

Belmont bank building talks stalled

By TIM CAMRATO | Mar 18, 2015

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CITIZEN FILE PHOTO

IN JANUARY, the town of Belmont and LRGH entered into a discussion on use of the old Northway Bank building.

BELMONT — Discussions between the town of Belmont and Lakes Region General Hospital over moving doctors' offices into the old Northway Bank building have come to a standstill, according to Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin.

In January, Beaudin reached out to a hospital official to talk about Belknap Family Healthcare, an affiliated practice

currently located in the Belmont Mill. The doctor's office would have needed to relocate if a warrant article to renovate the mill had passed last week.

A meeting was then held about a week later where the town expressed interest in renting or leasing the bank building to LRGH. Shortly after, Beaudin said the hospital was sending an architect to look at the building and the town expected to hear back in upcoming weeks.

"At this point, we don't know where it stands," Beaudin said on Tuesday.

She said an architect didn't make a visit and the town hasn't had any contact with LRGH since the initial meeting.

"I did send a follow up email prior to Town Meeting but have not heard back at this point," Beaudin said.

LRGH Marketing Associate Liane Clairmont said talks to use the bank building were in an early stage and they aren't yet at a point where information is available.

The Main Street building once housed a post office branch, Provident Bank and Northway Bank prior to being acquired by the McDonough family. After a series of failed Town Meeting votes, it was purchased in 2012 for \$250,000.

If a use can't be found soon, the building might be headed for the wrecking ball. Selectman Ruth Mooney mentioned the building during a meeting on Monday, while selectmen were discussing the Belmont Mill.

She said she's previously tried to get a vote to tear down the building for green space but neither Selectman Jon Pike nor Ronald Cormier would vote on it.

"If they (LRG) don't answer us in six weeks, then I'd say 'yes,'" Pike said.

Cormier said he'd be open for a vote, if someone would be willing to make a motion. None came before the end of the meeting though.

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