

2016

# Belmont Mill v. Town Hall

## Pros

Queuing needs in the Town Hall for the public at the TC/TC window could be addressed

New office space for the Water Department and Building & Grounds on upper level

Larger Conference Room

Accounting Assistant Office could be located to a larger space

More customer, staff & file space for landuse

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## Cons

Safety – The LU office at times is short staffed on Fridays as the AA only works M-Th so with vacations and inspections occasionally only one staff member is present; one person alone in any building should be avoided

Security concerns are paramount with the current and recurring personal safety issues staff faces; at a minimum this would require extending the existing panic alarm system into the mill and closing the annex whenever there were not at least two employees in the facility.

TC Safety – male staff in the Land Use office is helpful when customers at the TC window become loud and unruly – this added TH security would be lost. Much of the “security” currently existing at Town Hall is simply the high visibility of the site as well as the continual traffic in and out of the building based on the number of offices within. The TCTC office and Land Use account for the majority of that traffic. Significantly reducing the traffic by splitting it in half as well as the Mill and offices access being in a very secluded location increases safety concerns for both locations.

LU staff remains in the building at day’s end until all TC customers have left the building –

this is currently at no cost and provides a necessary safety measure

LU is a heavy user of the photocopier and mail machine; this is not only necessary for staff needs which could be “bundled” into a few daily trips, but is on a case by case basis for customers which would need to be done at several unscheduled times during the day. Duplicate equipment would need to be leased or there will be a significant loss in time daily as staff will be coming back and forth potentially in inclement weather which is likely to result in slips and falls during the winter

Computer Network Access – cost for wiring, etc. and potentially server needs

The Town Hall Phone system is linked to the FD and PD; new equipment and wiring would need to be purchased to link the Mill to the existing system

Access to shared files would be difficult; building/land use and assessing files are accessed by both the TA and land use staff daily, again often with an immediate need to serve a customer, and if assessing is not moved, the LU staff would again need to be back and forth for file review

TH staff currently shares office coverage during vacations, sick days and other absences; moving 5-6 potential staff members to another building will short staff Town Hall during these times. Undoubtedly some offices including the landuse offices will be closed when staff is away or out of the building on town business

LU collects fees throughout the day for building permits, abutter notices, etc., which increases safety concerns. Some fees are paid at the landuse office, but many are assessed there but paid at the TC’s window. So either more money will be collected by the landuse staff (which the auditors won’t support) or many of these customers will just not go to the town hall to pay the fees. Fees collected by the land use

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office must be turned in daily to the TC office; staff will need to make day-end trips to TH carrying money

Town mail is picked up daily by the TC office and then distributed to mail boxes in TH; again staff will need to make daily trips to send/collect mail

Residents coming in for demolition permits or permits to move a building as well as wetland permits must coordinate efforts with the TC office to insure taxes are paid before being issued a permit causing customers to go back and forth between buildings

Handicap access to the lower level is limited to the side entrance which is not readily accessible to the parking lot (right side facing the Mill)

Increased utility costs, heat, electric and internet access

CDBG grant restrictions remain for approximately 3 more years relative to use of the lower level – potential penalty to CDFA would need to be considered

Bringing another building on-line for staff occupancy will increase interior cleaning and maintenance costs as well as requiring immediate and continuing snow and ice cleanup and treatment through work days as is currently provided for town hall.

There is currently only one public access computer which is in the land use office. Used by customers from landuse, assessing and tax collectors office. Will require a second public access system.

Landuse staff currently provides in-house computer support which will no longer be available to other offices increasing IT calls/costs.

A second typewriter will be needed as the only one in the building is in the landuse office.

Relocation will require the moving of landuse plan and file storage in basement.

Landuse public notices will need to be ferried to town hall.

Kitchen facilities will be needed in Mill (fridge, microwave, water cooler, coffee).

9 (including 2 building, 2 water& sewer) of the total 17 staff members currently in the building would be relocated just by moving landuse, building, water & sewer. This isn't "relocating" some offices so much as it's establishing a full second town offices location.

The current staffing of town hall has evolved over many years to be as efficient as possible given available staffing levels and depends heavily on the current interaction and availability of staff members and resources. Most staff members work outside of their "traditional" job descriptions on a daily basis to that end. Cutting those links will result in a loss of efficiency and effectiveness.

Concern over use of parking spaces closest to Mill as the Doctor's office has/and needs many of those spaces for patients.

HVAC issues of varying degrees have always been a concern at the town hall and have continually occurred at the Mill. Full time staff at that location may be a concern.