

**WHITE CLIFFS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – December 18, 2020**

11:00 a.m. – Chairman’s Introduction to Remote Meeting

Chairman Helwig stated that pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the White Cliff Committee will be conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance by members of the public will be permitted.

Chairman Helwig confirmed that the following members and persons were remotely present and could be heard:

Committee Members

Todd Helwig, Committee Chairman - CPC Representative
Norm Corbin, Committee Vice Chair - Historical District Commission Liaison
Julianne Hirsh, Board of Selectmen Liaison
Diana Nicklaus, At-Large Member
Tom Reardon, At-Large Member

Town Staff

John Coderre, Town Administrator
Kathy Joubert, Town Planner
Scott Charpentier, DPW Director

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: September 22, 2020 and October 14, 2020

Ms. Nicklaus moved to approve the meeting minutes for September 22, 2020 as presented and October 14, 2020 as amended. Mr. Reardon seconded the motion. The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Corbin	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Nicklaus	“aye”	Reardon	“aye”
Helwig	“aye”		

PRESENTATION OF FINAL ASSESSMENT AND REUSE STUDY REPORT BY DBVW ARCHITECTS

Martha Werenfels, Nealea Morrison and Eric Busch were remotely present for this presentation. Ms. Werenfels summarized the Final Assessment and Reuse Study Report, report, adding that there is much more detail in the actual 176 page report and deferred to Ms. Morrison to begin.

Ms. Morrison reviewed the history of the property and summarized the assessment as follows:

- Building is generally in sound condition
- Main sloped roof is in fair to poor condition
- Flat roofs are in very poor condition
- Areas requiring immediate attention include repair or replacement of skylight and chimney flashings; installation of new roofs at turrets; secure or remove flat-roofed additions; and secure building from intrusion and vandalism

Ms. Morrison reviewed the Phase I work, completed and not completed as follows:

Phase I work completed:

- Sloped roof replacement
- Flat roof replacement at turrets
- Flashing and cricket replacement at chimneys
- Skylight repair
- Repair of fire damaged roof framing and sheathing
- Dormer restoration

Phase I work not completed:

- Restoration of south chimney
- Removal of reroofing of flat roofed additions

Ms. Werenfels noted that the reason that the above two items were not addressed was that financially the cost of the work was above and beyond the available funds for Phase I of the project.

Ms. Werenfels noted that the original reuse options included the following: residential use, cultural use, municipal use, hospitality/event use, educational use and commercial use. Following a review and analysis of each option, the Committee narrowed the options to 3 potential uses: residential, municipal and hospitality/event.

At the Committee's September 22, 2020 meeting, the following 3 options were reviewed in detail: residential, municipal and hospitality/event. As the proposals for each reuse were expensive, the Committee requested that the architect propose a fourth option that would, at a minimum, preserve the existing building.

At the Committee's October 14, 2020 meeting, the team presented a fourth option – "Preservation Lite". After hearing and discussing the project scope and fee proposal, the Committee approved the "Preservation Lite" option as the least costly approach. Without having to designate a specific use for the building, this option would allow for the minimum amount of work necessary to stabilize the building for the time being. This option would also allow for partnership with potential private sector entities to fully restore the building at some point in the future.

Eric Busch presented the market/ feasibility analysis portion of the report. Financial costs for each option were as follows:

- Hospitality/Event Use (Options 1A – rental event space in existing building & 1B – rental event space in existing building + addition) - \$10-15M range
- Municipal Use – \$30M range
- Residential Use – \$20M range
- Preservation Lite – \$6M range

In conclusion, Ms. Werenfels noted the following:

- The building is in relatively sound condition
- Most sources of active infiltration have been addressed (excluding additions)
- More work is required by the Town in short term, including restoration to the South chimney and the removal or repair of the addition
- 4 reuse options were presented, discussed and evaluated
- All have financial shortcomings
- Event space is most feasible
- “Preservation Lite” strategy may be needed to de-access the building

Ms. Werenfels stated that now that DBVW has completed and presented the Reuse Study Report, it is up to the Town to identify potential funding and ownership strategies for the “Preservation Lite” approach.

Ms. Werenfels and Mr. Busch answered several questions from Committee members in regard to the “Preservation Lite” option. Mr. Coderre clarified that a portion of the \$6M for the “Preservation Lite” option could be offset if a private entity renovates the building and opens it up to the public. Mr. Coderre thanked the representatives of DBVW and their subconsultants for their professionalism and quality of work.

DISCUSSION REGARDING NEXT STEPS INCLUDING POTENTIAL INTERIM CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Coderre noted that at the Committee’s October 14, 2022 meeting, it was agreed that the options that require full restoration of the building are not economically viable. He noted that the Town has paid for the acquisition of the building and land, made some improvements to the building, including a new roof and some minimal restoration to preserve the building envelope. He stated that a potential approach with the “Preservation Lite” option is to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking potential partners in the private sector that would be interested and able to fully restore the building.

Following an explanation of the RFP process, Mr. Coderre noted that some assistance would be needed from an architect and their consultants with the marketing piece of the RFP. He stated that the next step is to repair open windows and rotted areas that need to be secured. Mr. Coderre stated that there is enough remaining funds to pursue an RFP process providing that no major repairs are made, which is risky given the deterioration

of the South chimney. He added that there is a possibility to do both, but at some point additional funds will be needed for the carrying costs.

The Committee discussed the possibility of adding funds to the Community Preservation Committee's Admin fund to use for the RFP process, which would then leave funds in the White Cliffs Budget for any needed emergency repairs. Mr. Coderre stated that he needs to get a better sense of the cost for the RFP consulting services before knowing what funds will remain for repairing the South chimney. He first needs to develop a scope of services for the consultant that the Committee is looking to hire who will then develop a scope of services for the marketing portion of the RFP. By consensus, it was agreed that Mr. Coderre will seek a proposal from Mr. Busch for the marketing consultants and will exercise the quote of approximately \$10,000 to remove and seal up the windows and repair the rotted wood, which are both getting a lot of water infiltration.

Diana Nicklaus left the meeting at 12:55pm.

NEXT MEETING

Mr. Coderre noted that at the Committee's next meeting, he will provide an update on the consultant proposal and schedule a discussion regarding the RFP process. The next meeting date will be determined after he speaks with Mr. Busch to see how long he might need to submit a proposal for the Committee's consideration. Also at the Committee's next meeting, Ms. Joubert will provide information on the zoning uses of the White Cliffs property.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Hirsh moved the Committee vote to adjourn the meeting at 1:00 p.m.; Mr. Corbin seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Corbin	"aye"	Reardon	"aye"
Hirsh	"aye"	Helwig	"aye"

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynda LePoer
Executive Assistant

Documents used during meeting:

1. December 18, 2020 Meeting Agenda
2. Meeting Minutes from September 22, 2020 and October 14, 2020
3. DBVW White Cliffs: Phase III Feasibility and Reuse Final Presentation dated December 18, 2020