

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

Building Assessment and Needs Committee

Wednesday, May 7, 2025 @ 6:30 p.m.

Town Hall Meeting Room (Gymnasium)

Bruce Cullett, Chairman
Justin Russell, Member
Jay Jewell, Member
Doug Haskins, Member
Terry Walker, Town Administrator

Public Attendees: Bonnie Ditomasso, Bryan Louisell, Project Manager Austin Design Cooperative

Item 1: Call to order: 6:30 P.M. Bruce Cullett called meeting to order

Item 2: Roll Call: Bruce Cullett present, Jay Jewell present. Doug Haskins present, Justin Russell present, Ruth Calaycay absent.

Item 3: State Recording status: No one is recording

Item 4: Review and Approve January 2, 2025 meeting minutes.: Bruce Cullett motions to approve meeting minutes, Jay Jewell seconds. Unanimous 4-0 .

Item 5: Discuss Town Hall/Community Center/Library Feasibility Study progress and findings with Austin Design Cooperative:

Bryan Louisell provided the Committee with draft copies of the Feasibility Study findings and provided an overview of the findings of the Feasibility Study. Louisell indicated that the current building, although dated and very much in need of updating from an engineering standpoint, was in fact in pretty good condition structurally. Louisell noted that the findings indicate the least costly option would be to renovate the existing building without adding any square footage to the building's footprint. Louisell indicated that one of the driving factors for renovating the existing building is to avoid triggering a requirement for fire protection. By keeping the building less than 7500 square feet the requirement for a sprinkler system is not triggered. Chair Cullett asked if the Authority Having Jurisdiction (Peru Fire Chief) has the authority to waive that requirement. Louisell said that the AHJ does have that authority, but as the designer of the facility they have to work within the requirements of the Building Code and cannot depend on a variance. Chair Cullett stated that a fire protection system would be unrealistic and costly, and he was certain the Fire Chief would not require a sprinkler system.

Bryan Louisell explained that proximity to wetlands is also a factor in recommending the footprint of the structure is not modified. As an existing non conforming structure it could be renovated with minimal impact. Louisell also agreed that expanding the footprint was not out of the question, but would need to be examined by Conservation Comm/DEP.

Louisell discussed the modifications for the building which he termed a small building built for small people meaning it was built as an elementary school. Louisell indicated the building would be completely gutted, with new finishes everywhere, new mechanical, electrical, and HVAC systems and would be completely ADA compliant. The addition of an ADA entrance to the front of the building would be necessary and an elevator that serves both floors. Louisell also spoke of the elimination of the attic space above the Police Department and elimination of the kitchen in the basement. The current open space in the basement that once housed the Police Department and storage rooms would be turned into usable space by removing the concrete slab and making it the same elevation as the rest of the basement. New

restrooms, library storage/office and a janitor's closet would be installed in the space. Louisell indicated that a portion of the existing Community Center lower floor would become the Library and the Police Department would be relocated to the ground floor in the area of current kitchen.

Louisell discussed the office layouts on the upper floor of the renovated facility and got feedback from the Committee on their locations, etc. The Committee also noted that the Library was looking for more space than the current 1300 sf allowed for in the plan, and there would be a number of people unhappy that the kitchen would be discontinued.

The Committee questioned whether the proposed size of the new Community Meeting room would be large enough with an occupancy limit of 59 persons. Louisell indicated that making the meeting room larger would reduce the size of the adjacent offices and would potentially trigger additional egress requirements that the building's configuration would not easily allow for. Renovation of the existing building is estimated to cost approximately 4 million dollars.

Louisell briefly described a new building and the associated cost estimate. He said the new structure would be located in approximately the same footprint but would be squared off in the area of the current generator. Two floors would total approximately 11,200 square feet and is estimated to cost approximately 6.4 million.

Item 6: Public Input: Bonnie Ditomasso provided a copy of the Fire Evacuation plan for the Richmond Library and Town Offices to demonstrate how that structure is layed out. Louisell pointed out that design of a new building would be much easier to accommodate the needs of the Town.

Item 7: Adjourn: Bruce Cullett motions to adjourn meeting at 8:02 p.m., Justin Russell second, 4-0

Articles used: Minutes for January 2, 2025

Draft of Feasibility Study findings and schematics, Austin Design Cooperative

Copy of Fire Evacuation Plan for Richmond Library and Town Offices provided by Bonnie Ditomasso

Respectfully Submitted,
Bruce Cullett, Chairman

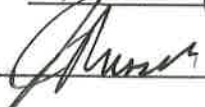
Bruce Cullett



Jay Jewell



Justin Russell



Ruth Calaycay



Doug Haskins

Date:

~~5/7/25~~ July 14, 2025