

Town hall renovation plan presented

TRSD Architectural Study adds bathrooms, increases ADA compliance

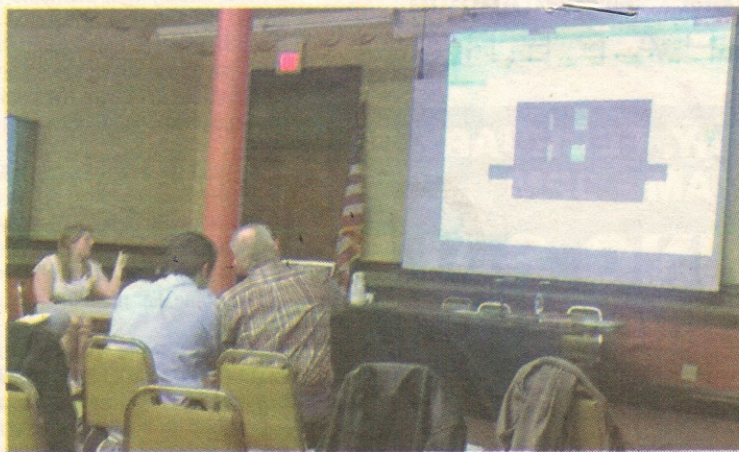
-BROOKFIELD-

By Jennifer Robert
Turley Publications Reporter

Samantha Francis, a senior at Tantasqua Regional High School, presented the completed architectural study on the proposed Town Hall renovations to Brookfield selectmen at Tuesday night's meeting.

A member of the CAD department, Samantha was team leader on this project that evaluated the current layout and design of the town hall, and proposed changes to office space, storage areas, restrooms and handicap access, among other things. Samantha's presentation included a detailed set of blueprints for each of the three floors of the building and a projected three-dimensional view of the exterior of the building, along with explaining the changes and opening the floor up to questions and comments.

With the proposed plans, the basement would see a dedicated area for the Council of Aging roughly 1,600 square feet in size, including a kitchen, open area, administrative space and rest-



TURLEY PUBLICATIONS PHOTO BY JENNIFER ROBERT

Samantha Francis (far left), a senior in the CAD department at Tantasqua Regional High School and team leader in the Brookfield Town Hall Architectural Study, shows off the proposed plans for renovations and explains the changes from the current layout.

room. One window would have to be removed from the new restroom area, as the current window is directly above the proposed location for the three stalls. The basement would also house the offices for the Water Department, Conservation Committee, a mechanical room, a custodial space including a mop sink, a vault, and a dedicated storage area. The proposed elevator would also allow basement access, and the elevator equipment room would be located there.

The main floor of the building would see several changes as well. The current meeting room and assessor's office would be transitioned through a wall that would be built into a renovated

meeting room and the selectmen office.

Selectman Rudy Heller questioned whether this would be a solid wall, or a mobile partition that would enable the rooms to be opened up together, and it was clarified that the current plans call for a solid wall. Additionally, the main floor would house two other, smaller, meetings rooms, including the assessor's office, the financial clerk, the tax collector, the treasurer and the town clerk, who would be located next to the vault for ease of access. Another maintenance room, with a mop sink, would be on this floor in addition

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tion to the one in the basement. There would be both male and female restrooms, with the female restroom having a full handicap stall.

Elevator access on the ground floor would be located immediately inside the handicap entrance to the building, which will be a grade-level entrance so there is no need for a ramp to be built outside the building. An extended canopy would be installed outside to allow for ease of handicap access even in snowy conditions. The

current plan for the elevator situates it in the current town accountant office, and the proposed plan would see removing the old ticket window to create an elevator entrance. Donna Neylon, administrative assistant to the selectmen, said that a few years ago she looked into removing that same window to create a second fire exit for the accountant, and relayed that the historical commission would not allow it due to the historical nature of the window, so that is something that may need to be looked in to.

As for the second floor, the stage bathroom would be renovated, and a wheelchair lift would be installed aside the stage for handicap access. The lobby area outside the rear stage doors would have two restrooms and meeting room/kitchen off of it, with elevator access also emptying into the area. In order to install the elevator shaft, one of the sets of stairs leading to the balcony would have to be removed, although the plans call for the balcony to be sealed off.

In addition to Samantha, the other team members from Tantasqua working on this project included Joe Miller, junior observer, Brandon Trafford, senior, Holly Marks, senior and Hayley Jerome, junior. Selectmen Chair Stephen Comtois thanked the group for its hard work, saying that they have done an excellent job and their evaluation has saved the town thousands of dollars. "We literally have not spent one cent on this," he explained. Heller agreed, and said, "I saw you here several times touring the building. You were very thorough, and I really appreciate that."