Town of Chapel Hill
HISTORIC TOWN HALL COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 3, 2017, at 5:30 p.m.
Southern Human Services Center, Board Room
2501 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Meeting Agenda

Members: Council Member Sally Greene (Chair), Moses Carey, Joel Curran, Richard Ellington, Josh Gurlitz, Commissioner Penny Rich, Alan Rimer, Lee Storrow and Chela Tu.

1. **Opening**
   a. **Roll Call**
   b. **Approval of Minutes**
   c. **Approval of Agenda**

2. **Business**
   a. **Presentation on Historic Town Hall Committee**

      Background: The presentation will cover the Historic Town Hall committee's formation, charge, and work to-date.

      Action Item: No action is anticipated.

   b. **Public Discussion**

      Background: The committee and community members will discuss the possible future use of Historic Town Hall for a purpose related to local history and culture.

      Action Item: No action is anticipated.

3. **Public Comment**

4. **Adjournment**

Meeting Materials

Minutes from March 22, 2017 and April 13, 2017 Meetings

Presentation on Historic Town Hall

Opportunity Statement: The Inter-Faith Council for Social Services is proceeding with plans to vacate Historic Town Hall. A recommendation is needed regarding the future use and occupancy of this building.

Goal: A Historic Town Hall Committee will represent the interests of the Town of Chapel Hill and Orange County to consider the opportunity to renovate the Historic Town Hall building at 100 West Rosemary Street as a Visitor's

Center, a History Center, or both for possible occupancy by the Chapel Hill and Orange County Visitor's Bureau, Chapel Hill Historical Society, and/ or Chapel Hill Museum.

Public Charge: The Historic Town Hall Committee pledges its respect to the public. The Committee asks the public to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous manner, both with the Committee and with fellow members of the public. Should any member of the Committee or any member of the public fail to observe this charge at any time, the Chair will ask the offending person to leave the meeting until that individual regains personal control. Should decorum fail to be restored, the Chair will recess the meeting until a genuine commitment to this public charge is observed.

Process to Consider Possible Future Use of Historic Town Hall



Committee Formation

- Established to consider the possible future use of Historic Town Hall as a **Visitor's and History Center**.
- Includes a **committee structure** and will culminate with a **report and recommendation** to the Council.

Historic Town Hall

- Corner of Rosemary St. and Columbia St.
- Built in 1938
- Town-Owned
- Occupied by IFC Community Kitchen



Context



Petition

Report to Council
June 27, 2016

As you know, many citizens of Chapel Hill were disappointed when our Town decided it could no longer afford a museum and were unwilling to support it with any funds. (As a former Chair of the Board, I was particularly disappointed.) We now are pursuing a unique opportunity to open a new museum and relocated Visitor's Center in the old town hall once vacated by the IFC Kitchen. This is a brief summary of the activities that have taken place with regard to the utilization of the old town hall as a relocated Orange County Visitor's Center and Chapel Hill Museum.

- Met with the Orange County Visitor's Bureau Board and made a presentation on the proposal. I believe it is safe to that the general concept of combining the Visitors Center with the Chapel Hill Museum was met with enthusiasm.
- We have met with the IFC on several occasions to discuss their schedule, look at alternatives for the kitchen and keep lines of communication open.
- We are scheduled to talk with Chancellor Folt after the Fourth of July to enlist the University's support for the idea, provide Chancellor Folt with a similar update to this presentation this evening and explore the potential for some economic aid for the effort.
- We have reviewed the report provided by the County for the upgrade of the old town hall. While a number of us believe that the estimates are on the high side for the repairs that need to be made we recognize that a variety of different sources of funds will be necessary to not only renovate the building but up-fit the space for both the visitor center and the museum.
- We have contacted five old board members of the museum who have expressed an interest in helping in any way to revive the museum.
- We anticipate having a reconstituted Chapel Hill Museum Board of Directors this year who can work in concert with the Visitors Bureau Board of Directors, the Chapel Hill Town Council and the Orange County Board of Commissioners.

Thanks for your enthusiasm and support for this idea.

Rev. Robert Seymour Alan E. Rimer

Committee Partners

TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

ORANGE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA



Visitor's Bureau



CHAPEL HILL
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Committee Discussions

- Introductions, Background and Tour of Historic Town Hall
- Presentations from Visitors Bureau, Chapel Hill Museum, Chapel Hill Historical Society
- Field Trips and Presentations by Museum Professionals

City of Raleigh Museum





Durham History Hub





“I would contend that museums are the greatest available laboratory for studying the problem of how to create interest, and that this problem is central to our quest for survival as a people. . . . What avails it to be surrounded as a race with all the wonders of technological wizardry, temporarily secure on our plundered planet, and simply not care?

“Could it not also be added that by making people interested, aware therefore of the sum of their surroundings, we are doing something more?”

—Dillon Ripley, *The Sacred Grove: Essays on Museums* (1969)

Development Opportunity – Adjacent Property



Discussion Question

- How could a place to connect people to Chapel Hill's history and culture, past and present, be of value to the community?

Discussion Question

- What would such a space need to look like and do to feel like it belonged to the community?

Discussion Question

- Does a future use related to history/ culture resonate for Historic Town Hall?

Next Steps

- Share Notes from this Meeting
- May 22nd Committee Meeting
  - Noon, Chapel Hill Library, Meeting Room C
- Report to Council in June

- www.townofchapelhill.org/historictownhall