

Friends open door for cooperative improvement

7/2013

Town hall lock change approved

-BROOKFIELD-

By Jennifer Robert
Quabog Current Reporter

The Brookfield Friends of the Town Hall (FoTH) have been regrouping during the aftermath of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) being shot down by voters but is now looking for alternate ways to support the building they are dedicated to saving. At Tuesday night's selectmen meeting, Bill Simpson approached the board about a joint financial effort to replace the main entrance door to the building.

"We want to offer support," Simpson said. "We would like to see a real door put on the building with an opener. There is no need to keep this heavy door in place with a sign directed people around the building. A new door would make access easier, and safer, for all." Simpson's offer, on behalf of the FoTH, was to cover half of the cost of door replacement.

Previous estimates for installing such a door came in around

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SELECTMAN

\$3,200 but select chair cautioned that the quote did not include installation fees. Simpson said that he would like to see the project put out to bid, and also suggested that he contact Tantasqua about installing the door for the town. As far as funding the remaining half of the cost, Simpson said that he is aware of a Town Hall Improvement Fund which has a balance of about \$13,000-more than enough for the project.

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should wait," Comtois said. "We still don't know what will be going on with the building and shouldn't be spending the money unnecessarily." Selectmen Linda Lincoln, however, was in favor of the project.

"That door has been a problem for many, many years," she said. "Senior citizens who come in to the town hall have a very difficult time managing it." Selectmen Nicholas Thomo agreed that the door replacement is a good project idea.

"I think that it is a great idea," he said. "It would offer improvement on the front of the building and with the Friends playing half it seems like a no brainer to me." The board voted two to one to support putting the project out to bid, with Comtois casting the vote against the project.

The issue of the locks on the town hall was also addressed during the meeting. Thomo said that it has been between 20 and 25 years since the locks have been replaced and both he and the custodian of the building felt that changing the locks would make the structure more secure for everyone. The estimate for replacement of the four perimeter locks to be changed and 46 high security, non-duplicatable keys to be issued came in at \$1,278.

"There hasn't been a problem here, but that's not to say there won't be," Thomo said. Comtois said that last week he asked the administrative assistant, Jennifer Grybowski, to send out an email to those who have been listed as having keys. Grybowski said that while no keys have been returned she did receive several responses that indicated that people who previously held positions had passed the key along to those who were currently in elected or appointed positions.

"I say save the \$1,300 and start keeping a record of who has keys," Comtois said. "I think that people will be honest and come forward and say they have keys." Thomo did not share that sentiment, stating that he doesn't share the same faith in people's honesty and is concerned about people coming into the building during off-hours.

Ultimately, the board voted to approve financing the replacement of the locks and keys, not to exceed \$1,500 and 66 keys. The key policy will be reviewed at the next selectmen meeting.