

BOROUGH COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO GROUP OPPOSING PROPOSED BOROUGH HALL

At the last council meeting, Mr. Richardson asked why the council had not done anything in response to the opposition to the proposed borough hall. He said there were several proposals and the council had not considered any of them.

While some of you have faithfully attended all council meetings, others have only been able to attend some of the meetings. In an attempt to bring everyone up to date regarding the council's efforts to incorporate some of the opposing ideas in the plan for a new borough hall, I would like to make the following comments.

1. We have investigated using the upstairs of the Public Works Building as the offices for the Construction, Engineering, Zoning and Tax Assessor's Departments. Without a structural review, we will assume this can be done. Robert Sibilia, of Sibilia Construction Management Services has advised that it would probably cost in the neighborhood of \$500,000. This would include bathroom facilities, an elevator and a staircase any other possible requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
2. We revisited a comprehensive report done by Hatch Mott MacDonald and submitted to the borough on March 1, 2013 and entitled "Condition and Damage Assessment Report in the Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. In this report, it is stated that previously, crosswise were placed at two locations in an attempt to stabilize the walls. "...these ties did in fact stabilize the walls for a period of time. However, with reference to Photos 5 and 6 ... the distinct sag exhibited by the cross-ties suggest that these are now offering little support to the walls. This makes the long term service of the building questionable should the building continue to be adversely impacted by additional settlement of the East and West foundation systems."
3. We developed a plan to shrink the square footage of the building by removing the public meeting/courtroom. It was determined that this would save approximately \$250,000 and would not significantly change the size of the building.
4. We had the architect design a different roofline.
5. We have delayed the project by almost one year while other options were considered and while the council and members of the building committee have met with various citizens opposed to the building both in groups and individually.
6. We have hired an outside construction services company to do a value engineering study of the project. We anticipate receipt of the final report in the next few days.

So, please know, WE DO HEAR YOU. We will continue to seek solutions to this enigma. The task of bringing all parts of our municipal government back within our borders, containing them in one or more smaller buildings for less than \$5 million is daunting. But let's not stop trying to work together to find a middle ground that will be acceptable to all.

If you have any questions or comments, I invite you to contact me either by phone (please call my cell as my home phone will be in limbo until we can move back into our home) or by email.