



# TOWN OF WAITSFIELD

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TOWN OFFICE EXPANSION FEASIBILITY STUDY

June 23, 2011

The Town of Waitsfield is seeking proposals from qualified firms to evaluate three sites in Waitsfield Village for their suitability to accommodate a relocated or expanded Town Office. The objective is to identify which one of the three properties should be advanced to the next level for design, permitting, financing, and preparation for construction.

### I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Waitsfield Town Office occupies approx. 1,780 sq. ft. in the lower level of the Joslin Memorial Library at the corner of Main and Bridge Streets in Waitsfield Village. The need for increased storage, office, and meeting space is becoming increasingly urgent as the Town Office is running out of vault space. More space is also needed for the town clerk area; a separate meeting room for town boards and committees; office space for the town administrator, planning & zoning administrator, and assessor; space for researchers; additional storage space; and improved accessibility for citizens with disabilities.

The need for more Town Office space has been known for many years. A report in 1981, for example, examined the feasibility of building an addition at the Elementary School to accommodate a new Town Office. A number of factors, including the lack of consensus on where a new Town Office should be located, contributed to the matter not moving forward.

A Town Office Task Force was formed in fall 2010 to define the needs, examine options, solicit public input, contract professional services, and make recommendations to the Selectboard for siting new Town Office space. A budget of \$10,000 was approved by voters at the 2011 Annual Meeting to support the work of the TOTF. The objective of this phase is to identify which of the three properties listed below should be advanced to the next level for design, permitting, financing, and preparation for construction.

### **Three Potential Locations**

The Town Office Task Force identified several potential locations in Waitsfield Village and Irasville for a new Town Office space. A public forum was held on February 10, 2011 to present the options and solicit public input. As a result, the options were narrowed to **three** parcels for further analysis. The following descriptions are not exhaustive but are intended to give an idea of their contexts:

1. Expansion of the Joslin Memorial Library and Town Office in their existing location;
2. A location at the Wait House complex; and
3. The Flemer barn(s).

## 1. Joslin Memorial Library/Town Office

### Description:

- Built 1904. On National Register for Historic Places.
- The building is owned by the Town of Waitsfield and is maintained by Library Trustees.
- The Town pays \$22,246 per year in rent and pro-rated utilities to the Library.
- Located in the Village Business zoning district.

### Advantages:

- Already owned by the Town.
- Centrally located.
- Shared meeting space with Library.
- Proximity to other civic and community activities.

### Known impediments:

- Location and capacity of septic system.
- Current property boundary lines.
- Limited parking.
- Any plan that includes relocation of the Town Office to another location needs to factor in the financial and special impacts to the Library.

## 2. Wait House Complex

### Description:

- The General Wait House is perhaps the oldest structure in Waitsfield and is on the National Register for Historic Places.
- The Wait House is currently occupied by five non-profit and/or civic organizations, the Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce, and a visitor center.
- Adjacent to the Wait House are the elementary school to the north, fire station to the south, cemetery to the east, and an open green. Across the street is a medical facility and the Town-owned Flemer field.
- Located in the Village Residential zoning district.

### Advantages:

- Already owned by the Town.
- Proximity to other municipal facilities.
- Facilities could be shared among other municipal or civic activities.

### Known impediments:

- Location and capacity of on-site septic system.
- Site restrictions from adjacent uses (school, fire station, cemetery).
- Not centrally located.
- Limited parking.

### 3. Flemer Barn(s)

#### Description:

- Two barns on 4.75 acres of agricultural land adjacent to the Town-owned Flemer Green Community Field.
- The 2-story barn is approx. 4,560 s.f. per floor and the 1 ½ story barn is approx. 2,465 s.f.
- Located in the Village Residential zoning district.

#### Advantages:

- Adjacent to Town-owned recreation field and green.
- Rural aesthetic.

#### Known impediments:

- Not currently owned by Town.
- Lack of infrastructure.
- Extensive renovation costs.
- Lack of clear connection to the Route 100 corridor.

### Future Town Office Space

Preliminary calculations suggest new Town Office space should be about 4,650 square feet comprised of the following: office space (1,250), vault (500), meeting area (600), bathrooms (1,500), utilities (250), storage (150), counter, files (200), entry, hallways (200). Other considerations: break room, public notice area, 100+ year plan with expansion potential, energy efficiency, and extra space for potential rental revenue.

### Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles were identified by the TOTF and presented at the February 10 public forum relating to the new Town Office space:

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.

## **II. SCORE OF WORK PLAN AND SCHEDULE**

### **Scope of Work**

1. Review notes and information prepared by the Town Office Task Force.
2. Develop and refine the scope of space needs for new the Town Office.
3. Evaluate the potential for each of the identified sites to accommodate the Town Office space objectives, whether through new construction, adaptation of existing space, or a combination of both. Consider such factors as:
  - the physical ability of the site to accommodate the proposed use;
  - vehicular and pedestrian access and site circulation;
  - need to acquire rights or property;
  - infrastructure, such as power, water supply, wastewater disposal;
  - regulatory concerns;
  - natural hazards; and
  - any other considerations based on the Consultant's professional judgment.
4. Any plan that includes relocation of the Town Office to another location needs to factor in the financial and special impacts to the Library.
5. Develop, to the extent possible, preliminary site plans of each alternative.
6. Develop preliminary cost estimates for each alternative.
7. Solicit input from the TOTF and the public.
8. Prepare final report and recommendations.
9. Presentation to Selectboard.

### **Schedule**

For this contract, the schedule is expected to be as follows:

- July 25, 2011: Waitsfield Selectboard considers TOTF recommendation and authorizes contract.
- August – October 2011: Feasibility study; meet with TOTF.
- Late October 2011: Public input; meet with TOTF.
- November 2011: Final report; present recommendation to Selectboard.

The long term schedule is as follows:

- January 2012: Municipal and capital budget adopted by Selectboard. Funds allocated to hire design team for next design and permitting.
- March 2012: Budget acted on by voters.
- May 2012: Begin design process for selected option.

- Summer 2012: Preliminary designs; public input.
- March 2013: Seek voter approval for bond.
- Spring 2013: Permitting; final designs.
- Summer – Fall 2013: Construction.

### **III. FINAL PRODUCTS**

The final products should include a report summarizing the findings and one or more schematic illustrations or site plans for each site. The products should be delivered in paper as well as in one or more digital forms that will allow for electronic distribution and posting on the Waitsfield Web site.

### **IV. REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF PROPOSAL**

Technical Proposal. Six (6) copies of the proposal should be submitted which, at a minimum, includes the following information:

- A short statement of interest and demonstration of the Consultant's understanding of the scope and objectives of the project.
- Detailed scope of services and methodology, including specific activities and tasks to be performed, individual(s) to be involved, and an estimate of hours associated with each.
- Proposed timetable for project tasks, including estimated hours associated with each.
- Qualifications of the individual(s) who will be involved in the project, including relevant past experience.
- Summaries of three or more relevant projects, including the names and telephone numbers of references.

The proposal should be printed on double-sided paper to the extent possible and bound in such a way to allow for recycling.

Cost of Services. In a separate sealed envelope from the technical proposal, please provide information about the costs associated with the proposed schedule of tasks, including anticipated costs of delivery, phone, travel, photocopies, etc. Include the hourly rates of involved personnel in the event that further services beyond, or adjustments to, the final project scope of work is desired.

## V. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Members of the Town Office Task Force will review the submissions. The TOTF may elect to interview any respondents or none. The technical proposals will be reviewed first. The cost proposal will be opened after review of the technical proposals is complete. The recommendation for award of the contract will be based upon the following considerations:

1. Responsiveness to the Request for Proposals;
2. Qualifications of the consultant or team;
3. The proposed schedule for completion.
4. Assurance that the consultant can perform the contract within the time specified;
5. Experience working with citizen committees;
6. The content of the cost proposal, including the approach taken to develop the overall estimate of both costs and person-hours; and
7. In accordance with the Waitsfield Procurement Policy.

The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to award the contract as determined to be in the best interests of the Town. All proposals become the property of the Town of Waitsfield upon submission. Waitsfield is an equal opportunity employer.

For more information, contact Valerie Capels, Waitsfield Town Administrator, at (802) 496-2218 or [townadmin@madriver.com](mailto:townadmin@madriver.com). Proposals will be accepted at the address below or by e-mail to the Town Administrator by **12:00 noon, Thursday, July 14, 2011**. Responses should be clearly labeled "Town Office Expansion Feasibility Study" and be delivered to:

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator  
Waitsfield Town Office  
9 Bridge Street  
Waitsfield, Vermont 05673