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## Belmont Community to have meeting about town buildings Jan. 10

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**BELMONT** — The Belmont Facility Strategy Committee, which has been studying the best use of town-owned buildings, will provide an update on its progress on Thursday, Jan. 10, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting will take place at Belmont High School, focusing on what the committee has learned and offering a chance for the community to ask questions and offer comments to guide the last phase of the Space and Feasibility Study approved by voters last March.

The committee is looking to determine the best long-term option for the police and town hall, and will work to complete a 20-year strategy for all town buildings later this year.



Some past building proposals focused on just the town hall or the police station. The Facility Strategy Committee's aim is to build on those past studies to create a practical 20-year strategy for all town buildings to meet future needs.

Belmont has 11 town buildings, many of which are part of the historically significant Factory Village District, which are eligible for recognition on the National Register of Historic Places. The library is on the National Register, and the Belmont Mill and Village Bandstand are on the State Historic Register.

The police station has major safety and congestion issues, and is the highest priority. The town hall and the library also operate under very congested conditions, while two other town buildings are largely vacant and have no long-term designated purpose, the Belmont Mill and the bank building. The fire department and public works garage have sufficient space or the ability to make minor adjustments at their existing sites. The pavilion and Belmont Beach Bath House are relatively recently constructed and in good condition, and the bandstand was recently relocated and renovated. A plan for renovating and expanding the library was developed, and some exterior improvements made.

The committee's biggest questions include how to address the police station's safety and congestion, congested conditions at town hall and recreation program needs. The committee wonders how much space is needed for these programs in 20 years. The committee is examining the best long-term use of the Belmont Mill and old bank building, looking at the condition of the police station and bank buildings, and their potential for renovation.

The committee is looking to develop the strategy for all town buildings that will be completed in 2019.

The study consultant looked at projected town space needs in the next 20 years, based on standard space requirements for municipal facilities, and found the police department and town Hall functions need double the space they currently use. The Building condition of the police station and bank building were not as good as anticipated, which affects potential renovation costs. There are four options for housing the police department and town hall. Feedback on these options will help finalize the study and the strategy for all town buildings.



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The Belmont Facility Strategy Committee comprises Tom Garfield, Donna Hepp, Carmen Lorenz and Pret Tuthill.