the far wall and below.



The Stage area serves as an unsecured area for storage for documents and old furniture while the piano stands idle.



2.2.2.3 Town Hall Mechanical Systems

The Town Halls mechanical systems are a hodge podge of gas boilers, electric space heaters, central air conditioning (first floor only) and window mounted AC units. It has access to the town water system and the natural gas pipeline buried along Ayer Road. Although a separate building (and not included in the scope of the work for the MBTF), the old ambulance building is adjacent to the town hall and has uses every type of energy, from fuel oil for the steam boiler, a gas domestic water heater, window mounted electric air conditioners and portable dehumidifiers. The northern half of this building on the lower floor houses the town vault, where all essential records kept by the town clerk are archived (*See Section 7.1.1*) The vault is currently at capacity and has been for some time.

The Fire Department has taken over the building to house the fire boat on its trailer, excess hose, and portable pumps. The upstairs area, formerly used as the training room and headquarters of the Harvard Ambulance Corps, now serves as the office of our S.A.F.E. (Fire education) coordinator and as storage for her curriculum materials all of which used to be housed at the Central Fire Station prior to the departure of the ambulance corps to the new public safety building down the street on Ayer Road. The Harvard Community Cable Access committee has expressed interest in renovating the old ambulance building to create a television studio and editing space to service the community and the development of programming for public access television.

Town Hall systems have seen periodic repairs but would benefit from a comprehensive energy audit as outlined in Section 2.4 of this report. The septic system is also limited in its capacity to provide a public restroom and is deed restricted to 18 employees.

2.2.2.4 Town Hall Mechanical Systems inventory

Heating system	Natural Gas Fired Boiler, some electric space heaters at workstations
Air Conditioning	1st floor has condenser, 2nd floor window AC units
Domestic Hot water	Stand alone gas fired hot water
Drinking water	Town Water System - access in mailroom crawl space
Cooking facilities	Yes - Kitchen combined with break room
Bathrooms	1st floor : 1 unisex HP at front, M&W HP at meeting room, 2nd floor: none
Septic	Deed restricted to 18 employees - 300 gpd. located on NE corner of lot across driveway to Hildreth House
Lighting	1st floor surface mounted fluorescent, 2nd fl screw base PLC
Elevator	None
Fire Protection	Alarm panel outdated, exit signage inadequate, heat detectors not sufficient, Exterior Fire Escape to be condemned - not serviceable at this time, no sprinklers, egress from basement blocked, shut off for furnace to be relocated outside of boiler room, stage and balcony area warrant further investigation prior to their re-use stage at as theater.

2.2.3 Hildreth House – Elm Street

Since the Bittermann survey was performed in 2004, numerous improvements have been made to Hildreth House through grants received from the town of Harvard Community Preservation Fund and private donations through the Friends of the COA. Much work remains to be done to restore Hildreth house to its former prominence at the height of the town common. In addition the community needs to determine whether or not Hildreth House will continue to be utilized as a senior center and the necessary modification made to meet the needs of the senior community. *(See section 6.2 or more detail on the needs of the COA)*

2.2.3.1 Hildreth Exterior Envelope - Under the direction of the Council on Aging (COA), Hildreth house received a new roof in 2006 and in the spring of 2007 the exterior siding was replaced and has secured the exterior building envelope and prevented further water damage to the interior finishes. During the most recent renovation to the exterior, blown cellulose insulation has been installed in wall cavities and accessible attic areas – this has greatly improved the inhabitability of the building during the colder months. Exterior windows are single pane glass with exterior storm window screen combinations. Not all window sets of storms and screens are complete and all the window trim needs to be repainted to prevent further degradation, as their painting and repair was not part of the siding repair contract. In addition, exterior shutters were removed during the residing process and have not been repainted, repaired or re-installed.

Although the exterior envelope has been secured, the recent repair to the sill area at the rear patio area on the north side of the house warrants “further review of the repair detail and flashing” as the patio condition that caused the damage has not been remedied. *(See photo at right and GPR report in Section 2.5)*



Other major structural conditions reported by GPR *(Section 2.5)*, the Fire Chief *(Section 4.0)* and the Building Inspector *(Section 3.0)* include non-compliant or missing stair landings on the north side of the building and missing or broken railings at the main entry as exhibited in the following photographs.



Exit Stair at Living room



Exit Stair at rear pantry area



Rear Stair exit from kitchen



Front steps to front porch entry

2.2.3.2 Hildreth Interior – Although constructed as a private summer residence, when the town took control of the building, its future was not clear. It has since been adopted by the Council on Aging (COA). Through donations of time and money from private citizens and the creation of the “Friends of the Hildreth House” the senior community has cared for and maintained the building. Accessibility to handicapped persons is limited to the first floor, even while the directors office, television room, card room and computer lab all reside on the second floor, accessible only to able bodied citizens (*See section 3.0*) and the third floor is restricted to storage due to a lack of a second means of egress (*See section 4.0*). The COA continues to make improvements to Hildreth House in order to sustain the needs of growing senior population in Harvard and expand programs despite the limitations of the facility. Almost all interior finishes on the first and second floors are original and in good condition. A combination of painted plaster and clear finished raised wood paneling, the interior on these two floors has not suffered from water damage and is a compelling reason to leave the layout of the rooms on these floors relatively unchanged.



Paneling detail at Dining Room



Arch detail at Second Floor Hall



Dining Room with typical table layout for weekly lunches

Until the recent repairs were performed on the exterior, extensive water damage had occurred in the exterior walls of the second and third floors. Plastic sheeting has been used to keep plaster from falling onto residents using the computers in the second floor computer lab. While the condition of most of the rooms on the second floor are acceptable, the third floor has suffered from neglect and only recently cleared of their collection of discarded documents and outdated equipment from the police department. The kitchen, although outfitted with a new electric stove is inadequate for the COA and unsafe for handicapped persons (*see HP assessment in Section 3.0*). For a sample of the conditions see the following photos.



Water damage in computer lab on second floor



Water damage to room on third floor



Kitchen Area



Third floor unfinished storage area

2.2.3.3 Hildreth Mechanical Systems

Updated fire protection and alarm systems were installed in the spring of 2007 and repairs were made to the electrical system to reduce known wiring hazards. Minimal improvements to cooking facilities and interior lighting have been made while revisions to the HVAC systems have been postponed until the future of the structure has been determined. It was observed during the inspection with GPR that there fire-blocking was not installed around the chimney area, leaving the structure vulnerable to the spread of fire. The building is served by the town center water system, but the location and condition of the supply line is unknown and likely to be in poor condition due to the limited water supply and pressure observed. It has been rumored that the building has a cesspool type septic system, although its location, construction and condition has not been determined it is most likely non-compliant with current Title 5 Regulations.

2.2.3.4 Hildreth House Mechanical Systems inventory

Heating system	Oil fired Hot air - Tank in basement not to code
Air Conditioning	None
Domestic Hot water	Stand alone gas fired hot water – replaced Jan 2006
Drinking water	Town Water supply is Limited (old small diameter iron supply line) low pressure, low volume
Cooking facilities	Kitchen gas service available but new electric stove installed 2007
Bathrooms	Main floor - 1 HP accessible (2005), 2nd floor - full bath with tub (residential)
Septic System	Unknown location, unknown construction, unknown capacity
Climate Controls	One zone - manual control mercury switch type thermostat
Lighting	Incandescent, floor lamps, sconces, pendant fixtures
Elevator	None
Fire Protection	New smoke detectors, lighting & control panel January 2007, no sprinklers, exterior stairs located near exists need to be reconstructed and/or repaired, heating oil tank not to code, third floor cannot be occupied without secondary means of egress

2.3 Summary of Building Envelope and Mechanical System Survey

What is not evident from the plans or square footage comparisons is how the volume and character of the spaces differ between these buildings.

2.3.1 Hildreth House -The most intimate of these buildings is the Hildreth house. A wood framed structure with field stone foundations and chimneys, it is situated upon a 5.66 acre parcel and surrounded by green space. It contains significant floor area, but it is divided between three floors. Each floor has relatively low ceilings (8-9feet) narrow hallways and a significant amount of well crafted interior trim. Originally constructed as a summer residence for the Hildreth family, the use of the building is likely incompatible for larger assemblies of people, and better suited to more limited uses over longer periods of time. With the addition of a larger dining hall/assembly space, perhaps off the rear patio of the building, HP access to the upper floors, and improved parking, Hildreth House seems well suited to continue as a senior center or private conference center.

2.3.2 Town Hall - The Town Hall stands in stark contrast to the Hildreth House. At the top of Elm Street and steps away from Ayer road, the building is located on the northern tip of the town common, tucked in behind the Unitarian church. It is a significant wood framed structure. Ceiling heights on the first floor are very high (approximately 12 feet). The foyer exhibits the classic dual stair as you enter from the covered porch at the front of the building. Inside the double doors is a large room that has been subdivided by cubicles and houses much of the “retail side” of town government. Little privacy is afforded to patrons and staff in this area (*See Section 6.1 for interviews with town employees*). The space is further divided into smaller offices in the middle of the floor, all with the high ceilings. With the recent construction of the new public safety building, the rear of the building has been transformed into a new public meeting room equipped for cable broadcasts, with the balance of space being used for two HP restrooms, janitors closet and mail room that can be accessed by the public after hours without entering the business side of town hall.

The second floor is unique – complete with a balcony, stage area and Steinway baby grand piano it has ceiling heights well in excess of 20 feet. Occupying the entire second floor, this assembly space retains many original finishes and electric light fixtures and represents the largest gathering space among the three buildings. This grand space is currently not used for public functions as the second floor is not accessible to HP persons and half of the floor area has been occupied by temporary offices for the board of Selectmen and the land use boards. The remainder of the space has been relegated to storage of old furniture and unsecured documents. There appears to be a significant need for dedicated storage of documents, and access to those documents all under one roof. An expansion of the basement area might seem to be an obvious solution, if it were not for the likelihood of encountering significant amounts of rock and ledge in the dirt floor crawl space below the building.

If the community desires to restore the second floor assembly space and stage area, the land use boards and the selectman’s offices will need to be relocated. Upon interviewing town employees, examining the needs for accessible and secure storage it does not appear that the office of the selectmen and the land use boards and their associated document storage requirements can be consolidated into the first floor even if the ground floor meeting room is converted to office space.

2.3.3 Hapgood Library – The most noble of the town’s municipal building inventory it was chosen many years ago to grace the town seal – the icon that represents the center of civic life in Harvard. The brick Victorian era structure echoes the character and spirit of the new library building at Old Bromfield. Situated on the southeastern corner of the town common, it squarely address the center of Harvard and the cross roads of Still River Road and Ayer Road. Located just off the intersection of harvard’s only traffic light on Fairbanks street its façade is unobstructed by other buildings and graced by the presence of the civil war memorial on the little common immediately in front of the building. Unlike the

image in the town seal, the entry of the building was relocated to the side porch during a prior renovation when the Hapgood room was added.



As the building is currently configured with a finished basement and first floor mezzanine area, it offers a variety of different spaces with differing ceiling heights and room configurations. Providing a balance of smaller and larger rooms, it lies between the intimacy of Hildreth House and the large open spaces with generous ceiling heights of the Town Hall. Well suited to being subdivided it appears to be the provide amply opportunities to meet all the needs of the employees of town hall, document storage requirements as well as community meeting spaces.

2.4 Energy Audit

Over the course of the winter and spring of 2007, the MBTF consulted with the “Energy Survey” subgroup of Harvard Local to discuss the possibility of performing an energy audit and developing a comprehensive energy policy on behalf of the town. The goal of this audit is to examine energy use by all town buildings, determine the tightness of each building envelope and provide a series of recommendations to reduce energy consumption, improve thermal efficiency, develop criteria for the selection of energy efficient heating, cooling and lighting systems when the replacement of equipment is anticipated. Harvard currently participates in the “Green Start” program where individual property owners can pay a slightly increased rate for electricity that is generated from alternative energy sources such as wind or solar. In exchange, the utility company will make contributions to a “Clean Energy Choice Fund” that can be used by the town to implement conservation strategies, install solar panel arrays or simply install automatic lighting systems and thermostats. The fund currently has over \$13,000 available to the town and could provide seed money for the initiation of a comprehensive energy conservation program. Harvard Local has already begun collecting data from the schools as they are the largest consumer of energy and are the prime target of this audit. However, they will continue to gather energy data and fuel usage for all town owned buildings as part of their survey.

Bill Blackwell, co-founder of Harvard local has been the point of contact for the MBTF. All energy related data that is collected will input into an Energy Portfolio Manager, a format developed by the EPA to help communities inventory their energy usage combined with daily weather data with inputs for the type of building construction and mechanical systems. The following task list has been developed and will be completed over the course of the next calendar year.

1. Get all building and energy use data into the EPA model.
2. Run the model to produce the energy performance rating (EPR) for each building.
3. Bring in a green building designer/consultant here in Harvard, who has volunteered to help us analyze the data and make recommendations.
4. Depending on consultant recommendations, for the buildings with highest energy use and lowest EPR ask the town to order a detailed energy audit on those buildings.
5. Report to the BOS the auditor's results and request the BOS fund their implementation based on highest payback first.
6. Investigate energy service companies (ESCO's) for possible contracting to do remediation work and efficiency improvements with guaranteed performance.

Note - Vehicle, street lighting and other energy users have not been considered yet.

2.5 Structural Assessment

Goldsmith, Prest and Ringwall (GPR)

In order to gain a better understand of the condition and potential limitations related to the continued use or future re-use of these historic buildings, GPR was retained to perform a structural review, based upon a visual assessment of each building and to identify areas of further investigation that might be necessary and/or outline actions necessary to correct any structural liabilities uncovered during the investigation. The work was performed by Senior Engineer Val Prest and Scott Nelson, PE of GPR and was accompanied by Tim Clark of the Town Center Planning Committee.

GPR's report to be included here.

3.0 Accessibility for Handicapped Persons Assessment

Gabriel Vellante Jr., Harvard Building Inspector

With the exception of the old Library building, the historic exteriors of the three buildings investigated has largely been unchanged since their original erection in the later part of the 19th and early part of the 20th Century. It should come as no surprise that these buildings have had minimal adaptations to service the needs of handicapped persons. All three buildings are not fully compliant with the current HP Accessibility requirements, as set forth in 521CMR for the State of Massachusetts. Due to the limitation of funds available for this project, the MBTF was unable to secure professional assistance to perform this component of the survey and as the Building Inspector report does not include an assessment of ADA compliance as he is not authorized to enforce that portion of the federal code.

The following report of the Building Inspector was submitted to the MBTF on January 17, 2007 titled "HP Accessibility Study"

At your request, I have reviewed the following town buildings for compliance to HP Accessibility requirements, as set forth in 521CMR. Since I am not authorized by the Commonwealth to enforce ADA Regulations, no evaluation was made for compliance to ADA.

My findings are as follows:

3.1 Old Library Building

Exterior

- There is no access to the front door which is the main entrance to the building. 'HP' entrance should be along the Normal Access Route, not the back door.
- 'HP' parking space is 12' wide, this includes the parking spot and accessible route. When one space is provided it must be van accessible. This requires an 8 foot wide parking space and an 8 foot wide access route. The parking space and access area cannot have a grade that exceeds 2% in any direction measured over a 24" grid. There are some locations which exceed this restriction.
- Accessible route to lower level. The access route can have up to a 5% grade along the direction of travel. If the grade exceeds 5% up to 8.3% it is considered a ramp. All ramps must have 'HP' railings on both sides. Further, the access route must be a minimum of 48" between railings, and cannot have a cross slope exceeding 2%. The present walkway is too narrow, and in many locations exceeds the maximum slope requirement of 8.3%. This walkway not only does not comply to 'HP' requirements but is a dangerous walk way for anyone.
- At the rear entry door there is insufficient flat area in front of the door and the metal grate does not meet 'HP' standards and is bent upward.

Main entrance

- There is a step from the vestibule to the main floor level.
- The distance between the two doors in a vestibule cannot be less than 7 feet. The vestibule is approximately 6'-4". This vestibule would have to be reconfigured to meet 'HP' standards.

Interior space

- There is no 'HP' restroom in the building.
- There are irregularities in the floors going from one room to another. These areas would have to be feathered so that a wheelchair could travel freely through the building.
- The lower level exit door does not have the required side clearance to accommodate a wheelchair.
- Travel through the aisle ways is restricted by stored materials and limited aisle widths.

Elevator

- The elevator measures approximately 51" x 51" inside. The 'HP' requirement is a minimum inside dimension of 54" x 68". The elevator is clearly inadequate under the present regulations. Further, there is no marking on the inside panel for level of discharge and access to the door is limited.

3.2 Town Hall

General

The Town Hall was renovated in four phases.

Phase 1 - The Selectmen's office and the Joint Boards offices were moved from the first floor to the second floor. The original intent was to install a stair climber and the Joint Boards room was originally intended to serve as a Selectmen's meeting room. Unfortunately, the AAB denied the variance request for a stair climber. Because of that denial, the upper floor was to be closed to public access and the meeting room converted to the now Joint Boards Office.

Phase 2 - The 'HP' ramp on the side of the building was constructed so as to provide access to the main floor level of the building. Although this is not exactly along the normal access route the location was chosen to maintain the historic entrance and to get 'HP' traffic off Elm St. As part of this renovation a closet was created in the side hallway. This was done so as to be able to install a 'HP' restroom at a future date.

Phase 3 - Renovate the first floor of the Town Hall for office space.

Phase 4 - Renovate the vacated Police station into a meeting room, with 'HP' restrooms and an 'HP' entrance.

Although these projects were completed in phases, the completed work reflects a good over all design.

Exterior

- The 'HP' parking is poorly paved. This parking area does not meet the slope requirements exactly. This is a result of poor grading and winter conditions. Repairs are needed. Re painting of the parking and accessible routes are needed.
- 'HP' ramp is need of repair.

Interior

- Although not perfect, the interior renovation does a good job with complying to the AAB regulations. However, there is no 'HP' access to the second floor. This floor should be restricted to employees only. This would then comply to the AAB regulations, in that the AAB currently has no jurisdiction over employee only areas. However this would still be a violation of the ADA regulations. For future long term use, and elevator must be considered for this building.
- The interior doors leading to the reception area do not individually meet the HP width requirement. These doors should be secured open during working hours or have an HP opener installed.

3.3 Hildreth House

General

The 'HP' modification to this building were performed over a period of time. The original concept was a comprehensive design incorporating 'HP' access to the farmer's porch, and new front entrance, while allowing for proper interior circulation for all users. Unfortunately the plan was not implemented as a whole but in phases with the exterior work and new entrance being performed first. At the request of the Council on Aging, the original interior design was not used and the 'HP' restroom installed with a basic field design. This modification was done so as to not loose the rear pantry and storage cabinets. This modification now requires anyone using the restroom to travel through the kitchen. This is a dangerous situation for anyone, while the kitchen is in use for a function, but especially dangerous for a 'HP' person.

Exterior

- The 'HP' parking spot is inadequate in that it does not meet dimensional standards. At this location this can be easily corrected, with regarding and paving.
- 'HP' ramp was recently constructed, however in need of maintenance.
- 'HP' hand rail on the stair are in need of repair.

Interior

- The interior circulation of the first floor is poor because of the design modifications discussed under 'General'.
- Thresholds at doors must be removed or modified.
- There is no elevator to the second floor.

If you have any questions regarding this report, or if I can be of any further assistance please feel free to call me during my scheduled times. (Mon thru Thurs 6pm to 7pm at 978-772-4991 or Mon 8:30am to 11:00am (Town Hall Office hours) at 978-456-4110).

Gabriel Joseph Vellante Jr.
Building Commissioner /Zoning enforcement Officer

4.0 Life Safety and Fire Protection Assessment –

Robert Mignard, Harvard Fire Chief

Walkthroughs were performed by the Harvard Fire Chief and observations were recorded by Tim Clark who accompanied him on all of his inspections. Each inspection began with an exterior assessment, followed by a bottom up approach for each building starting in the basement areas and ending in the attic of each building. Although the investigations were thorough, they may not represent a complete list of all the existing conditions for each building as other conditions may be uncovered during future investigations or in the process of performing other work outlined in other portions of this report.

4.1 Town Library – Fairbanks Street , Walkthrough performed 11/17/2006

Fire Protection/Loss prevention

General Recommends

- 1) Installation of sprinkler system if building to be renovated.
- 2) Upgrade Fire alarm system
- 3) Remove/replace heat detectors with smoke detectors
- 4) Exit lighting and signage insufficient (exits not properly marked, illuminated signs not installed) throughout building
- 5) Emergency lighting insufficient – not all exits are properly illuminated – System installed with battery back-up appears to be operable, but not installed in all required locations.

Basement

- 1) Exit stair to grade may be sufficient as to width (dependant upon occupancy)
- 2) Steam Boiler – oil fired – recent inspection – unknown vintage
 - a. No unions permitted on supply line
 - b. Floor drain beneath supply to boiler – potential contamination risk
 - c. Fuel Tank buried (exterior North/East corner) needs to be removed
 - d. Asbestos insulation in use on boiler.
- 3) Electrical service closet damp, too crowded, fire alarm control panel not fully accessible.
- 4) Library director's office and elevator machine room not inspected.

Main Floor – Circulation

- 1) In reference area, book cases should not overlap baseboard radiators

Third floor – Staff Room/Tech services

- 1) Door handle on rear stair exit needs to be installed (rope handle not sufficient)

Exterior

- 1) North stair escape stair landing blocked. Concrete landing not in place,
- 2) Shrubs partially block both north escape exits and need to be trimmed back.

4.2 Town Hall – Ayer Road, Walkthrough performed 11/17/2006

Fire Protection/Loss prevention

General Recommends

- 1) Installation of sprinkler system if building to be renovated.
- 2) Upgrade Fire alarm system
- 3) Remove/replace heat detectors with smoke detectors
- 4) External fire escape to be condemned (stair tread broken above 2nd floor landing. Should be repaired or removed. Chain should be installed to prevent access from ground. Access should be restricted from second floor and balcony area.

Walkthrough observations

Basement

- 1) Heating system is gas – installed 12/2001 – Manual shut off should be located outside of the room that contains the boiler
- 2) Gas hot water heater appears to be of recent vintage
- 3) Egress from basement insufficient. Fire door blocked and does not close properly
- 4) No emergency lighting
- 5) Crawl space below old police station contains water shut off, meter and water service.

Main Floor – Ground level

Recently renovated appears to meet code

Second Floor

- 1) Space could be restored as an assembly hall – Chief will look into requirements for these types of spaces.
- 2) If stage used as theater with curtain – will require a fire curtain to be installed.
- 3) Balcony area currently contains radio equipment for Town Fire Department, Mutual aid frequency and Highway department (antennae are located on cupola of Town Hall)

4.3 Hildreth House – Elm Street/Ayer Road, Walkthrough performed 01/25/2007

Fire Protection/Loss prevention

General Recommends/Comments

- 1) Installation of sprinkler system if building to be renovated.
- 2) Fire alarm system, smoke detectors and exit signs have all been upgraded and replaced in January 2007.

Walkthrough observations

Basement

- 1) Fuel Oil tank leaking around filter fitting (condition has since been corrected)
- 2) Fuel tank not to code – should be bottom supply to eliminate collection of water – tank is vulnerable to pitting and possible failure.
- 3) Oil supply line does not meet code (upgrade when tank is replaced) and cannot be buried, must be exposed and contained in armored sleeve to meet code
- 4) Egress from basement obstructed – Repair/replace basement access door with operable lock/latch.

Ground Floor

- 1) Rear Exterior stair at NW corner missing – needs to be replaced to provide proper egress from back hallway/bathroom area.
- 2) Single step from exterior terrace a rear is too high. Grade to be adjusted or step added to allow egress from dinging room

- 3) Rear exterior stair at NE corner needs to be repair, railing added to provide proper egress from living room

Second Floor

No comments

Third Floor

- 1) Public occupation of the rooms on the third floor is not possible unless a secondary means of egress is provided. The rooms may be used for incidental storage but cannot be used for offices.

5.0 Investigation of Gifts and Deeds of property

All documents related to the title of the three buildings in the assessment were requested from the Town Clerk Janet Vellante and reviewed by town Administrator Tim Bragan. None of the three buildings surveyed have any language that would prevent their reuse or limit the town from annexing them if the town decided that they were no longer necessary or they became too difficult and costly to maintain.

6.0 Current uses of Town Buildings and program requirements

6.1 Interview of Town Employees

Over the course of the Fall of 2005 Barbara Brady of the Harvard Planning Board and Lucy Wallace of the Board of Selectmen conducted a series of interviews of Town employees from different departments within Town Hall to ascertain the suitability of current office space, future improvements, and anticipated space needs. The information sought included:

- Level of public interface during the day
- Need to be able to meet privately with public
- Adequacy of current space to do job; what about it works well, and how could it be improved?
- Additional accommodations that would improve public's ability to conduct business with town
- Archival document storage needs or requirements

The following is a summary of their comments and findings.

First Floor – Finance Department and Town Clerk

Overall the present open configuration of the first floor of the Town Hall for public interaction is quite good (the u-shaped counter area, with the receptionist in the center and access at the counter to the assessors, tax collector and town clerk). The overall space, however, is small and, therefore, limits the amount of privacy customers have if there are several people served at the same time, and if there are people waiting behind other customers that are being helped. In addition, there is limited desk space for reviewing the assessors' maps or working at the computer terminal to review assessors' property records, the availability of which is a valuable public benefit and time savings for the assessors. A larger and more private area for such independent work by the general public would be quite beneficial and improve the public's ability to conduct business.

6.1.1 Town Clerk, Janet Vellante: This position requires constant availability to the public. Therefore, Janet's desk and files must be next to or in close proximity to the counter. She occasionally needs the ability, however, to meet with a customer privately. In those instances, she uses the break room. Using the break room for this purpose, however, makes it inaccessible for town employees. A separate, small room for private meetings (with the public or other town employees) would be extremely beneficial.

Aside from basic storage needs, her work space is good. By law, the Town Clerk must keep certain records, such as vital records, land use boards' decisions and public filings such as subdivision plans, readily available should they be requested for review. While some of those records are kept in a fire proof filing cabinet, she has more records that should be stored this way. Those records that are no longer current (for instance, vital records for other than the current calendar year) are stored in the town vault. In spite of regular relocation of files and records to the town vault, Janet is severely challenged with chronic lack of space for documents, files and records she needs fairly regular access to. She is left with no choice but to put many of these in the town vault, and ends up making at least one trip daily outside and to the vault to access necessary documents, something which is less than desirable for both her and the archived documents, especially in inclement weather. She also noted that the Town Hall is limited in ability to store basic office supplies, which are purchased in bulk to save money.

The town vault, however, is filled to capacity, lacks space for sorting and purging documents, and generally should be improved and enlarged. Only certain documents must

be kept in perpetuity, and those must be stored in a climate control, fire proof facility. Most documents have a finite life, as required by state law, and can be periodically purged. They do not require a climate control facility. To organize them to make annual purging easier, files should be grouped by years in which they can be destroyed. Presently there is no space to do this. A space that is neither in Janet's immediate office space nor in the climate controlled vault for permanent records would alleviate space in both these areas, perhaps help the access issues, and greatly simplify the task of purging documents that have reached their lifetime.

It was suggested that if documents were saved on microfiche, there would be less need for storage space. To accomplish this, the town would have to have documents transferred to microfiche, acquire a microfiche reader, and provide space for its use by both employees and the general public. These costs could, perhaps, be covered by fees charged applicants.

6.1.2 Finance Director, Lorraine Leonard: The Finance Director currently has her own office, with internal glass walls so she is aware of general activities and can step in to assist or at least open the blinds to chose to be visible in the event that with difficult public interactions or situations develop. She does, however, need to be able to meet privately with town employees and board members. Her office space is quite adequate, especially now that she will have some office/file storage space at the school for school-related matters. Generally the files she needs to have available are those relating to current work. Other town financial records are kept by the Treasurer. She did note that managing temperature levels in the open configuration was difficult, as there are pockets that are too cold (under vents) or too hot (away from a good air flow).

6.1.3 Assessor, Angie Marrama: Like the Town Clerk, the Assessor frequently meets with the public during business hours. She also has occasion to meet privately with customers. While she can have fairly discrete conversations in her cubicle, a separate office could be an improvement. Absent a private office, access to a small meeting room would be good. Her work space is fairly good, although she could use more space for file cabinets. By law, she must keep the field cards on all properties (to trace ownership, land division, etc). Because any given property could require access to its field cards, she is reluctant to store older cards in the vault (would not be convenient to access them there). She could microfiche older cards as another storage saving solution provided there was a microfiche reader that was available to the public. Another drawback of her current work space is the level of noise, such as the general noise on the floor and the noise of phone calls or conversations of the person in the adjoining cubicle, both of which can be distracting to getting her work done.

She agreed that the u-shaped counter and open floor plan was good for dealing with the general public. However, she felt the counter space for dealing with the public should be enlarged, and also suggested that a more functional and/or designated waiting area for the public that did not force them to stand just behind other customers would be helpful. She thought the counter's height made it difficult for the public to work at. And, as the Town Clerk noted, Angie said there is a severe lack of storage space for office supplies. Finally, she would like to see more color and artwork on the walls, perhaps having changing exhibits of work by local artists or students.

6.1.4 Assistant Assessor, Julie Doucet: The Assistant Assessor is usually the first point of contact between the public and assessors, which necessitates having her desk and work space in close proximity to the counter. While she does not have a need for private meetings with the general public, meetings with the Board of Assessors, which are usually held during the day, are held in the break room. As noted by others, this is an imposition on the other town hall employees. A separate room for meetings, therefore, would be an improvement. As the Assessor noted, more storage space for records is needed. Her personal work space, however, is adequate. And, as the Assessor noted, more counter space for working with the public is needed.

Noise and temperature control are two significant issues with the current space. One other issue is the need to answer the phone if the Receptionist is not available. Julie noted that the main line doesn't ring on her phone, which necessitates her (and others) listening to make sure the receptionist has answered. Again, a minor distraction from her work.

- 6.1.5 Treasurer/Tax Collector, Vicki Smith: Vicki has minimal interaction with the general public, as either the Receptionist or Assistant Tax Collector handle receipt of payments from the public. Occasionally there is a need to meet privately with someone, in which case she uses the break room. The greater need for privacy is on phone calls, as most often a taxpayer will call to discuss private matters. Her desk, work and storage space is definitely not sufficient for the documents and records she needs to keep readily accessible during the course of the day. By law, the town must save payroll, tax title, and tax payment records. These are stored in the town vault, which Vicki noted needs reorganizing to make retrieving items easier.

Ambient noise and temperature control are issues that need to be resolved. In addition to ambient noise, direct noise and vibrations created phones and keyboards (as generally these instruments touch or are near common cubicle walls) are perhaps an even greater disturbance and distraction than is the ambient noise. Airspace and/or acoustical insulation between adjoining cubicle walls could help alleviate this problem.

While the open concept is good for purposes of dealing with the public and covering for each other, there is not enough counter or other work space for the public's business, either in speaking with an employee or looking through public records. She would like to see the counter area and public work space, therefore, enlarged.

- 6.1.6 Assistant Tax Collector, Stephanie Ginter: Stephanie has frequent dealings with the public, serving as the first contact for the Tax Collector (much as Julie does for the Assessor) and thinks the current counter arrangement is quite good. As she handles payroll and benefits for town employees she needs a place to meet privately with them. She does not have enough desk, work or storage space to accommodate her daily needs. In particular, she could use a fire proof file cabinet for employee records. Employee payroll records must be kept indefinitely and, therefore, once no longer active are stored in the town vault.

As others noted, temperature and noise are both issues that need to be addressed to improve working conditions. The open floor plan, however, is generally viewed as a good and encourages a "team" approach to work.

- 6.1.7 Accounting Officer/Network Coordinator, Fred Aponte: As Fred has no need to deal with the public he is quite content with his hidden workspace (behind Janet). He also has minimal need for a place to meet privately with anyone. As a matter of fact, he could work even further away from the general public area of the Town Hall, although as the only male on the first floor it is good for him to be nearby for public safety reasons. His desk and storage space are adequate for his needs and he has little need for longer term storage, as warrants for payments can be disposed of after the annual audit has been completed. He agreed the temperature control is a challenge that needs to be addressed.

- 6.1.8 Receptionist, Marlene Kenney: As the *primary* contact for the public with the Town Hall (both in person and on the phone), she has constant contact with the public during the day. She has no need for a private meeting area, other than the occasional meeting with the Council on Aging Director regarding issues pertaining to the MART van. Her work space must be compact so she can access files and forms she needs without leaving her desk. As such she felt having a u-shaped work area (desk and two work surfaces) would be an improvement over her current L-shaped work area. She thinks the open floor plan works very well, enabling people to cover for each other. She thought the public space in front of the counter should be enlarged to provide a sense of space and privacy between those being served and those waiting to be served, as well as an area for toddlers (when moms come in during the day to conduct business). She also thought a slightly larger counter

area would be good in order to provide more space for customers dealing with the Assessors, Tax Collector, the Town Clerk and her.

Second floor – Board of Selectmen and Land Use Boards

- 6.1.9 Town Administrator, Paul Cohen:** The Town Administrator meets with the public, town officials and town employees throughout the day. This is mitigated somewhat by the present arrangement of access to his office through the Executive Assistant's office which provides an important "gate keeping" function. Paul definitely needs the ability to meet privately. His current arrangement of a small table and 4 chairs is generally sufficient. However, it would be helpful to have a slightly larger meeting space for working meetings with employees or town officials (6-8 people). He should have a window in his door or a glass door, however, so people would know when he is meeting privately and to avoid appearances of any improper conduct. Filing space in his office is adequate for his needs as he only keeps active and current files in his office. As Janet noted, certain files need to be kept for a specified time frame (3 years, 7 years) and those can be stored in the town vault. Legal files and building permits must be kept indefinitely and are stored in the town vault too.

In general the town needs more efficient and usable vault space and adequate record storage. The town hall should have an elevator for handicapped access to the second floor offices, but that is not critical at this time.

Paul sees moving the town offices to the current library not only as a viable use for that building, but also a better space than then the town hall for addressing present and future town office needs.

- 6.1.10 Executive Assistant, Valeska Ross:** The Executive Assistant deals with the public, town employees and other town officials throughout the day. Being on the second floor of the town hall, however, does limit the public interaction to those having specific business with the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator or her. Valeska has limited need for a private meeting space; on those occasions she does it usually includes Paul so they use his office. Her current office space is quite adequate (she would not like to give it up for a cubicle), although she could use more filing cabinets, particularly for non-active files that do not need to be stored in the town vault. The second floor could use more space for storing office supplies. It would be nice to have a bathroom upstairs as well.

Valeska had several general suggestions for improving the municipal offices. First, there should be better signage in the entry hall so the public knows where to go for particular services. Second, while the open floor plan works well for the departments on the first floor, there needs to be some element of privacy for the employees in doing their work. Third, it is important to clearly differentiate between public and employee space. Fourth, there should be panic buttons at key locations to call the police in case of a threatening situation. She has one upstairs. Fifth, the building inspector needs space for storing building plans.

- 6.1.11 Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals Clerk, Marie Nader:** The Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals Clerk, Marie Nader, shares her office space with the clerks for the Board of Health and Conservation Commission. Fortunately, they all only work part-time and their hours do not often overlap. Marie has limited daytime hours, but those are often filled with individuals seeking information regarding land use regulations, applicants coming for information on board meetings or filings before the boards. She has occasion to meet privately with applicants or landowners, as they may be seeking information on options and not want their conversation shared with the other land use boards. There is a chronic shortage of space for additional filing cabinets and those she has are full. Plans and permits are best kept fairly close by (not out in the town vault) as questions often arise about their history or status. The office definitely needs a designated work space - a large

table and chairs where plans can be opened and reviewed. The current small table doubles as storage, which makes it difficult to use for plans' review.

Marie's office space is totally inadequate. She needs more desk and work space, more storage space for plans and files, and interconnected phone lines so calls can be transferred from one department to another, to name a few. The boxes of files and other items being stored on the stage and in its surrounding area need to be sorted and cleaned out and, those which are to be kept need to be better organized.

6.1.12 Board of Health Clerk, Shanna Large: The Board of Health Clerk works 6 hours/week, 4 of which are doing the Board of Health office hours with Nashoba Boards of Health sanitarian Ira Grossman. She has a fairly constant stream of customers during her hours, though their business does not generally require a private meeting space. Because so much of the public interaction includes queries about existing septic systems and permitting history, she needs to keep all files and records readily available. By law, Title V permits must be kept indefinitely and should be stored in fire proof filing cabinets. As Marie noted, a large work table for reviewing plans is sorely needed

Improvements to work space included: 1) providing Ira with a desk; 2) better definition of work space for the clerks (even having cubicles as they have on the first floor as opposed to the large open room with file cabinets and 3 desks); an 3) better temperature control (too hot if the door is closed in the winter and bad air circulation in summer as the a/c unit doesn't fit the window properly), and 4) a space to meet with others and/or go over large plans. A plus with the current space is the ability to informally share information with other land use boards, although the current arrangement may not offer enough separation of work and discussion space if more of their hours were to overlap.

6.2 Summary of Needs of Council on Aging (COA)

On October 25, 2005 Anne Marie Rowse (Co-Chair COA Board at that time) prepared and submitted a comprehensive needs assessment to the Director of the COA. Her report was based upon extensive research of other facilities in Massachusetts that service communities similar in composition to that of Harvard and should serve as a guiding frame work to consider the rehabilitation and expansion of a municipal property within town center to serve as a senior center (*See Appendix B for Senior Center Design considerations*). Members of the MBTF have met on several occasions with the director of the COA, several of its board member and members of the community who utilize the services offered by the COA currently located at the Hildreth House located at the top of the common at the intersection of Elm Street and Ayer Road. The October 25, 2005 report contained the following observations and recommendations:

6.2.1 Basic Public Necessities

The greatest fundamental building need is for a structure that is structurally sound and provides the basic necessities that any public building should have such as:

- 1) Adequate water (which we currently do not have)
- 2) Adequate sewer or septic (it is my understanding that there is uncertainty about where the cesspool for Hildreth House lies and I am sure it would not be considered adequate for the current level of use)
- 3) Adequate heating and air conditioning (the Hildreth House is freezing in the winter and very hot in the summer, and there is only one zone for the whole house, thereby requiring that the

- whole house be heated no matter what rooms are in use. Additionally, the Hildreth House was built as a summer home and has little or no insulation, making it very energy inefficient),
- 4) Handicap accessibility (currently physically challenged folks can not access the COA office, outreach worker office, computer center, card room, pool table, or lending closet)
 - 5) Sufficient interior and exterior lighting for folks who often have vision limitations,
 - 6) Adequate and up to code electrical wiring,
 - 7) Adequate and up to code fire alarms systems with the proper number of exits maintained (Hildreth House currently has an exit door with no stairs, meaning there is a 3 foot drop when you open the door, and smoke detectors that go out regularly in the basement due to high humidity and in the 3rd floor space due to high heat)
 - 8) Reasonable parking (the parking at Hildreth House is limited to about a dozen cars in the circular area and the over flow must park along the road and walk up the hill). The pavement needs to be kept up so that bumps and ridges are kept to a minimum thereby reducing tripping and falling hazards. The driveway for Hildreth House or any future senior center should contain a circular pattern for easy drop off and pick up. Ideally, this would also be covered.
 - 9) Additionally, the building should have some aesthetic or "curbside" appeal, it should not look run down, neglected and gloomy so that no one can envision coming inside and having a good experience.

6.2.2 Administrative space

Within the senior center, there should be a private office for each of the current staff persons (director and outreach worker). Currently the outreach worker shares an office with the computer center, which means she needs to leave the office to make and or receive confidential phone calls and must be very careful that there is no paperwork on her desk that can be viewed by someone using the computer center. Looking to the future, (5-10 years) with the anticipated increase in seniors and demand for COA services, we should be prepared to have offices or desk space available for an activity director, volunteer coordinator and secretary in addition to the current two positions. All offices should be equipped to handle necessary computer and phone hardware (we currently have wiring running along the floor and ceiling that are not only unsightly, but unsafe). We also only have one phone line for two staff people and a fax machine and this will need to be upgraded.

6.2.3 Program Space:

- 1) There is a need for a large multipurpose room that can be used for meals and other large events such as dances and parties. This room should be able to hold enough tables to serve 200 people a meal and be able to be divided into smaller rooms for smaller more intimate events. This room needs to have adequate storage so that all tables (on wheels) can be rolled away to be stored so that the room can be used for exercise programs where folks need the room to spread out, and workshops or educational programs where chairs can be set up theater style. The walls should be designed so that a rotating exhibit of tasteful art works can be displayed. The acoustics should be such that a musical group could perform in the room comfortably
- 2) There is a need for an industrial kitchen with appropriate appliances (stove, refrigerator, freezer, and dishwasher) to handle the preparation and clean up of a large meal and adequate storage for all necessary dishes and supplies. The kitchen would have to be built to meet all Board of Health regulations.
- 3) There should be quiet and inviting seating areas throughout the senior center that are light filled and appealing where folks can talk with one another in a relaxed atmosphere
- 4) There should be a room for a pool table to be set up permanently
- 5) There should be card-playing rooms that can also double as meeting rooms
- 6) We need a computer room where computer skills can be taught and reviewed. Ideally this would have enough terminals for 10-12 seniors to take a class at one time with adequate space for seating at each terminal for two people (instructor and student)
- 7) There should be a small private office that could be used by a nurse for health screenings (currently there is no privacy). This room could also be used by the Shine (volunteer insurance counselor) representatives when they need to meet with a senior and also AARP tax assistance volunteers who help seniors with their tax returns, but need privacy.

- 8) We need a large closet or room to store used medical equipment (walkers, shower chairs, wheel chairs etc) that has been donated for us to loan out to those in need
- 9) We should consider a room big enough to house exercise equipment. Future generations of seniors will need and demand the ability to stay in shape, senior centers who can offer them this without them having to pay to join a gym will be doing them a great service and other senior centers have learn that this is an important draw for younger seniors
- 10) We need an Arts and Crafts room or studio where classes can be taught and where seniors with space limitations at home could come to work
- 11) We need a resource library where seniors and their families could access a variety of literature and media on a variety of topics related to aging as well as brochures and marketing information on various home health care agencies, assisted living facilities, nursing homes etc
- 12) We should have exterior space (perhaps a courtyard, where seniors can sit outdoors in good weather and enjoy a cup of coffee and visit, or an outdoor meal could take place (BBQ, buffet dinner dance, Luau etc)
- 12) We should consider having space for the Friends of the COA to run a 2nd hand store in the center as there are many centers that benefit financially from the funds that the Friends are able to generate with this endeavor.

6.3 Community Arts Center/Teen Center/Cultural Center

The Town Center Action Plan of 2005 identified a community priority to protect and encourage the restoration of “gathering places” within town center. Since the relocation of the library to Old Bromfield, located within the public school campus, a gaping hole has been created within town center. Several key recommendations derived from extensive public participation in the development of the action plan, documented the desire to create a community arts center, bring the teen center back from Devens and provide a more opportunities for cross sections of the public to encounter one another.

The common area in the town center is currently supported by structures on three sides by three churches, a civic presence dominates two sides and residential properties small scale businesses fill the spaces in between. What is absent in the town center is community presence that can provide a cultural or community gathering place within the center. A place that is accessed by the community at all hours of the day, providing a variety of opportunities for young and old people to explore and expand their knowledge of the arts while developing a sense of community. The previous analysis of square footage and building volumes makes it apparent that there is excess space available within the footprint of the current municipal buildings that is currently being underutilized. A community arts and cultural center would likely require an assembly space that could be used for concerts, lectures, exhibits and films. Additional requirements would be dedicated space for program administration, artist studios, limited cooking facilities for event purposes and complete accessibility for handicapped and disabled persons. If the community desires to develop these kinds of programs to complement school curriculums and expand continuing education offerings, the Town Hall or Hapgood Library buildings appear to be able to meet all these requirements.

Appendix A - Building Conditions and Mechanical Systems Matrix

(See attached)

Appendix B

Design Considerations for Senior Centers

Parking	Van or emergency access. Allow 1 parking spot/100 gsf.: fewer spaces if you have excellent public transport. Minimize parking "islands!" Consider: covered ramp, enclosed (lit) entryway. Lighting for parking, walkways....
Entry, Enclosure /Vestibule	Enhance visibility, identification of center. Energy conservation. Maintain an even lighting transition (from exterior to interior). Assisted/automatic doors are valued amenities. Consider <i>separate</i> exits for home delivered meals, durable equipment loan closet.
Waiting / Reception	Use for groups awaiting departure. Sign-in/registration (and security). High/low height reception countertops to include horizontal cubby slots for handouts. Coat storage .
Display Area /	Consider enclosed bulletin board, display rack, and/or cork edged cork strips in hall-way for public notices, volunteer recognition.... Shop(pe) sales?
Recreation & Assembly	Multi-use space: meals, presentations, assembly, exercise/fitness, line dancing, etc. Chair mix (with & w/o arms); interlocking chairs may be required for public assembly. Test chairs (with live seniors!) <i>in advance</i> .
Auditorium/ Main Room.	Noiseless (prefer ball-bearing hinges on large) doors. Assistive listening capability. Stacking/ storage closets . (Automated) drapes/blinds or curtains. Electrically operated partitions; quality sound system.
Stage	Ramp access. Consider storage , toilets, wheel-in shower, dressing room/s.
Dining	Avoid institutional feel (round/folding tables [wheeled legs], colorful decor, "café" canopies, and adequate space for wheelchairs & service). Consider: access to outdoor areas.
Kitchen	Refrigerated, dry and temporary storage . Ventilation for dry food storage: 2" from walls, 6" from floor and ceiling: plastic DIY shelving works well. For serving/food return consider a "pass through." Restaurant style appliances, sinks, dishwashers. Sep-a-rate areas for clean / soiled dishes, utensils. → Use a <i>Food Service Manager and/or professional chef/s</i> (not an engineer!) <i>for kitchen design consultation</i> .
Classes lockers.	Multi-use space: adult education, training, rehearsals, music, sink/s,
Arts & Crafts	Seasonal and other storage . Dedicated space for computers, pottery/kiln.
Lounge and Furnishings	Quiet corners; conversation, cards, reading. Use a <i>Physical or Occupational Therapist</i> to design/suggest supportive (firm) furnishings. Consider washability, #250 capacity. No protruding legs; elders to test samples.

Lavatories	At least twice as many women attend senior centers as do men. (There are 43% more older women than older men). Locate toward middle of lengthy corridors as well as near front entrance and elevators. <i>Strongly</i> consider emergency call buttons in the lavatories, as well as assisted doors. Paint rear walls a contrasting color from commode. Allow for display of sensitive materials (e.g., elder abuse brochures).
Site movement	Encourage walks (e.g., to lavatories) that pass activities. Use translucent/clear panels in solid doors to reduce collisions. Consider interior blinds for support groups/ programs. Use mini track lighting behind (deep) handrails/ chair rails. Consider: corridors to allow <i>two</i> wheelchairs to pass.
Fitness/Rec.	Consider cushioned floor in exercise room (& storage for mats). Allow (some) visibility for passers-by. Consider walk-in shower/s.
Supportive Day Care	Allow 50 SF per participant. A walk-in shower and washer/drier (and hairdressing sink!) may be helpful. Consider keyed doors, digital recording.
Administration	Staff, board meetings/special functions; individual (private) consult space. Computer/copier accessibility. Lav near director, nurse and/or outreach space. Use of glass/curtains/blinds to allowing seeing "through" rooms. Intercoms. Supply storage .
Building Services	Corridors "short, wide, eventful." Carpeting should have color changes near (the) walls. Consider (recessed) benches; mini-lighted railings. Fixtures to be operable with a <i>closed</i> fist. Plan for speaker partitioning and divisible rooms. Provide separate HVAC controls in computer, exercise rooms. Lockers for volunteers. Suggest two-hour firewalls in section/s of multilevel building. Good soundproofing where "noisy" activities may be adjacent to "quiet" ones. Locate defibrillator near telephone jack (for automatic dialing when case is opened.) The signal to summon the fire department should not be near the plate that opens the automatic doors!
Outdoor Rec.	Consider: fitness path, wheelchair garden, stretching stations or quiet areas.

→ Maximize multipurpose/shared space possibilities— through floor-ceiling (movable) partitions. Design for **ultimate** use of five to six (gross) sq. feet per elder (allow **more Square Feet**/elder in towns with fewer than 1000 seniors, a little less **SF** for 7500+ seniors) or "stub" construction for cost-effective expansion, including parking.

GENERAL NOTES:

EXPECT TO USE UP TO 30% OF YOUR SPACE FOR STORAGE! (Don't skimp).

AUTOMATE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE (e.g., curtains, drapes, partitions – esp. if no janitor).

DESIGN FOR EASE OF USE by STAFF AND PARTICIPANTS. INCLUDE (A MEMBER OF) YOUR DISABILITIES COMMISSION ON YOUR BUILDING COMMITTEE.

INCLUDE ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS and/or INTERIOR DESIGN PROFESSIONALS on BUILDING COMMITTEE, as well as someone familiar with ADULT/SUPPORTIVE DAY CARE.

YOUR BUILDING COMMITTEE IS NOT YOUR FUND RAISING COMMITTEE.

BE DILIGENT: DOCUMENT (daily, if need be) **ALL** AGREEMENTS/ASSUMPTIONS YOU MAKE WITH RESPECT TO DESIGN WORK AND RE-WORK.

Special, Non-typical or Occasional Uses Found at Senior Centers in Massachusetts

Supportive Day Care (or Adult Day Health – medical model)
Fitness Center (uses equipment that may require initial assistance with operation)
Arts & Crafts (particularly a kiln and dedicated storage/lockers)
Woodworking
Small household items repair workshop
Private counseling and group support
Computer training (may need separate cooling system in room)
Greenhouse
Kitchen for “cooking for one”—or large scale ovens;
also café style enclosure (low bookcase/planters & awnings)
Durable Medical Equipment Loan “closet”
Pool/table tennis
Bowling Alley (in community center)
Diving/swimming pool (in community center)
Video production
Stage (accessible)
Gym (with Park/Rec or community center); Lockers; Showers – wheel in type.
Police sub-station (bicycle or regular patrol—good for elder abuse reporting issues,
scams & related matters, RUOK telephone reassurance calls)
Other health & human service agencies (can be for profit...), or
“Friends of COA” space (rental)
Resale Shop(pe)
Library (lending, including videos: may be good for outreach)
Walking trail
Emergency Support (heating/cooling—“homeland defense”; use as emergency shelter?)
(defibrillator)
Breakfast services (e.g., “coffee shop” – run by COA)
Physical exterior spaces (e.g., dining, raised bed gardening)
Aquarium (good in conjunction with supportive day/adult day programs)

Senior-Ctr-DESIGN-CONSIDERATIONS--EXPANDED:
Elder Affairs OCT 05/REV/EHS with thanks to numerous COA directors.