

Waitsfield Town Office
 9 Bridge Street
 Waitsfield, VT 05673



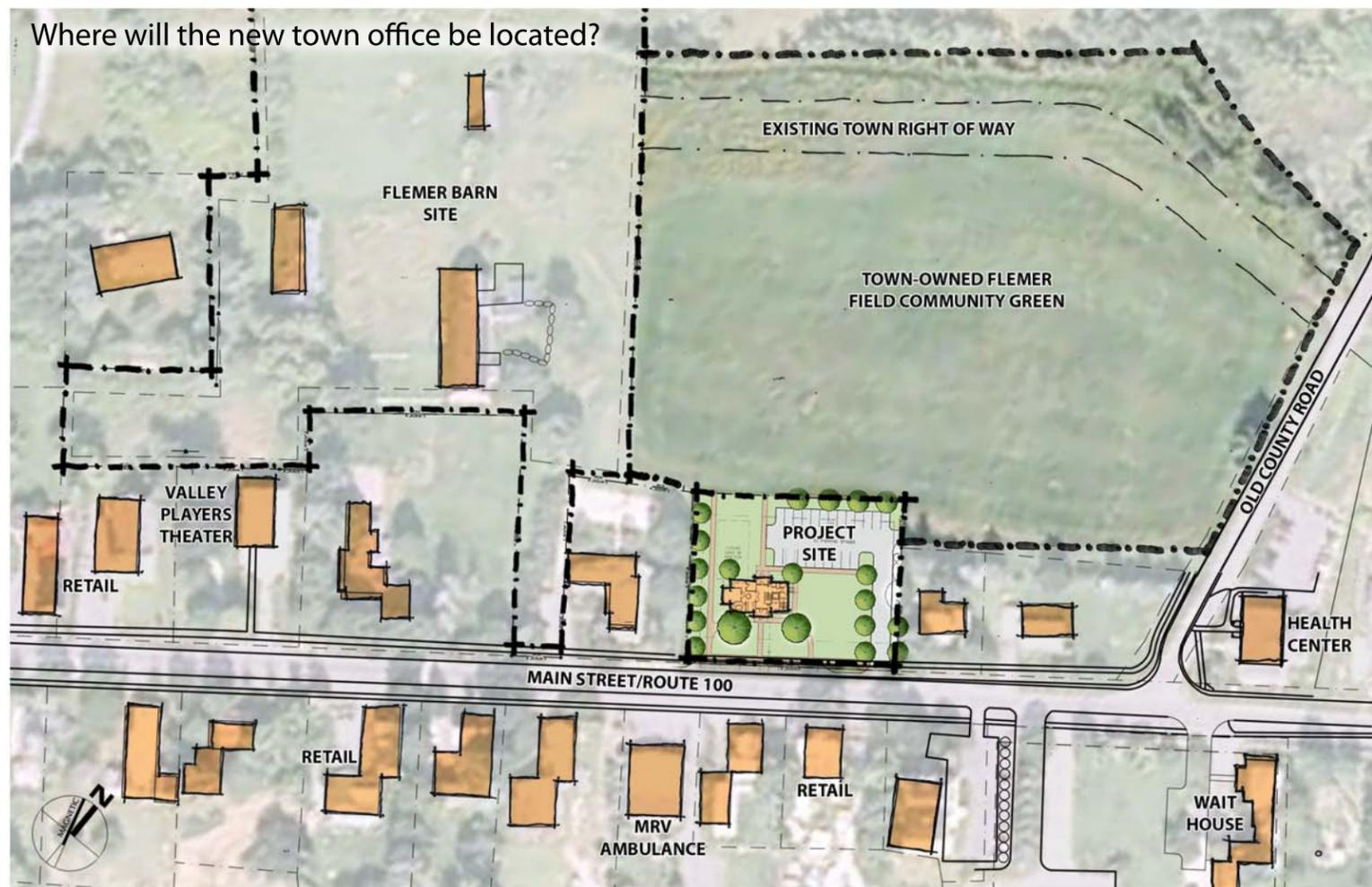
Important Information Regarding the Proposed New Town Office Project

The Waitsfield Selectboard has placed an Australian ballot item for the March 5, 2013 Annual Town Meeting asking voters whether to approve borrowing up to \$1.6 million for the development of a new Town Office. Through this bulletin we would like to provide voters with information about this matter.

Inside are answers to frequently asked questions including:

- Why is a new town office needed?
- How much will a new town office cost?
- What will be the impact to taxpayers?
- How can I get more information?

Where will the new town office be located?

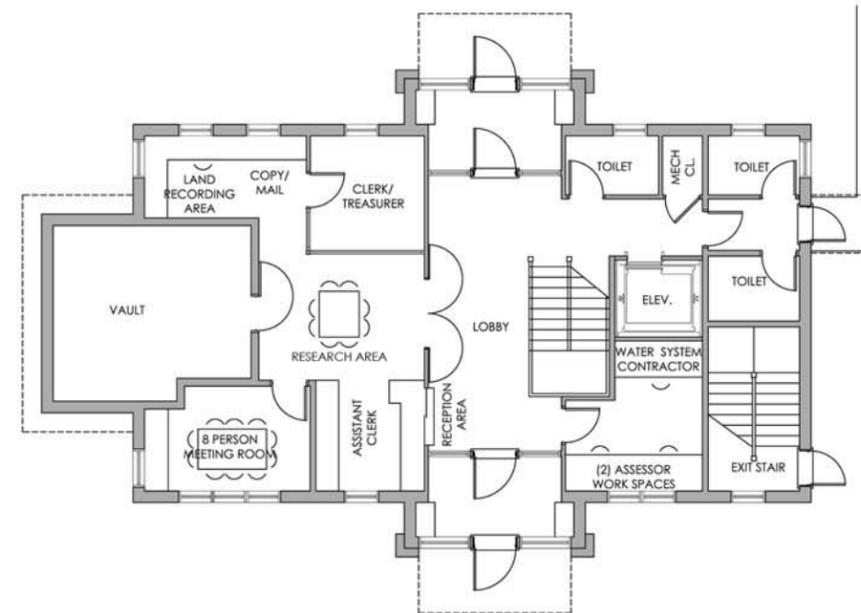


Why is a new Town Office needed?

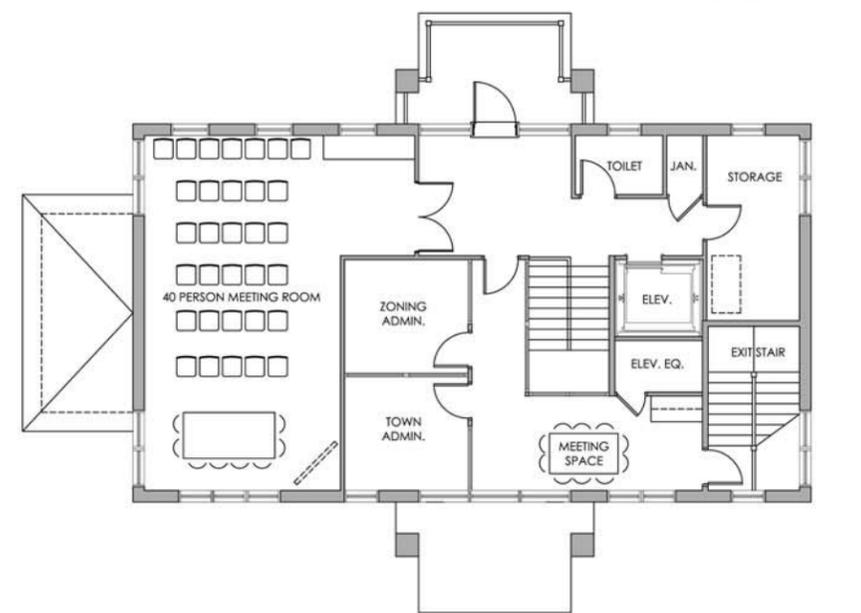
The basement of the Library no longer meets the needs of Town Office functions, where it has been since 1972—more than 40 years. The vault has run out of space to store the Town's vital, historic, and land records. Space for day-to-day records storage, supplies, and basic operations is increasingly stressed. Prior years' financial and other records are stored off-site in a rented, non-heated storage unit and in the basement of the Wait House. Permits are stored in expensive, free-standing fireproof file cabinets, which are at capacity. The Town Office is not accessible to persons using wheelchairs. The space sustained serious flood damage twice in the last 15 years. The capacity of the septic system is a concern. The Library needs more space to meet the changing needs of the community.

The need for increased Town Office space was identified as far back as the 1980s, with a study of an addition at the Waitsfield Elementary School in 1981, and has been included in the capital budget since it first appeared in 1990. New Town Office space will provide a larger vault, increased town clerk space, a conference room, research area for visitors, a meeting room that could reasonably accommodate up to 40 persons and office spaces for the town administrator, planning & zoning administrator and assessor.

Conceptual First Floor Plan



Conceptual Second Floor Plan



Town Office Task Force

A Town Office Task Force was formed by the Select Board in 2010 to evaluate the various options, solicit public input, and make recommendations to the Selectboard regarding the expansion or relocation of the Town Office. Maclay Architects of Waitsfield was hired in 2011 through a competitive bid process to assist the Task Force.

Town Office Task Force Members

- Jennifer Peterson, current Town Clerk/Treasurer
- Sandra Gallup, former Town Clerk/Treasurer
- John Reilly, Joslin Library Trustee
- Brian Voigt, Planning Commission member
- Charles Hosford, Selectboard member
- Brian Shupe, DRB member

What criteria were used to determine which sites were studied?

The TOTF first developed a program of what essential space and functions were needed. The Town Office currently occupies the full 1,780 square feet below the Library. At least 3,500 square feet are needed in a configuration that allows the Town Clerk to monitor access to the vault, provides for separate meeting space and research functions, and provides separate office space for administrative functions.

Next, the following guiding principles were developed, which were strongly influenced by the Waitsfield Town Plan:

1. The town's future office needs should be coordinated with planning to meet the future needs of the library.
2. The town office should remain in one of the two designated village centers (Waitsfield Village and Irasville) to reinforce the town's longstanding land use, transportation and infrastructure policies.
3. New or expanded town offices should meet the town's long term needs (e.g., serve the town for 50+ years) either through initial construction or a potential for future expansion.
4. The town office should enhance Waitsfield's built environment and sense of civic pride through quality design and construction, and should serve as a model for energy efficiency.
5. The decision to expand or relocate the town office should be based on a realistic understanding of the Town's fiscal outlook and the impact on taxpayers.
6. The decision to expand or relocate the town office is ultimately a decision of the voters, and any proposals made by the Town Office Task Force should be the result of an inclusive public outreach effort that provides meaningful opportunities for Waitsfield's citizens to weigh in.

What were other considerations?

Other considerations that narrowed the site selection included:

- The construction of a new vault will be a significant capital investment, which should be in a location that would be owned by the Town rather than rented or leased space.
- There should be adequate space for large public meetings and hearings, which the current office lacks. The Select Board, Development Review Board and Planning Commission all have regular meeting schedules that make coordinating meetings with other users of the elementary school a challenge, and there is often a need for access to town files during meetings.
- To the extent practical, the Town Office location should support or compliment other public facilities or programs.