Town of Springvale

Town Hall Building Committee

STUDY REPORT

October 8, 2024

Table of Contents

SUMMARY4
NEEDS OF THE TOWN
Indoor restroom4
Address rodent intrusion, persistent rodent waste odor and concerns for mold and air
quality4
Secure storage of voting equipment4
Adequate safe parking5
Other building use and site considerations5
Larger town board meeting room space5
Community meeting room space5
Office space6
Indoor restroom for the recycle attendant6
Outdoor space for potential future park, playground, picnic, and for arts, crafts, flower, fruit and vegetable sales events6
BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE OPTIONS AND COSTS
Option A improves the existing building6
Option B improves the existing building and includes adding restrooms6
Option C constructs a building on the town-owned 1 acre land parcel on the north side of Old B Road
Option D constructs a building at the 1 acre town recycle transfer site on the south side of Old B Road, and moves the recycle transfer site on the north side of Old B Road6
KEY FACTORS REGARDING THE LAND PARCELS
For Options A and B at the Raddatz Road site, a small useable lot area6
For Options A and B at the Raddatz Road site, lot line issues6
• A triangle of land not owned by the town lies between the building and the road7
• The existing building extends approximately seven feet over the north lot line7
For Options C and D at the Old B Road sites, zoning issues
Planned Development
For Options C and D, slope on the Old B Road north parcel
DESCRIPTION OF THE OPTIONS
Options A and B – existing building8

Option A, existing building without any addition	8
Option B, existing building with an addition	9
Options C and D – new construction	9
Option C, new building on the north side of Old B Road10	0
Option D, new building on the south side of Old B Road10	0
STUDY OF THE OPTIONS	0
The No-Change Option10	0
Options A through D10	0
Building codes and commercial inspections1	1
FUNDS, REVENUES, OPERATING EXPENSES, AND EFFECT UPON TOWN TAX LEVY1	1
ARPA funds1	1
Supplemental County and Municipal Aid to the town beginning in 202412	2
Maintenance of effort for fire and EMS12	2
Potential Utility Aid increase to the town related to solar electric generation13	3
Langdon Mills solar facility projected revenues1	3
Earlier utility aid projections for the Langdon Mills project	3
Recent utility aid timing projection for the solar project13	3
Borrowing approaches14	4
Operating expenses	4
Property insurance costs	5
Effect upon town tax levy1	5
Municipal finance advisors10	6
COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM	6
RISK MANAGEMENT	6
Renovation risk10	6
New construction risk	7
Well and sanitary risk1	7
Responsible bidder risk1	7
HISTORY OF TOWN HALL REPLACEMENT EFFORTS	8
1995 annual town meeting town hall building reserve fund	8
Town Of Springvale Comprehensive Plan 2030 adopted 2008, page 88	8
STUDY APPROACH	8

SUMMARY

The Springvale Town Board at its June 2024 meeting appointed the committee and asked it to study the needs of the town for a town hall building.

The following issues had been raised in recent years.

- Indoor restroom
- Rodent intrusion, persistent rodent waste odor and concerns for mold and air quality
- Provide secure on-site storage for voting equipment
- Adequate and safe parking also arose as an issue during the committee's study.

The committee studied three major alternatives:

- 1. Do nothing
- 2. Renovate the existing building
- 3. Build new

As a result, the committee led the study of four options, A through D, for improving or replacing the town hall. In July, the town board asked the committee to study Option A. and contracted with Jewell Associates Engineers, Inc. to study options B, C, and D.

This document provides the Town Hall Building Committee's review of how the four options meet the needs of the town.

NEEDS OF THE TOWN

Indoor restroom

Indoor restroom with toilets and sinks are needed to serve town board attendees, election workers and voters, in place of portable toilets.

Address rodent intrusion, persistent rodent waste odor and concerns for mold and air quality

Future rodent intrusion needs to be prevented, and remediation of rodent waste odors and possible mold needs to be addressed. Attempts over the years to block out rodents have been unsuccessful. Rodents have repeatedly found a way to borrow under the shallow foundation and make their way into the walls and attic.

Secure storage of voting equipment

Clerks across the state receive training to keep voting equipment locked in a secure area. The state Election Administration Manual for Wisconsin Municipal Clerks says:

General Electronic Voting System Security Procedures

 Throughout the life of the electronic voting system, the municipal or county clerk maintains control of all memory devices and keys to the voting systems. Access to voting equipment is to be strictly controlled and granted in a secure manner at all times. Document authorized access to secured components by election officials. This documentation serves as a chain of custody showing who has accessed the voting equipment outside of election day, when, and why. [highlighting added for this report]

The Manual also says:

Secure Storage of Voting Equipment

 The need for proper voting equipment security does not stop at the end of election day. Once the polls have closed, municipal and county election officials must ensure that the voting equipment used in their jurisdiction is stored securely until the next election. This means more must be done than simply putting the equipment out of the way somewhere in the clerk's office. WEC recommends placing voting equipment in a locked and secured area within the clerk's office that is only accessible by the clerk or another authorized individual. Voting equipment can be stored in the municipal clerk's office, the office of the county clerk, or at an agreed upon, and secure, third location. Wis. Stat. §7.21(5). [highlighting added for this report]

Adequate safe parking

Parking capacity and parking safety needs to be improved. Options A and B don't address these issues. Even with moving the building to the west, it's expected that attendees won't "park in" the vehicles of other attendees. Thus, parking is only available on-site for about 8 vehicles.

On voting days or meetings with larger attendance, some attendees find they need to park on the road shoulder. Or some potential attendees may decide not to attend.

Other building use and site considerations

Larger town board meeting room space. Options C and D, a new town hall, would provide approximately 780 square feet of space to accommodate town meetings with larger than usual attendance.

Community meeting room space. Options C and D, a new town hall, would accommodate potential uses by residents for such things as 4-H, scouting, cards, birthday parties, family gatherings, etc.

Office space. Options C and D, a new town hall, would provide office space for current or future elected officials.

Indoor restroom for the recycle attendant. If the town hall were located on Old B Road, the restroom would be available for the recycle attendant on Saturday mornings.

Outdoor space for potential future park, playground, picnic, and for arts, crafts, flower, fruit and vegetable sales events. Options C and D would provide opportunities with outdoor space and restrooms could be opened as appropriate.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE OPTIONS AND COSTS

Option A improves the existing building on the half-acre site on Raddatz Road, with no addition to the building. The estimated cost is \$200,675 plus a 25 percent contingency of \$43,625 for a total of \$244,300.

Option B improves the existing building and includes adding restrooms on to the building. The estimated cost is \$223,100 plus a 20 percent contingency of \$55,775 for a total of \$278,875.

Option C constructs a building on the town-owned 1 acre land parcel on the north side of Old B Road across from the town recycle transfer site. The estimated cost is \$447,500 plus a 15 percent contingency of \$67,125 for a total of \$514,625

Option D constructs a building at the 1 acre town recycle transfer site on the south side of Old B Road, and moves the recycle transfer site on the north side of Old B Road. The estimated cost is \$465,500 plus a 15 percent contingency of \$69,825 for a total of \$535,325.

KEY FACTORS REGARDING THE LAND PARCELS

For Options A and B at the Raddatz Road site, a small useable lot area

Due to its smaller size, a half-acre site that also includes waterways, slopes and trees, the existing site on Raddatz Road presents space challenges for meeting long term needs and wishes for a town hall site. In addition to the waterways and slopes, zoning requirements for setback from the road and from the property to the line to the north provide few options for the building location.

For Options A and B at the Raddatz Road site, lot line issues

There are two lot line issues at the Raddatz Road site:

- A triangle of land not owned by the town lies between the building and the road. The triangle should be acquired in order that the town own the access to the road. The neighboring landowner has expressed willingness to work with the town.
- The existing building extends approximately seven feet over the north lot line. This requires resolution by acquiring land, or by moving or by removing the building. Efforts are being made to contact the neighboring landowner.

For Options C and D at the Old B Road sites, zoning issues. A town hall may be constructed on either of the two town-owned land parcels on Old B Road:

- a 1-acre parcel where the current recycle transfer site is, and
- a 1-acre parcel across the road to the north in the northeast corner of Old B Road and Welsh Prairie Road.

Planned Development. The committee explored the possibility of a "Planned Development" method of zoning to possibly consolidate a new town hall and recycle on the same parcel, allowing those uses not only on the same side of Old B Road, but allowing for less land required.

This has not panned out but is reported here for information.

In general, zoning regulations don't allow a town hall on the same one acre land parcel as a recycle transfer operation. Each land use would require its own parcel with a minimum lot size of one acre.

The committee explored with Columbia County Zoning staff the use of Planned Development provisions of the zoning ordinance to allow both a town hall and recycle on the same site.

If approved, a Planned Development can allow for uses from more than one zoning district such as Commercial and Industrial. This could reduce the total land requirement below two acres.

The town explored with neighboring landowners the possibility of obtaining additional land on the north and south side of Old B Road in order to have a single larger parcel to accommodate both recycle and a town hall. Both landowners considered the idea but have declined further interest.

The committee believes that the existing rectangular one-acre town-owned parcel on the north side of Old B Road is too small for both recycle and town hall due to the slope of the north half of the parcel.

The committee observes that the one acre site on the south side of Old B Road may also be a bit too small for both uses.

Therefore, because both north and south side one-acre parcels appear too small to accommodate both uses, the Planned Development zoning approach won't work.

The reasonable options for new construction on Old B Road are Options C and D with recycle and town hall on opposite sides of the road.

Commercial versus industrial land use. A town hall is a "Commercial" zoning use, and the recycle transfer site is an "Industrial" land use. Those two uses can't be on the same parcel unless the Planned Development approach is pursued and approved.

Therefore, the options for placing a town hall on Old B Road are:

- **Town hall on the north, recycle on the south.** Place a town hall on the rectangular one-acre town-owned site on the north side of Old B Road and keep the recycle on the square one-acre site on the south side of the road.
- Town hall on the south and recycle on the north. Place a town hall on the townowned recycle site and move the recycle use to the north side of the road.

For Options C and D, slope on the Old B Road north parcel. The slope to the north on the north half of the rectangular parcel on the north side of Old B Road makes that portion of the parcel less than ideal as either a building location or a recycle location

DESCRIPTION OF THE OPTIONS

Options A and B – existing building

Options A and B would include constructing a new foundation to the south and west with crawl space and moving the building to that new foundation.

The building straddles the lot line to the north and is too close to the road to allow structural improvements under zoning regulations.

This approach of moving the building to the south and west would meet "front yard" and "side yard" zoning requirements. It would not require acquiring land to the north but would still require acquiring the triangle of land to the east.

Option A, existing building without any addition

Restrooms would be built inside the building. The meeting room is further reduced in size.

The small triangle of land between the building and the road needs to be acquired to meet zoning requirements. The committee believes this would not be a major obstacle because the landowners have expressed willingness to work with the town.

For this option, planning and budgeting should be done for two restrooms. A variance can be requested from the state to require only one restroom, but approval is not certain.

Option B, existing building with an addition

Restrooms would be built in an addition, and room for secure storage for election equipment would be added within the existing building.

While this option addresses the needs that were the reason for the study, it does so at high cost for what one gets. The meeting room is further reduced in size, and the small parking availability is also further reduced.

The same as for Option A, the small triangle of land between the building and the road needs to be acquired to meet zoning requirements. The committee believes this would not be a major obstacle because the landowners have expressed willingness to work with the town.

For this option, planning and budgeting should be done for two restrooms. A variance can be requested from the state to require only one restroom, but approval is not certain.

The same as for Option A, for this option without office space, a holding tank would be allowed per meeting at with Columbia County sanitary staff at Portage August 9, 2024, and per telephone discussion confirmation September 9, 2024.

Options C and D – new construction

Options C and D would be on a concrete slab, with frost wall foundations and no crawl space.

In addition to the benefits offered by Options A and B, both of Options C and D offer the following additional benefits:

- Larger meeting space allowing for tables for use by attendees in addition to tables for elected officials.
- Improved ADA access to the building, with no slope or smaller slope from parking to the door.
- Indoor restroom available for the recycle site attendant on Saturdays.
- More meeting room space for town board meetings and other meetings.
- More parking.

- Office space for current or future town board members, town clerk and town treasurer.
- Sufficient space in the meeting room for possible community activities and meetings of local clubs and groups such as cards, 4-H, scouts, birthday parties and family gatherings.
- On the site(s), potential future park, playground or picnic space

Option C, new building on the north side of Old B Road.

A new building would be placed on the town-owned parcel in the northeast corner of the intersection of Old B Road and Welsh Prairie Road.

Option D, new building on the south side of Old B Road

A new building would be placed on the town-owned recycle transfer site parcel on the south side of Old B Road at the intersection with Welsh Prairie Road; and the recycle transfer operation on the south side would be relocated to the town-owned parcel in the northeast corner of the intersection of Old B Road and Welsh Prairie Road.

STUDY OF THE OPTIONS

The committee evaluated each option, including a No-change option for how well it meets the current and potential future needs of the town.

The No-Change Option

The No-change option --- no improvement and no new construction -- would mean that the key needs found in this study would continue unaddressed.

Options A through D

All four options studied address three of the four key needs found in this study except that of adequate and safe parking:

- Indoor restroom
- Address rodent intrusion, persistent rodent waste odor and concerns for mold and air quality
- Secure storage of voting equipment

In addition, all four options address other needs of the existing building.

- Improved ADA access
- Improved ADA parking
- Improved lighting

• Reduce the loud furnace noise

Options C and D, but not Options A and B, also address adequate and safe parking.

Building codes and commercial inspections

Compliance with commercial building codes, not residential dwelling codes, is required when the public or employees will enter a building.

Each option must be constructed to meet not only ADA standards, but also to meet required commercial building codes for ventilation, restroom, fire safety and insulation/energy efficiency.

A commercial building inspection is required before an occupancy permit is issued.

FUNDS, REVENUES, OPERATING EXPENSES, AND EFFECT UPON TOWN TAX LEVY

The committee looked at likely future revenues, likely project costs, and likely borrowing sources, and at the likely effect on town taxes.

ARPA funds

The town in recent years received \$54,000 in federal ARPA (American Recovery Plan Act) money. It has carried the money over from year to year. As reported at the August 6, 2024 town board meeting, the balance of the ARPA money with interest was \$54,796.32.

If by December 31, 2024, the ARPA money is not used or a contract signed for its use, the town must return the money to the federal government.

The money can be used for any public use, except that it may not be used as matching money for other grants.

The town had been reserving the ARPA funds for possible town hall improvements or construction.

As the end of 2024 nears, the town is using the ARPA funds for general town expenditures including to pay for the current study of town hall building improvements or construction.

To use the money before the end of 2024, the town board might choose to use the funds by contracting in 2024 for additional road improvements in 2025. This could be considered "catching up" or "getting ahead" with respect to road improvements. In that case, in 2025 town funds normally devoted to road improvements could be applied to town hall costs.

At the August 2024 meeting, the town board directed some expenditures from the account in order to ensure the money would not need to be returned to the federal government at year's end.

Supplemental County and Municipal Aid to the town beginning in 2024

Beginning in 2024 Wisconsin towns receive a new additional category of annual state aid, **Supplemental** County and Municipal Aid.

The Town of Springvale is receiving \$39,059 in this new category in 2024.

This is in addition to the longstanding County and Municipal Aid category in which the town is receiving \$6,418 in 2024.

Background. These county and municipal aid categories are often referred to under a general term of state shared revenues.

2023 Wisconsin Act 12 created the new Supplemental County and Municipal Aid category. This new category is viewed as a "once in a generation" change that is likely to continue for many years or even decades.

The amounts of the two aid county and municipal aid categories increase by the percentage change in state sales and use tax revenues in the prior state fiscal year over the preceding state fiscal year.

In September of each year, the Wisconsin Department of Revenue notifies local governments by letter of the original estimate for the following calendar year.

Also in September of each year, the Department notifies of the revised and final amount for the current year. Therefore, the final amount for a current year may vary by a small amount from the original estimate provided in September a year earlier.

A Wisconsin Department of Revenue letter dated September 13, 2024 provides the original estimate of County and Municipal Aid of \$6,565 and of Supplemental County and Municipal Aid of \$39,958. This is approximately 2.3 percent greater than 2024 aid figures.

Maintenance of effort for fire and EMS. In general, the Supplemental County and Municipal Aid revenues to the town can be used for any purpose for which a town may make expenditures. There are provisions, however, requiring "maintenance of effort" to ensure that fire and emergency services are not shorted.

Fire and EMS services serving the town certify annually in June to the town that the agency has maintained expenditures, employment and response times at a level not less than that of the prior year. Where a town receives services from more than one agency, the clerk

receives the reports from serving agencies and consolidates the reports into the town report. The Springvale town clerk received such certifications in 2024.

Because the look-back period is the prior year, the maintenance effort level can vary over the years. Any increase or decrease in effort during a year changes the maintenance of effort level for the subsequent year.

Potential Utility Aid increase to the town related to solar electric generation

In addition to county and municipal aid categories, local governments receive Utility Aid payments annually. The town is receiving \$3,305 in Utility Aid in 2024, and the Original estimate from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue for 2025 is \$3,173.

If a solar facility begins operation in the town in the future, the town will receive additional state Utility Aid. The amount of Utility Aid depends on the amount of certain public electricity utility facilities such as generating facilities and substations in a municipality, and on the population of the municipality. Because public utilities are exempt from local property tax, this aid may be viewed as payments-in-lieu-of-taxes. [Note: Information about Utility Aid is from The Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau Informational Paper #22, Shared Revenue Program, County and Municipal Aid and Utility Aid, January 2023.]

Langdon Mills solar facility projected revenues. A final operational date for the Langdon Mills solar project is several years into the future. Therefore this study is not relying on any increase in Utility Aid, but the committee is offering this background information in this report.

Earlier utility aid projections for the Langdon Mills project. A Langdon Mills letter to the town clerk dated July 20, 2023 estimated an annual Utility Aid increase to each of the two towns of Courtland and Springvale of \$216,700 for 2024.

This was providing that the solar project revenue was split equally between the Town of Springvale and the Town of Courtland.

The committee observes that the Langdon Mills project proposed use of more land in Courtland than in Springvale, so the \$216,700 figure likely overstates the potential increase in Utility Aid to Springvale. Generation has not yet begun, so payments have not begun.

Recent utility aid timing projection for the solar project. In addition, a recent email to the town clerk by Eric Callisto representing Langdon Mills stated the company "is anticipating the start of construction late Q2 or Q3 of 2025 (it could slip into Q4 of 2025), with commercial operation anticipated by May of 2027. With that COD date, shared utility revenue payments would begin in November of 2028." Any 2027 production may be for only a few months in 2027, so the first related utility aid payment in November 2028 would be only for a part year.

Borrowing approaches

The committee examined possible borrowing approaches including:

- **General obligation bonds.** From the Wisconsin Towns Association September 2022 document:
 - General obligation bonds may be issued to fund public purpose "projects," as defined in state law, such as highway or building projects. See Wis. Stats. §§ 67.04 and 67.05. General obligation bonds can be useful for very large projects that will take longer than 10 years to pay in full. However, they require more time and higher costs to issue than other borrowing methods, so they are used less frequently than promissory notes. To authorize general obligation bonds, the town or village board must adopt an initial resolution stating the purpose and amount of the proposed bonds. In towns, the town electors must then vote at either an annual or special town elector meeting to authorize the town board to issue the bonds. See Wis. Stat. § 60.10(2)(d). In both towns and villages, these bonds also generally require electoral approval via a referendum process. [highlighting added for this document.]
- **Promissory notes.** For private lending, such as from a bank, a town has a ten year limit, and may be extended for a second ten years.
- **Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) lending.** The Wisconsin Towns Association information sheet on borrowing dated May 2020 says:

The procedure for taking out a loan from the BCPL is like borrowing on promissory notes, except that the loan essentially comes from the State as opposed to a bank. Further, BCPL loans have no prepayment penalties and come with competitive interest rates. If your town or village would rather borrow from a local bank, you can still leverage the BCPL interest rate into a better rate from your local bank.

The committee recommends borrowing through private lending, namely from a bank, because of its flexibility during construction and later during the term of the loan if interest rates go down. Rates are competitive with the Board of Commissioners.

Operating expenses. Improving the existing building or constructing a new building will increase some building operating expenses, some expenses would remain the same and some would decline or be eliminated.

The expenses for property insurance and heating expenses would increase, and internet expense would be added.

The expenses for liability insurance, snow removal and lawn mowing would be similar to current expenses.

Portable toilet expenses on election days would be eliminated.

Property insurance costs. For an improved or new building, the insurance agent providing the current insurance estimates that the property insurance portion of insurance premiums would rise from \$627 to \$1,363 annually, an increase of \$736.

The insurance agent providing the current insurance is checking into the cost of insurance premiums for private non-official purposes such as club meetings.

During any construction period the insurance agent advises the town to obtain short-term builders risk insurance at an estimated one-time cost of \$50. This would insure a new building during construction. The premium would be refunded when insurance is put in place upon completion of construction.

Effect upon town tax levy

A town hall project would require borrowing by the town. The effects of a town hall project upon the town tax levy would depend upon: The extent to which the town uses regular town funds in 2025 in paying for a town hall project, to replace ARPA funds.

- The town had previously earmarked \$54,000 in ARPA funds for use in improving or replacing the town hall.
 - To avoid having to the return the ARPA funds at the end of 2024, the town is using a portion of the ARPA funds for town hall study costs, and is using the larger remainder for other regular town expenditures such as additional road maintenance.
 - Using some regular 2025 town funds for town hall project expenditures, to in effect replace the ARPA funds used for regular town expenditures in 2024, would reduce the amount borrowed for a town hall project. This would reduce future loan payments and thus the effects upon town levy.
- The final amount borrowed
- The other borrowing terms of interest rate and duration of a loan
- The revenue elements described in the above section regarding:
 - The new supplemental county and municipal aid category
 - Maintenance of fire/EMS effort related to this category
 - o The traditional county and municipal aid
 - Potential increases in utility aid due to planned solar electric facility start up in a future year.

Municipal finance advisors. Municipal finance advisor companies are available for a fee to assist the town in evaluating effects upon town levy, and in considering borrowing options and pursuing borrowing.

COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM

Some residents have suggested that the improved or new town hall could be made available for community use, for example for scouting and FFA meetings and for cards and other gatherings such as birthday parties, perhaps including a small use fee.

Even if a small fee is charged, experience by other towns is that these fees often do not cover the additional heating and cooling costs, cleaning costs, and insurance premiums.

An additional way of thinking about this is that like a playground or park, the town hall belongs to the community and break-even isn't needed for these types of community-building activities.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The purpose of risk management is to reduce risks. This is done by brainstorming potential problems, identifying an identification method, assessing the likelihood and the impact of the occurrence, and then planning avoidance and remediation strategies.

Renovation risk

In renovation projects, hidden physical problems may appear. In the case of renovation of the town hall, for example, the committee is aware of:

- The east wall bows inward slightly. This seems to have a low likelihood of concern, and thus low impact.
- The north wall bows inward significantly. This appears to be extreme and may make application of new siding difficult. Strategy: If necessary, replace studs and outer wall boards/sheathing on north wall before applying siding.
- The sill timbers or sill plates and rim boards on the north may be rotted because the soil rises to near the level of the sill. Identify when raising the building for moving, and if necessary, replace timbers/sill plates/rim boards.
- The floor in the north one-third of the building flexes unduly. Strategy: Install additional floor joists as needed to meet standard.
- The walls may not have "fire-blocking" to prevent the travel of fire from the main floor to the attic. Strategy: If necessary, install blocking as needed to meet code requirements.
- Windows and doors may not have structural headers. Strategy: If necessary, install headers.

- Door sills and substructure may be rotted due to water intrusion: Strategy: If necessary, replace door sill and substructure portions.
- Wall bracing may not meet code requirements. Strategy: If necessary, install bracing or sheathing to meet code.
- Rafters may not meet code requirements for fastening to wall structure. Strategy: If necessary, install tie-downs to meet code.
- Rodents may have damaged the structure. Strategy: Repair as needed.
- Rodent waste and mold may require remediation in walls and attic. Strategy: See other section on this subject.

New construction risk

In new construction projects, risks may appear in finding subsurface problems. A cheese factory was previously located on the south side of the road, with liquid waste disposed of on the north side of the road. Small likelihood and small impact risks may arise:

- Foundations or other building materials or personal property may have been covered over by dirt, causing potential problems of non-liquid waste disposal or of foundation construction. Strategy: Identify any non-liquid waste disposal issues, and remove to proper waste location. Identify any foundation, building materials or personal property. Remove and dispose of properly as required.
- A well may not have been properly capped. Strategy: Properly cap any unused well.

Well and sanitary risk

To reduce the risk of going down a path more costly than expected, if the town decides to pursue one of these options, the committee recommends:

- If land acquisition is part of the option selected, as a first step, complete any land acquisition.
- Although confirmations on well and sanitary have been received, to ensure the selected parcel is buildable, it may be advisable to examine well and sanitary locations in detail and obtain sanitary and well permits before contracting for detailed building and site design. Determine that a well and sanitary system can be economically placed on the selected parcel.

Responsible bidder risk

State law requires that building construction projects be awarded through a bid process, and further that the bid be awarded to the "lowest responsible bidder." The town should ensure responsible bidder criteria are in place in order to help avoid the problems associated with awarding to a low bidder that can't competently and efficiently complete the work.

The vendor managing the bid process for the town can assist with stating and enforcing responsible bidder criteria.

HISTORY OF TOWN HALL REPLACEMENT EFFORTS

Replacement or improvement of the town hall is not a new topic. Although residents recall earlier discussions about building a new town hall, no effort of that type has progressed as far as the current effort. Here is the history that has come to the attention of the committee.

1995 annual town meeting town hall building reserve fund. The April 1995 Town of Springvale annual town meeting notes record the adoption of a motion by Warren O'Brion "to set up a building reserve fund of about \$10,000 annually to be amendable each year." We have found no evidence that such a fund was set up.

Town Of Springvale Comprehensive Plan 2030 adopted 2008, page 88. The 2008 town comprehensive plan makes this statement about the town hall.

"4.4.17.1 Springvale Town Hall

Each Town government in Columbia County operates a town hall. The town halls are used to conduct town government meetings and to serve as an administrative office for each town. The Town of Springvale Town Hall is located on Raddatz Road in the Town of Springvale. The facility was constructed in 1850. No plans for a new facility exist at this time, however there is some demand for a community center to serve Town residents. Should the need for a new town hall arise in the future, consideration should be given to including a community center in the facility. The locations of town halls in Columbia County including the Town of Springvale are illustrated on Map 4-11 in Appendix I." [underline added for this report]

STUDY APPROACH

The committee used the following criteria to study the four options:

- 1) How well does each option address the major needs for the long term?
- 2) How well does each option address other wishes such as adequate and safe parking,
- 3) How well does each option address other considerations such as ADA access and, potential community use, for example as a community meeting center, and for potential future playground and park uses?
- 4) Is the option cost effective, meaning does the town get a lot or a little for the money?
- 5) Is the option affordable in light of town financial resources?

End of document