

**A Report of Space Utilization
of the Bridge Street School
for Town Hall Offices**

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (LZW) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

**Presented by
Study Committee Members**

**Janet Banks / Tom Wardell - Co – Chairpersons
Charles Alfano, Jr., Paul Basdekis,
Justin Donnelly, Craig Horrigan**

Table of Contents

- 1. Task Description**
- 2. Space Utilization Suggestion**
- 3. Revised Estimate**
- 4. Use of Existing Town Hall Facility**
- 5. Study Committee Recommendations**

1. Task Description

During the May 6, 2009 Board of Selectmen meeting, a recommendation was made and accepted by the Board of Selectmen to continue the investigation into the utilization of the Bridge Street School building and associated property. The Committee recommended the hiring of an architect to review space requirements and prepare a suggested arrangement of the Town Hall offices in the Bridge Street School. This task would confirm and verify that the recommended use was practical and would satisfy town needs. A maximum cost was approved for the services of Schoenhardt architects. The Committees' task also included creating a schematic of the floor plan , suggested handicap access locations and to review and adjust , as necessary, the estimated cost estimate based on an opinion of cost from Schoenhardt.

The Board of Selectmen should also refer to the previous report submitted by the Bridge Street School and Property Committee dated January 21, 2009.

2. Space Utilization Suggestion

A thorough review of the Space Needs Study was conducted by Schoenhardt who also utilized the previous reviews by EDM of the Town Hall office requirements. The Schoenhardt prepared plot plan is one of potentially several possible arrangements. Particular emphasis was focused on Town Hall operations and providing a reasonable traffic flow and convenient accessibility to the office areas more frequently accessed by the public.

Increased operating efficiencies and reduced operating costs will occur By removing redundant physical facilities with the current split Town Hall offices.

The committee suggests that the Probate Court and IT systems operations remain at the present Town Hall building. Increased space for the IT department was identified in the Space Needs Study. With the current uncertainty of the extent of the Suffield Probate Court space requirements, the reflected use recommendation may change.

A review of the suggested plot plan will reveal the following significant points:

- a. the floor area is Space Needs Study compliant.**
- b. there are two handicap entrances, one at either end of the building**
- c. all offices but Park and Rec are on one level**
- d. there is a lift at the east end to access the lower level Park and Rec level and the main 1st floor level.**
- e. no structural load bearing wall changes are required to accommodate the office use.**
- f. there is an additional entrance to the Public Works / Town Engineer / Building Department area where contractor traffic is the heaviest.**

3. Revised Estimate

Schoenhardt has prepared an “Opinion of Cost” that represents the suggested configuration. With a 20% contingency, the current opinion of cost is approximately \$2,200,000. We believe the dated, \$3,200,000 estimate created by EDM contained excessive contingencies and soft costs as well as less aggressive construction costs available today.

4. Future use of Town Hall

Should the relocation of the Town Hall offices (except for Probate Court and the IT facility) to the Bridge Street location be pursued and enacted, the vacated space would be used as follows:

- a. Lowest Level - Probate Court and the existing conference room**
- b. Street level - Fire Department training and expanded facilities.**
- c. Second Level - IT department / facility**

5. Study Committee Recommendations

The feasibility study performed by Schoenhardt confirms an acceptable utilization of available space in the Bridge St. School building while increasing accessibility and reducing yearly \$90,000 + rental fees for some of the town offices. The use of the street level floor space of Town Hall by the fire department in lieu of a building addition will avoid spending approximately \$900,000. Having invested in numerous investigations and studies, the committee recommends the following actions be approved by the BOS and enacted as soon as practical:

- a. asbestos abatement - needs to be accomplished regardless of the future use or disposal of the building.**
- b. continue the minimal heat during the winter months to avoid further deterioration.**
- c. pursue the selection of an architect to prepare renovation plans.**