

Old White Meeting House – Community Survey – Open Ended Question Responses

Overall Structure

Question 1f. Other ideas and comments

- I believe that after tearing down the original building that the town should then decide on an appropriate use for the property in the future. A new replica of the previous architecture and style of the building which can be utilized in a practical way for office spaces or other town uses.
- Granny's Attic should remain according to its current arrangement with the town
- Not sure if these comments belong in THIS space but to explain the “neutral” responses to the questions above: more info is needed. I can't give an opinion before knowing the costs to make renovations in order to make the building usable for public events. The goal must be to make the building self sustaining which I truly hope can be done!
- Historic (retain restore facade - renovate interior). Could do public/private partnership.
- A town gym should be put in to help community members stay active and healthy even throughout the winter months.
- Renovate for the Town of South Hero Town offices and sell the current bldg.
- Rent to for profits as well
- Curious how much revenue "Granny's Attic" donates to town non-profits + schools; surely that should have some bearing on the discussion?!
- Keep the building as a historical site. It gives the town the old time feeling and makes you want to stop.
- If not a non-profit use...then something that may generate income for the town
- The town has spent enough money on this building its time the town spend money on a new structure for all of its towns offices and possibility of renting space to other organizations
- Sell it to some one who will renovate and bring business. Or lease it to some one who would do the same. It seems structurally sound, it has been around this long, it would be a shame to tear down.
- If not used as Granny's, sell it
- It should remain a town meeting house, once it has been made structurally sound, and weatherized and renovated.
- Rent should be charged at fair market value, no more free rides. Or the Non profit should give its assets back to the town. The answers given depend upon cost. Without a cost element these questions are pie in the sky.

- Sell it to someone as a business site.
- It's hard to know what the potential uses are, and how the space can economically and socially benefit the town. I don't know what other uses have been suggested.
- I would move our town offices to the new building and then offer the old town office building for community activities.
- Sell the building so our taxes don't go up.
- The town should accept bids to rent the space to businesses that might enhance commerce, culture, etc
- Is the building at it's highest and best use? I'm not sure.
- Granny's Attic should remain. Brings in a lot of money which is donated, attracts tourists
- Windows
- Should tear it down and put up a McDonald's or other modern store.
- Music Space
- There are no bathrooms/septic would be too expensive!
- Item E - rent to locals and free to non-profits for limited periods of time, to have more general variety use of space.
- Renovate with chair lift or elevator for handicapped access
- Why not renovate the building and move our town offices to it; then convert our town office building to a Community Resource Center
- I am a little puzzled as to why this question is coming up, since it wasn't long ago the town or someone spent a huge amount of money taking down the cupola and restoring that, I would be re concerned about the town descision making to have spent town money or someone's money to do that with only the description to tear it down in the near future?
- Complete restoration. Revert back to a meeting place/Town Clerk Office. Grannies Attic could move to the current Town Clerk Office. SELL the Fire Station building to Blue Paddle and use income to help renovation. The Fire Station has no historical value, it's only about 60 years old +/-.
- Sell to developer who is willing to renovate while keeping as much as possible, the historical aspect of the building could be use as a function hall and rented by outsiders if not sold.

- Keep Granny's Attic in the building.
- Don't tear it down!
- Political meetings, voting, etc.
- Structural renovation is paramount. Use free for open community events and rent to generate \$ for ongoing maintenance
- This is a beautiful landmark within a very eclectic (not pretty) town center. We need to make the most of it.
- Restaurant and a few either apartments or guest rooms on second floor.
- my understanding is that Granny's Attic contributes all of the money earned back to the community. Why would you want to charge this non-profit organization rent? It is run by volunteers who dedicate many hours to keep it going. This only benefits the community and saves taxpayers money.
- Put in water and sewer, insulate, move Granny's out and make it the Town Office building and community space to use for events, yoga classes, etc.
- Donate to Granny's Attic.
- Weatherization and structure renovations depends on cost. Both are good options.
- Short-term leases only. We need to formulate a long-term plan for the property based on future needs....such as community meeting hall, town office, etc.
- Continue use by Granny's Attic
- Would need to know financial factors to have a good idea of what to do, but I support retaining it.
- Use for town functions. Retirement parties, weddings, graduations, plays. We need a big space that has better acoustics than the gym at the school.
- this historical building has cost the town of south hero alot of money in the steeple restoration as of this date...the non profit organization that now occupys this space is not self sufficient...they require money from the town each year to continue their operations...i would like to see the building sold and put back on the tax roles of the town....some new business person may renovate the building and put in new spaces for a greater use of the building...the town does not need another town space as we have a nice school gym to hold wedding receptions and the town meeting and etc...lets stop wasting our tax dollar...we who are struggling to pay the current property tax are sick of the town throwing away our money...lets be more aware of where we spend our money....
- Don't take away Granny's attic!

- Expand the space for other nonprofits and run granny's attic year-round
- A place for various groups to use...playgroups for local kids to get together parents and the children, afternoon activity place for school age kids, evenings can also host adult activities, etc

First Floor

Question 2c. Other ideas and comments:

New construction of town office space and or police offices as well as meeting space

- Granny's Attic is almost an icon of South Hero, is a great place staffed by the hundreds of volunteer hours given by its dedicated supporters. I love Granny's Attic and they do great work by supporting so many local non-profits. But it must be self sustaining and not be subsidized in any way by the taxpayers of South Hero. Do they pay rent, utilities, maintenance and upkeep? I have asked and but not received an adequate response so don't know. I could see that it could increase receipts if it had higher inventory turns and longer hours.
- "B" is a good option but new town offices better idea.
- Granny's Attic needs to price their stuff to sell- not just store it
- Have never seen the space, other than entrance and stairs up to Granny's. [Question 2b] Possible if it's feasible financially?!
- Use the entire building as granny's attic.
- The multi purpose space makes the most sense as long as the historical value is maintained.
- Possible town office or sale of building with preservation stipulation.
- Relocate our town offices to the first floor.
- Move our town offices to the first floor; renovate our current town office building for Community use
- Again not sure why this question is coming up after the huge expense already spent in it.
- Perhaps it could be flexible for both uses?
- Grannies Attic storage is ok until renovations begin but not afterwards. I agree both first (and second floors) should be used for meetings, small gatherings, art activities, hunter safety courses, boys & girl scout mtg's, etc.
- Either
- musical events, art exhibits, guest speakers, etc.
- 1st Floor Accessibility is better (obviously!).
- Free distribution for Habitat for Humanity

- I think it would be important to preserve the historic aspects of this building and then maybe sell it as a potential bed and breakfast with a small restaurant on first floor.
- If Granny's attic had access to the first floor I believe they would use the space for bigger items that come in, ie. furniture, not for storage. As to having it used for dances and weddings, there would have to be a major renovation of the whole building. Who will pay for it??
- Town offices and tear down existing town office for parking lot.
- We already have that....the Congregational Church and Viva Marketplace.. Does it (the building) qualify for grants? Depending on how much it costs and if taxes are going to be raised.
- The meeting house is a landmark property that distinguishes South Hero. Keeping it for seasonal use would have the least financial impact on the town.
- New Town Offices
- We have limited community spaces. Grannie's Attic is a community resource but it is open such limited hours (understandable given the volunteer force). It would be good to have the space more widely used.
- Granny's is a very important part of our town. It makes money for us that helps in many ways. I'd like other uses to compliment granny's. Granny's is only open in the summer. What can we use the building for all winter?? If you build it, they will come!! We don't have to know what it is, we just have to fix it up so it is possible!!

Second Floor

Question 3c. Other ideas and comments:

- Again, not enough information to provide a fair response.
- A second floor area for Granny's Attic is not recommended.
- Keep as is.
- Germany's Attic benefits South Hero not only through its donations to town non-profits but as a much needed "reuse, recycle" resource for town residents who want to get rid of things too good for the landfill without driving "off island" to make a donation.
- Please do not boot out Granny's Attic. I donate to this organization and if ever needed, I know I can get things there. If you did not allow a Dollar Store in to South Hero...then please remember the poor as you develop
- Until egress is improved the building should not be used. Then a fair rental agreement could be arranged. No more free ride.
- Find a space to continue shop. "b" is a great idea.
- This use of 2nd floor might require installation of an elevator for handicap access in favor of elevator if needed, if one is not already in use?
- Grannys attic may have outlived it's usefulness
- Why was this not considered in the reconditioning of the cupola
- Grannies attic could continue to use second floor only until renovations begin. Grannies Attic needs to continue operating, they provide an amazing service on a volunteer basis, the money they earn and donate to various organizations is wonderful.
- Keep Granny's Attic!
- leave it alone!
- If it isn't sold to an independent entity, continue to use for Granny's Attic (increase space to full building use).
- Retail space? Office space?
- Free distribution of goods.
- The bottom line is, what is it going to cost taxpayers? I would hate to see an Historical building torn down. This building has been used by Granny's Attic for years. My understanding is that they have contributed thousands of dollars to the community from hard working volunteers. I

would think people who have contributed items to Granny's Attic, would love the money to flow back in to our community. Why would you want to change that??

- Using second floor for these events would be difficult. Elevator. Too many stairs.
- Good ideas for another space in town. It would be great to have more private development along Route 2!
- Meeting space for town gatherings
- All depends on finances to make sure the use is sustainable.

Other Questions

Question 7. Other comments and/or ideas:

- If financially plausible, would prefer to keep and use. Would be interested in knowing the costs to upgrade and bring to code for public events and am looking forward to seeing this info being made available to residents. We need to determine it's highest and best use, and I don't know what that is! ** I love how the group is involving the community in the decision making process and thanks for letting us complete online!
- Only after development plan (outline various options first). I have an interest in the planning phases - as a professional land use planner and recently retired Director of Campus Planning for University of Vermont, I have experience in similar types of projects. I also have a very comfortable experience working with the State Historic Preservation Office and would be happy to assist as liason with them directly.
- Time to make more space for town offices several office spaces could be provided as well as a meeting room.
- Use contemporary materials when appropriate
- Keep Granny's Attic. It is a fun place to stop at every week.
- This question[question 4] was written to confuse people. Need to retain exterior historic integrity.
- Question 4 is meaningless.... it is not the type of question that can be answered by any sort of agreement or disagreement.
- It is imperative that we maintain this historical building. I also feel that Grannie's Attic should not be pushed out. They have provided amazing financial support to our local organizations. But, I also understand that the building needs to be sustainable. Possibly renting a portion so building is multi use. I would also point out that parking is an issue that needs to be addressed and not pushed to the back burner. It is a problem already with the restaurant and continues to be a problem.
- I can help with the planning now and when I retire I can help with the operations then.
- I think it sounds like a great idea, however, I primarily live in California, and therefore cannot currently commit to helping operate and maintain the space. I can commit to donating funds to help restore the building.
- No grants!
- Sell the property.
- There are enough old buildings in VT. Tear it down and join the 21st century.

- I am deeply opposed to using any state grants to pay for any improvements.
- No grants involved in funding.
- It's Historic - must be renovated and preserved!
- Granny's Attic should give up old 3 bay red garage @ back of property. Granny's Attic should only be given use of 1st floor 2 garage areas if the old 3 bay fire garage is demolished. New space should be replacement, not expansion for Granny's Attic. Committee needs to publically report that there is no septic or restroom in old white meeting house!
- Charge Blue Paddle to use of parking.
- #6 because of our mobility and are not conducive to be much help
- I think the community as a whole would support fundraising and volunteering
- There must be a grant program out there for historic building preservation. Should have been done when the money was spent for the cupola.
- Definitely keep Granny's Attic which is a draw for locals and tourists and which gives valuable funding to community organizations.
- Thx for including community in this process!
- Keep it as a seasonal use building for Granny's Attic. The help all the non-profit groups in South Hero and the island communities. Please allow Granny's to expand into the whole first floor after the area has been renovated.
- We are in favor of keeping the building and fixing it up, hopefully for things that will be a benefit to the town: farmers markets, events, etc. However, we don't feel we know enough about the financials to make meaningful recommendations.
- Does Granny's Attic make a profit? Are there enough volunteers?
- 20-year summer residents
- With all the money going to build new homes and buying up all the green spaces...there should be some to do all that needs to be done and to let Granny's Attic continue. It's not all about the \$\$\$ and taxes. Let South Hero be South Hero.
- South Hero is really missing a town center. We'd love to see more private development along Route 2. It would be nice to have a village like Jeffersonville with a diner, coffee shop, small attractions - a situation that is walkable with sidewalks.
- Sorry we won't be able to help out. We're moving out of town soon.
- Between health, age, and distance we're unable to help with the project.

- Perhaps the V&W would agree to use and manage the hall
- Granny's Attic has done so much for the town why would anyone want to change this? These ladies give so much of their time.