

Buildings and Facilities Task Force  
Monday, May 3, 2021 - 9:00 am

Steve McNally - Chairman

Chairman McNally called this subcommittee to order at 9:00 am with the following in attendance: Robin DeLoria, Archie Depo, Stephanie DeZalia, Jim Dougan, Shaun Gilliland, Charlie Harrington, Roy Holzer, Steve McNally, Mike Mascarenas, Noel Merrihew, Jim Monty, Dan Palmer, Jay Rand, Tom Scozzafava, Jeff Subra, Ike Tyler and Davina Winemiller.

Also present: Dina Garvey, Bill Johnston, and Nancy Page.

News Media present: Tim Rowlands - Sun News

MCNALLY: Good morning, let's call the Facilities meeting to order, first on the board, Ike would like to do a short presentation.

TYLER: Good morning, everybody. Everybody have a packet? No, I can get you one. Alright, I got a little statement before we get into the slides.

I have been through this process recently with the renovation of the Westport Town Hall, which some members of my Town Board believed couldn't have been saved. The Town worked with a small group of volunteers and formed an advisory committee. The advisory committee included the Town's Code Officer, George Hainer; Alan Higgs of the Housing Assistance Program; Nancy Page, Town Board Member; Bill Johnston, retired County Planner and Director; John MacWilliams, resident; Jim Dougan, Essex County DPW; and the man who ended up being the contractor for the job, Schelling McKinley of High Peaks Carpentry. I have asked some of the same people to help me to present the case for the renovation of the CCE building. They are the 'WE' referred in this project, proposed cost documents; okay.

Let's start with the presentation, the 1924 National Register listed Cornell Cooperative Extension Building at the Essex County Fairgrounds is in need of extensive renovation. An estimate of \$2.3 million to renovate the building is being used to justify its demolition, but by eliminating unnecessary project options and modifying the approach of the renovations we can show you that the entire building can be renovated for less than \$1.5 million and that renovation has greater economic and community value than new construction.

Cornell Cooperative Extension Building is a historic building that is structurally sound and adaptable for a host of modern reasons. Our proposed scope of work, based on the 2008 Crawford and Stearns Architect Plans will safely renovate the entire building for less than \$1.5 million, far less than the frequently stated \$2.3 million price tag. At \$255 a square foot, this compares favorably to a typical \$370 square foot cost for new public construction projects. Renovation, therefore, is the most cost effective option and will provide more space for less cost. A recent illustration compares the Westport Town Hall renovation at about \$150 square foot and the construction of the Nutrition Building at \$370 square foot, excluding expenses of the commercial kitchen and appliances.

This is what the building looked like in the 1930's and after restoration. This is the south side, as you can see we put the side walkway on the right. In the first picture we took that off, we have solar on it now, solar panels on the top. Solar panels and heat pump units were funded by a 2020, \$50,000.00 from NYSERDA. It really turned out to be a great project as far as heating and cooling the building down. We got the solar and the heat pumps for \$50,000.00, during, especially we threw some insulation in there.

This is the back; the ramp that we tore off and replaced. In the back of the building you can see the, this building was in a lot worse shape than the CCE building, trust me. Down below, the basement with the cars parked there, those doors were all falling apart and the cats and the skunks lived in there. They were upset when we changed, but we moved them around, and so were the neighbors, because they moved to their place. I got a couple of calls, what are you doing to do about it? I said, well, handle it.

Fire escape, second interior stairwell and areas of refuge, took that off. I added another staircase in the back, which helped also the court system, so they have, nowadays courts have to have two escapes in case something happens, they have to have two exits.

This is the before, during and after. You can see the difference, low ceiling, look what we have now; which

is all historical, back to the way the building was back in 1920's, the same age as the CCE building. There's the entranceway, when you come in, you can go down, there's the stairs there and right to the left is the lift, the cost was approximately \$25,000.00, a lot cheaper than an elevator.

Our volunteers and crews from Moriah Shock helped us with, that's them working on the basement to the right. Same with this project, I know we go out for bid for the CCE if we're going to save it, any work that you do in-kind with volunteer work will save you a bunch of money, any work, just a little bit of work can save a bunch of money.

That's what it looked like on the left, same probably as underneath the CCE building with the insulation falling down and after repair to the right.

Cost saving measures proposed for the CCE building; use of building code flexibility available for historic structures, leave the exterior walls intact, eliminate the construction of a full basement and reconstruction of existing foundation piers, reconstruction of existing foundation piers. Appears to be cause of concerns indicating there's nothing wrong with them, Shelly shot those, shot the floor and the floor of that building is in perfect shape, it hasn't moved a bit. His comment was, it's more level than a brand new building and it's been there since the 1920's. remedial work, the roof framing is not needed, provide sensible accessibility to the second floor by a lift instead of an elevator, provide heating and cooling with high efficiency cool climate heat pump system, powered by solar electricity panels paid for in part with State incentives, as the Town of Westport did, eliminate expensive north porch conversions.

As you can see here, the numbers that we came up with and these numbers we all called contractors and our contractor called on the window prices and all that and of course, you know, you put a job out it bid this time of year, a lot of contractors have their jobs now, so they up the price just so, we get it, we get it, if we don't, we don't, so timing's really a big thing, plus this year we all know that construction costs are crazy. I just went and priced some pressure treated for my decks, I ended up going to the saw mill and got some wood there, a lot cheaper. So, you see here, the total contractor costs, additional costs for public works projects and again, with a little bit of help from them, we could save a lot of money, overhead, the profit 20%, architectural planning \$100,000.00, total costs \$1.5 million. This is coming in at \$255 a square foot.

Besides being less expensive renovation of the CCE building will enhance the Essex County Fairgrounds most unique feature and its biggest asset. The unique and picturesque character of its late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings. Renovation of the entire CCE building will help restore the fairgrounds as the center of agricultural activity in Essex County. It will provide space to house offices for the new Fairground Manager, the Fair Board, Cornell Cooperative Extension services. The CCE building and adjunct fairgrounds will come alive again with activity; meetings and training programs, events enjoyed by many users. CCE will have space for its staff and programs at the location that is in keeping with the organization's roots in agriculture, nutrition, environmental education and youth services.

Here's some pictures of a fully alive building when there were, I think there were like 20 employees at one-time, am I correct in saying that Bill?

JOHNSTON: Yeah

TYLER: CCE, Cornell and Soil and Water.

The loss or retention of an historic building can have a profound effect on a place. Westport experienced this in the mid 1960's when our 19<sup>th</sup> century hotel in the heart of the village was demolished. Some of you may remember that hotel in the middle of town. Community life centered around the hotel and when it was gone the loss was keenly felt and a period of decline followed in the business center. I am sure many of you have been, seen this in your communities. Think of what Port Henry would be within the Lee House. Former Mayor Bob Brown said that if the Lee House was gone I wouldn't want to live here anymore. The loss of the CCE building would forever diminish the character and quality of the fairgrounds and the village and greatly reduce the current opportunity to make the fairgrounds a true center of agricultural activity in the County.

We urge you to halt the wheels that are turning in the direction of demolition and reverse course. Start the wheels turning in the direction of renovation.

Thank you, any questions at this time and I can answer what I can and I have some other people here that are far more qualified.

WINEMILLER: Has it been tested for asbestos and lead?

TYLER: Yes

WINEMILLER: And what did the test say?

TYLER: Jim can better say the results.

DOUGAN: We have abated all asbestos with the exception of electrical wiring; which is suspect for asbestos and one porch roof; okay? Because we didn't want to provide anymore demolition. So, all the rest of the asbestos has been removed, we did that project in 2020.

WINEMILLER: Okay, and does this estimate include the remediation of the remaining suspected asbestos?

TYLER: I don't believe so, because we don't know what that cost would be. Bill, do you have an idea on that?

JOHNSTON: Well, the County received a \$50,000.00 grant for asbestos remediation and I believe only \$13,000.00 of that has been used.

TYLER: Is that true?

DOUGAN: No

PALMER: That's not true.

TYLER: Do we have some money for that?

DOUGAN: We got some money from Dan Stec's office that was originally slated for asbestos removal, but then after they looked at it again, the grant they didn't allow us to use it for asbestos removal.

TYLER: So, how much was it to remove the asbestos?

DOUGAN: We spent about \$25,000.00 in the project that we did in 2020; okay and the big question is going to be the electrical wiring, then we open that up. The electrical wiring is at an age that's kind of paper wrap around the outside of it that's suspect for asbestos, so it if definitely has that. Some of the wiring is at a different age, so until we open up the walls we won't know the exact cause.

TYLER: I would like to think it's similar to the same age as the one in Westport and we didn't have an issue with it. You won't know until you open it up.

WINEMILLER: Does this estimate include replacing or updating the electric?

TYLER: Yes

WINEMILLER: It does, okay. Thank you

MCNALLY: Does anybody else have anything for Ike?

TYLER: Thank you very much.

GILLILLAND: I went out, as you all know we've been looking at this project for years and we did try and get some money and we were somewhat successful in getting money from Betty Little, \$500,000.00, which is now gone because of Covid. So, we took a look at whether we renovate at approximately \$2.3 million and Ike has come in at \$1.5 million with his, I guess you could say, ballpark. So, we took a look at, asked and this committee has requested that we take a look at costs for actually renovating and looking at a new building. An idea came up at building of a new building and kind of matching the architecture to

bookend the two, between the building that Nutrition Building that we built there, that was built in the façade of, basically of the spires and things of the fairgrounds and bookending the same kind of building on the other side, the CCE building. I then went out and took a look, went looking for some funding for this particular one, at the same time, as you all know Elise through this budget process, they're bringing back the member items, so I asked her about this particular one, I got some data from Mr. Dougan on it and this proposal that came up, we demolish the building and build this one and build one in this particular façade, kind of along as the same facility at the Minerva Community Center; which I think some of you have gone out and taken a look at. So, we've basically included in the first page here, you know offices, CCE program and then various other amenities, you know like kitchen, greenhouse, act like the County youth and agricultural building. The cost of it, based upon this layout in \$1.8 million and Elise's member item is coming in, basically what I asked her and stuff, she'll put it as number one and we'll get it \$3,000.00 less than a million dollars.

Now we're been at this facility for a large number of years, you know it started back in 2005, I believe or earlier, with CCE, itself went out long and heartfelt fundraising campaign that went nowhere and then we had problems taken back up again with trying to get funding through the State. We've been turned down, I think twice by SHPPO for funds, so it just isn't there. So, basically, right now because in the last couple of days there's a good chance of getting a million dollars for this, which would lower our cost, finish it based on this design of \$800,000.00, plus or minus as per the handout that you've got there.

Jim, do you have anything to add on that?

DOUGAN: Nope

GILLILLAND: So, this is basically option 2 of this particular one, this particular thing. So, I guess it's an opportunity for us to get some Federal money and on both options you take a look at taking for bonding for the balance of the building. So, on this, I did ask CCE what, I didn't ask them to design the building, what I did was ask them is to get what are your requirements for the building. So, that has been incorporated in this particular design. So, any questions that anybody have on it?

MCNALLY: Okay, so the new building also includes a greenhouse?

GILLILLAND: Yes, \$81,000.00 in a greenhouse.

MCNALLY: And this would be a two story building with a walkout basement?

GILLILLAND: Yes

MCNALLY: Okay, does that have where Cornell would have their offices, or could have their offices?

GILLILLAND: Yes, and if you take a look at the picture, the photograph on the conceptual there, the back, if you twist the building, the fairgrounds off that corner and that's additional parking on both side of the building. So, this is for your...

TYLER: I'd like to add, the information I'm getting from Albany is \$500,000.00 is not dead, it's \$500,000.00 that is still going to be available once the Covid money starts flowing. Number one and number two; we did talk to, we actually had Shaun's wife who works at Cornell come down and we asked her what they needed to have CCE to come back into the building, so we worked with that in our plans, also.

GILLILLAND: Who at CCE did you ask to do this for them?

TYLER: Your wife.

GILLILLAND: Okay

TYLER: So, if we have the \$500,000.00, it comes to \$1.5, it's still going to be less than a million dollars, to redo, remodel and have an historic building that's been there since the '20s and could be there for another 100 years. I think, you know, we're looking at this, people and I was probably one of them a few years

back before we did our project, tear down, tear down, if the building's not structurally sound, yes tear it down, but it is structurally sound, nothing wrong with the roof, there's nothing wrong with the piers in the ground, there's nothing with the walls and it can be done, if we want it to be. That's my strong opinion on it.

RAND: Are the solar panels are they going to stay, if it was left as is? Are they included in the new design?

TYLER: Solar would be designed into the remodeling of the project.

MCNALLY: I just want to make some comments, I've been looking at these two estimates and there's some really large discrepancies, as far as plumbing, the County what Jim Dougan did has a \$107,000.00 and this plan that Ike has has \$15,000.00 worth of plumbing. The electrical we have a \$176,000.00 on the county plan and \$70,000.00 on Ike's plan and then we also have a charge for \$34,000.00 for fire alarms. I don't know where in these plans, either plan is there a sprinkler system that is going to mandated on that building.

TYLER: No, it's not.

MCNALLY: Well, if it comes to code it's going to be.

TYLER: No, it doesn't, code officer said it doesn't have to, it's historical and it doesn't need to have one.

MCNALLY: If you spend upward of...

TYLER: I guarantee you that.

MCNALLY: And why would we not want to put in a sprinkler system in that building if we're going to spend a million dollars on that? But, I am saying it's a \$100,000.00 added to that.

TYLER: That's why you have insurance.

MCNALLY: I am just saying I went through this with a building.

TYLER: Can I answer why the discrepancies in cost?

MCNALLY: Yeah, that would be great.

TYLER: Bill, do you have, I know Shelly's not here, but was that the reason? I think the reason who, the main reason is we're not putting in a full basement again? Is that the reason?

JOHNSTON: Yeah, in the packet there's a line item for the difference of aspects of the renovation project.

TYLER: It's all detailed in there?

JOHNSTON: Yes, there's a two-page cost summary that's in the back. Now, why there's differences? I can't explain, because I haven't seen some of the proposals and there's been no discussion comparing the two numbers.

TYLER: I think that would be important, have a discussion on why there's a difference.

MCNALLY: It says budget amount for system upgrading, as needed, if needed in the plumbing and there's a \$15,000.00 expenditure.

JOHNSTON: The plumbing for this building is relatively simple. I mean it should be defined in the eastern end of the building where you do have a full basement. Presently, you have a basement on the second floor, bathroom on the first floor and the kitchen backs up to this area. So, that all the plumbing will be

concentrated in this east end of the building.

DELORIA: Yeah, I see apples and oranges, I don't know which is the apple and which is the orange, but you know if you were to take, say, Ike's proposal and actually went out to bid, I don't think that the \$15,000.00 would cover the cost. If plumbing, you'd be looking at the ADA compliance and other factors, but then again we don't have a comparison to actually go out to bid with a new building, but I think at the end of the day the most important thing to understand is that everybody wants a building on that site to facilitate the success of the fairgrounds. So, you know I don't know how you get to that place, because it seems to me that, you know, not to be Debbie Doom here, but 25 years from now nobody's going to remember what that old building looked like. I mean it's been a struggle to try to keep it up and move forward and renovate it, which is probably financially feasible, but I don't see the plans that were submitted to really justify that low number. It just seems to me that it would cost more than that.

TYLER: I can answer because they're probably different, the plans that are being submitted by Jim are probably more expensive to deal with the whole building and what we're suggesting is that you don't need to put plumbing in the whole building, you just need to do the one side where there is already a basement. There's two bathrooms there. Like I say, unless you look at both and have a conversation about both, you really, you're right, you can't make a discussion on and just an overview of what Jim's plan is here, just receiving this morning, well, maybe that is right for what he wants to do, but what we are planning on doing is to renovate that building just as well as we did the one in Westport, at a lower cost, because we're not going to spend the money in the areas, like redoing the basement or redoing whatever we got to do, just do what you got to do and that building will go for another 100 years. Like I say, structurally it's sound, that's the issue.

HOLZER: So, one of the dilemmas that we all share here in this Board is we're town supervisors and we're also members of the Board of Supervisors, so we have to wear two hats. My town supervisor side totally understands where Mr. Tyler's coming from and it's been a real dilemma for me trying to figure it out. I mean several trips down to the agricultural building, I did make a trip down to Minerva to look at the building there. So, we are really pressed to make a decision on this level on what's best for the County Taxpayers, but my town supervisor side realizes that that's really a dilemma for Ike and my personal feeling is I'd like to declare the property surplus, offer it to the Town of Westport, even give them some County financial assistance and be done with this. So, I'm offering that option as more discussion in seeing what you guys seem to think of that idea.

TYLER: I can tell you right now that I think, I can't speak for my Board, you give us the money that Elise is promising and I'll take it in a heartbeat.

HOLZER: With no more further County involvement as far as maintaining the building or anything like that and then if we get into Cooperative Extension or Soil and Water going back there and we do it and this is just a proposal and rent the property from you for office spaces to help with revenue.

TYLER: I think that would be a discussion, somehow how we work it out, but I am sure that we can work it out.

PALMER: I was a building contractor for 15 years before coming part of this and if you said to me, can you give me a price to build a new building, I would say sure. If you said give me a price for doing a renovation, I would say not until I get into it. Because renovation costs never come out the way you expect them to come out. We had a renovation project, right down the street, it was the Mental Health Building. We started out, we were going to save ½ of the old foundation, it was all going to be new in the front and the back section was going to be the old foundation part of it. We got into that building back in 1996 and the foundation was so crumbled and did not meet building code that we ended up digging the whole thing out and pouring a foundation throughout the whole thing in order to meet building code at that time. Do I think you can do plumbing in that building for \$15,000.00? Not a chance. I just asked for a price to do a bathroom here, handicapped bathroom, it's \$25,000.00. You're not going to put bathrooms over there, in that building for \$15,000.00. No disrespect to anybody, but those prices that are delineated in that estimate are not accurate and the other part of it for me as the County, from the County's perspective, if we do a renovation on a building that's not fully up to code and is really well done then you're just going to

be looking at maintenance costs over and over again down the road. There's 80 windows and doors in that building over there, because I went outside and counted them the last time I was there and all I'm saying is when we're a Board here, sitting here and believe me, I'm not a voting member, I'm just a guy that's supposed to direct you on what I think is the correct thing to do, if we're going to spend money on something you want to spend money on something that you know is going to be around for 40 or 50 years without having to have additional funds spent on top of it. I know that doesn't make everybody happy, but if you're asking for my recommendation, would you take a million dollars and build a new building or would you take the same million dollars and try to renovate, you are way better off building a new building. It would have a foundation under it, it would have a usable foundation under it, it would have up to code all the way through it, it would look like the other building on the property, it would dress up the whole look going into Westport from everywhere. So, you know, ultimately it's going to come down to a vote of this Board, but if you're asking my recommendation, it's a new building.

TYLER: Just, something, I think the issue is the two bathrooms already there and they're both up to handicapped assessable and they just need to be replumbed at the one end out to the kitchen. When you're talking about the windows, we went out and priced the windows. We called the supplier up and that's the price we got for new windows.

GILLILLAND: I'll address the bathroom first, for a number of years, the handicap bathroom in there was a toilet that went through a hole into a five gallon bucket and it was this Board and when they found out about it, said, what? And put a new bathroom in, and new handicapped assessable bathroom in there. That building has been neglected and has been for so many years and maintenance and stuff it's just beyond, you know and as far as the plumbing there goes, yeah we put a new handicapped bathroom in, but that was plumbed into the old system; which was really not sufficient to in the first place.

TYLER: Nothing wrong with Westport sewer.

GILLILLAND: I wasn't speaking to Westport sewer.

SCOZZAFAVA: I'm in the contracting business, electrical. I can tell you right now that this is not the time to be building anything. A sheet of plywood is \$100.00, 250' of 12/2 is \$125.00, we used to pay for that stuff, all day long for \$50.00, it's skyrocketing.

I mean this is a double edge sword. I come from a community where we lost numerous historic buildings and I can tell you that you know, today we regret that. We had a building that Bill Johnston saved right next to the Town Hall; which is now the Iron Center and the Town Board was ready to demolish it was back in the '90s. I am very thankful that it is there. The train station we are upgrading that with CP Rail. The Republic Steel office building, which was owned by this Board of Supervisors, by the County at one time, they turned it over to the Town and that was a mistake, because now the building still sits there in decay, it was sold in the tax sale. So, do I believe that you can go in there and renovate that building for a million dollars, right today, absolutely not, it won't happen and I mean, I understand the importance of trying to save that building, I had Charlie Bryant who's been in the building trades all his life, who owns Bryant's Mill, 94 years old, he came down to see me and said it would be a shame to you know, tear that building down, you should do everything we can do to try and save it and I don't disagree with him, but there comes a point that you know you have to, like our Manager pointed out and it makes sense, I mean if you were in my community and offered me a brand new building, that's going to look very similar to that building; which I see over in Vermont, Bill, you and I talked about it, I mean I would jump on it, with open arms. It's a tough situation.

GILLILLAND: So, with this proposal here, this is Federal budget driven. The Federal budget won't be signed into law until the minimum of the first of October or go into action until the first of October. So, you're not looking, first of all it's got to get through the budget process, of course, this is a new thing under the Biden administration and they're the ones that put back in the line items for members. This has been approved, essentially on the numbers by the Congressional Committee that says, yes, it meets all the passes that they're looking for. So, this would not be construction this year, as it were, because you know we are already in the hiatus of doing anything there, because of the possibility of having a fair there, so you would be looking at 2022 or mid '21 construction season before you would be able to, 2022, before we have opportunity to do that. So, you know that would be for your thinking, put your thinking on and the

whole thing on this proposal would be contingent upon the approval of the Federal budget.

TYLER: I just get a kick out of people saying we're going to build a building that resembles the building that we have there. There is no way are you going to build anything, you look at the building that we put down there, we tried to make it look like a fairgrounds building, it doesn't. There's no way it can resemble that great architecture in that building, at all, for the price you're talking. Yeah, you want to spend \$3-\$4 million to build a new building that looks like that, is similar to that? You can. No way you're are you ever going to bring that picture back into your head when you drive through there and see that building, magnificent building, no way are you going to do anything similar to that.

DELORIA: Yeah, I mean I agree with what Ike just said, but going back to what to Shaun, we looked, Newcomb looked into this member items grant intensively and we actually submitted a small project, but you know, my understand of looking at how that money's going to be, if it's, the project, new construction would absolutely fit it to a glove, but I believe it would be probably, I don't think it would make the table if the money was for a renovation project. That's not what they're looking for. That's just my take on this whole grant program and it is a 2022 item, so if the Board didn't want to build a new building and decided to, you know, do a renovation, I think we're looking at another 3 years before the money's available. I mean what's the purpose of the building? Ike, would you, I mean at the end of the day, if the Board did decide to say, listen, let's just build a new building, I'm certain you would support that, I mean why wouldn't you? I mean if it's about less work in the fair.

TYLER: Well, I guess it's the difference of, you know, would I rather be stabbed in the front or stabbed in the back? Maybe that's not similar, I guess I'll take the back, but anyways, if it boils down to, you're going to tear that building down and put a new one up? Yes, I would support that, but that's not until this saving this building is far too important than building a new building there. I've seen it. It can be done. I'm sitting in it every day in my office, that building is going to be good for another 100 years, we did it for \$800,000.00. It was worse off than this building.

WINEMILLER: I just have to say that I'm really conflicted with this, because I absolutely understand what Ike is saying and I guess personally, from an emotional standpoint, I'm definitely leaning with him, because I love old buildings and I love old architecture and anything that can be saved and especially a building this important and iconic, I think that's the difference, you know? But, I understand, too, how a new construction might fit the grant requirements better. This is tough, you know, this is a tough one. I'm very conflicted on it.

MCNALLY: Anybody else?

GILLILLAND: I just want to step it back a little bit, as Chairman, people here, we are all looking for what is the best and that's why we're gathered here, this is not a personal issue, one way or the other and we do need to have people, members here that are passionate about where they stand and we should have good data on it; okay? So, but in the end we all have to vote as to what we think is best.

HARRINGTON: Yes, I would feel that Essex County is one of the most agriculturally motivated counties in the State and I know that the, all the persons involved in agriculture realize that they do not have a meeting place, they do not have the modern facilities that our agriculture now demands if you're going to be successful. I like that old building, but I live in an old house and you best be having a hammer and a screwdriver beside you at all times, because something is going to fail and fail and fail. I believe that the plumbing there is a perfect Rube Goldberg and the electrical system is to be truthful, really shameful. So, I think we would be far, far, far ahead if we just applied to the adage that a new broom sweeps clean.

DEPO: Yes, I just wanted to say that I'm kind of with Tom, when you get into the rehabbing of old buildings, our project at the Community Center started as a \$400,000.00 project, jumped up to \$600,000.00, once you get engineers involved and contractors up and it's still far from being over, before this project's done I wouldn't be surprised to see it go to \$800,000.00, maybe even a million dollars, before it's totally done. So, the numbers you've got, I wouldn't take them to the bank, because none of these projects turn out being what they are when you get the engineers and contractors involved, they are never what they are.



TYLER: Yeah, these are best guess estimates from a guy who's been in the business for 40 years and he reached out to other contractors, number one. Number two; like as I stated, I'm sitting in a building that was in worse shape, 100 years old, we did for \$800,000.00.

DEPO: This building is also, was built in 1934.

TYLER: I can just compare what we did in Westport. You know, the same or similar. In shape, the building is in better shape than my building is that we did for \$800,000.00. That's all I can tell you.

SCOZZAFAVA: I think we're all in the dark here, I mean, what would it take to do a set of plans and put it out to bid, so we know what we're talking about? So, we can see what the numbers are going to be?

PALMER: For renovation? You're talking a lot of money. You're talking a lot of money. By the time you draw drawings and get bid documents ready, you're talking \$300,000.00 - \$400,000.00 to get this thing out.

MCNALLY: Not to mention if you don't have a change order on the first day.

DEPO: Exactly, the charge orders are daily.

MCNALLY: I would add something to Charlie's comment about that, I am on the Cornell Board right now, Essex County has a fantastic program now with the agri-tourism, family farms. In the last 8 years they've grown immensely, it's an aggressive bunch and a new building with a commercial kitchen, I mean it would be so helpful to all those groups up there.

I happen to have a brand new building, it's great, I go over there, there's no maintenance to be done. We've had it three years and haven't done any maintenance on it, we clean it. So, I know it's in Ike's town, it's a hard decision for him. I think if a million dollars is coming to rebuild one, I think you almost have to rebuild one, it would be best for the taxpayers.

TYLER: I am sitting in a building that we put \$800,000.00 into and we haven't done anything in the last few years and we don't need to for the next years. So, the argument of maintenance in this building, once you redo it, it's done, it's like new. It's not like an old building, an old house that you don't have enough money to do the projects, you just do the project and then it's done again, it's just like new.

PALMER: Just one more thing, I've been here 28 years, you know and I've heard this a number of occasions that we've done nothing with that property and we just let it sit there. Well, the reason we do nothing is because Jim Dougan or I or Mike or anybody else here at the County can't touch a thing on that building until this Board passes a resolution that says what's going to happen and the reason these projects don't get done is because you can't come to a consensus. Ultimately, there's no way you're going to make, have a vote where everybody says, that's great we're all happy, but at some point and if we're going to get our hands on that money from the Feds, this Board will need a vote that directs us what to do. That's ultimately what's going to decide how it's going to work out.

MCNALLY: My personal feeling is, if there's a million dollars available for new construction and nothing is available for renovations, there's only one way to go. Now, Ike says that \$500,000.00 is still available, I have not heard that.

TYLER: I heard it from Albany.

MCNALLY: I don't think there was ever a contract initiated.

GILLILLAND: There was never a contract.

MCNALLY: So, does anybody have anything else or do we want to get a resolution out of this Committee to go to the next Board?

TYLER: I would like to, like you said, it's been sitting around for 28 years, what the hell is another month difference? Let people go over the numbers and check it out again. You know what I am hearing here, I am hearing from most of my Supervisor friends here that, you know, let's tear down the old, you're talking like it's an old barn sitting out in the middle of a field somewhere, it's not. If it wasn't structurally sound, I wouldn't be here today telling you it is. It would just be a crying shame to tear down that historically building just because you think you can build something new for a million dollars that's going to look like it.

DELORIA: Yeah, I mean I'm willing to wait 28 days, but the thing is, Ike, I've got to tell you right now, based on the numbers that you gave me, I can't compare that as being anything close to be accurate with what you're asking to be done in that building, so me personally, I'm going to need to know more. You know, just me and my life, I call tell you, those figures are way off and how do you present a package that is acceptable to allow us to make a decision when, right now, it's too low, the numbers are totally off. I need that to look at.

TYLER: Tell that to the contractor that did my job for \$800,000.00 when the original bid came in at \$1.5 million.

DELORIA: I don't doubt that. I'm saying I've got to see that data.

TYLER: I agree, I agree. That's why we should have a little more time to get that.

DELORIA: I'm not on the committee, but I would ask that that would be moved to table.

GILLILLAND: I would say that we don't move to table, that we move forward with that, go ahead and give indication that we are willing to move forward with the Federal money, without the idea that we are stalling or still can't come to some sort of decision. So, I mean it's not final, but I don't want to turn off that spigot, you know, prematurely. So, it's you know, basically I think we need to have a resolution saying that we support this, if the money becomes available.

DELORIA: That is correct, because that is required of the town to submit the application. We did for the member items and that is part of the proposal. If you want that money than show support and that's what we were required to do.

MCNALLY: So, what we would move out of Committee is to move forward with the replacement if the funds become available through the Federal Government, the million dollars, is that what we're talking about?

GILLILLAND: Yes, essentially

MCNALLY: That doesn't tie us into the fact that we're not going to restore the building, but that we would move forward, if we get that million dollars, is that what I understand?

DELORIA: Well, my understanding is without the support for the project than your application isn't going to go anywhere. If you're applying for a million dollars, you have to have the support behind that, at least that's what we had in Newcomb, and that's my understanding.

HOLZER: So, what you're saying is, we can go ahead and at least apply for this, but the actual physical building will not be torn down until we have a clear consensus where this Board is going with this?

GILLILLAND: You always have that option.

HOLZER: Okay, and just to get back to my other point, is there any interest, and no big deal, I was just wondering, is there desire of any of the members to just give this building to the Town of Westport? Or is it just me talking? Okay, no biggie, I was just wondering.

MERRIHEW: I would certainly support their consideration, but it all, it's more about the money, how that was going to be handled and things like that.

I would commend the Chairman and our leadership here for putting us in the position to be able to secure financing through our Congresswoman. We have one definitive choice, without there being a lot of greyness and we need a lot of quote or we need another thing or we need another that. We have a lot of projects in Essex County that are just looking for money that doesn't stop as we talk about Chesterfield with the bridge and we're going to find other bridges, we always going to have needs for money, needs for money. I think we would be able to put this to bed today, we're never going to make everybody happy, but in the long run, I believe it is the right choice. I would be comfortable offering a resolution, that is contingent upon the financing from Ms. Stefanik that we build a new building in place of the Cooperative Extension Building, knock it down, put up a new one that we have the information on, move forward and put that on the floor for discussion, today.

MCNALLY: And this is all based, this will all be based upon receiving the million dollars?

MERRIHEW: Yes

MCNALLY: And we don't receive that then we can look at other avenues?

MERRIHEW: Absolutely.

MCNALLY: Noel moved that, do we have a second on that?

HOLZER: Based on the financing and that doesn't lock me into tearing down the building, yet?

MCNALLY: No, that does not. Basically, it's just going to strengthen our application for Federal money.

MERRIHEW: But, I believe my resolution did encompass knocking that building down. If we get the money that we would put up a new structure in place of what we have.

PALMER: That's part of the project that's been requested. So, that would be within the project at the Federal level, right now, to supply the million dollars in funding, based upon what we put in front of us. Now, if you don't get the money then I guess you're back to the drawing board.

MCNALLY: Okay, so we have a motion, but we don't have a second?

DEZALIA: I'll second it.

**RECOMMEDATION FOR A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ESSEX COUNTY TO APPLY FOR FEDERAL GRANT FUNDING FOR THE NEW ESSEX COUNTY YOUTH AND AGRICULTURAL CENTER PROJECT**

Merrihew, DeZalia

MCNALLY: Anybody have any questions on this?

WINEMILLER: I just wonder if Dan could repeat what he just said, because I didn't quite hear?

PALMER: Again, what this, the application that went into Congresswoman Stefanik's Office is for a million dollars, while it's a \$1.8 million project, the Feds would supply a million dollars for construction of a new building at that site, the old building comes down.

WINEMILLER: So, if the financing is received then we would have to?

PALMER: You would have to, again, if you, you know there's a lot of people competing for that money in Stefanik's Office. If it comes through then you have to make the next steps; okay? Authorizing Jim to tear down the building, those kinds of things. If you don't get the money then

you're back to the drawing board. You're right back to where we started a month ago.

MCNALLY: So, this is not, this decision, the final decision of this project would not be until October?

PALMER: Well, it's whenever you get the notification from the Feds that the money is there. You know, again, the funding issue always is when do you get your hands on the contract; right? I mean money can be talked about, a lot, but until you get your hands on a contract that says you're receiving the money, that's when you know you have a project.

MCNALLY: But, I also would like confirmation whether that \$500,000.00 is completely off the table or who has control of it, that Senator Little gave to us 3 or 4 years ago.

GILLILLAND: According to Dan Stec's office, yes, is it dead. Nobody in the State Government is going to say it's dead; okay? Because nobody really knows that it's dead. The best estimation is, that I've been told, under the table, is that it's not coming. That's the last communication I had.

MCNALLY: Alright, so we have a resolution, we have a second. We're done with questions, comments? All in favor? And opposed?

GARVEY: Three is favor, two opposed.

PALMER: So, what this does is you've now moved a resolution through this Committee which will now be brought up, I am assuming the next meeting from the floor and then everybody here gets the chance to vote on it.

GILLILLAND: We have to go Regular Board.

MCNALLY: Alright, we are adjourned.

**AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS BUILDING AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE, IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:00 AM**

Respectively Submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy Clerk  
Board of Supervisors

