

Van Gyzen Hall Study Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 3, 2015
Dighton Town Hall, 979 Somerset Avenue, Dighton, MA 02715

Starting time: 6:02pm
Ending time: 7:45pm
Total meeting time: 83 minutes

The Van Gyzen Hall Study Committee held its second meeting to weigh options for the future of the hall. Committee members Mr. Robert Mullen (Chairman), Mr. Brett Zografos (Clerk), Mr. Jack Taylor, Ms. Myrna Santos, Mr. Donald Hirschy, and Mr. James Ready were present. Mr. James Aguiar was in absentia.

The Committee weighed the positives and negatives of several alternative uses for the hall: a Town Annex, a community center, a senior center, moving prime time, a library, selling it, and the possibility of the Native Americans relocating from Grange Hall to Van Gyzen Hall while converting Grange Hall into a Town Annex.

Note: The following alternatives for future use of Van Gyzen Hall are dependent upon upgrades to the building (e.g. additional costs) that will make the structure code compliant for public use.

A) Town Annex:

Pros

- alleviates space for offices in Town Hall
- center room allows for community meetings
- building is already owned by the town and the infrastructure already exists, which saves costs and is less expensive than expanding current Town Hall
- enough space to include a meeting room for veterans

Cons

- additional costs to renovate the interior
- old building
- town offices would be separated
- remote location

B) Community Center:

Pros

- currently do not have one
- would be for public use
- would give our residents a sense of community and togetherness
- could be rented out to residents at a charge
- possibly could be used by Leo's, Lions, and Dighton Historical Society

Cons

- need a director for scheduling
- interior renovations could be costly due to the need to remove the bar and kitchen

C) Senior Center:

Pros

- could be part of the community center

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Cons

- limited parking
- interior renovations could be costly

D) Selling:

Pros

- revenue from sale would go back to the town into the general fund
- would save on costs from maintenance
- increased tax revenue

Cons

- only one of 2 buildings that the town owns outright
- may encounter zoning issues because Van Gyzen Hall resides in a residential area

E) Moving Prime Time:

Pros

- minimum cost to expand Annex
- has good-sized meeting room
- already has parking, septic, water, electricity, and air conditioning

Cons

- could be costly to renovate interior of the hall
- must deal with Council on Aging
- potential zoning issues
- remote location

F) Library:

Pros

- Van Gyzen Hall is a little bigger than the current library

Cons

- Van Gyzen Hall would need to be completely gutted
- no idea what to do with the old library

G) Conversion of Grange Hall into Town Annex and Relocation of Native Americans to Van Gyzen Hall:

Pros

- Grange Hall is underutilized
- town is already maintaining the building, so no extra costs
- not many renovations needed at Van Gyzen Hall for the Native Americans to relocate there
- Annex would be closer to Town Hall

Cons

- Grange Hall is not much bigger than Van Gyzen Hall
- would need to weigh the cost of renovating Grange Hall against the cost of renovating Van Gyzen Hall
- Grange Hall would need to be made handicapped compliant
- meeting room is smaller than those in Van Gyzen