



APPROVED
MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE
ON BUILDING Re-USE MEETING
Wednesday, September 13, 2006 at 7:30 a.m.
Library Site Walk

The Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Building Re-Use met on Wednesday, September 13, 2006 at 7:30 a.m. at the Portsmouth Public Library for a site walk.

Present were public representatives Heather Hurtt, Chair; Tom Heany and Richard Cyr; and present from the City were MaryAnn List, Library Director; Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager; and Jim Dumont, DPW Foreman.

Ms. List began the tour in the Academy Building. She said it was originally built as a boys' college preparatory school in 1806. The building was gutted when it was converted to a library in 1895. The exterior of the building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and Ms. List said it is possible that some interior features such as the staircase and the balcony railing may currently qualify for preservation under the register provisions. The windows are original. There is a complete basement and the building is heated with gas. The library reference desk, several computer terminals and book stacks are located in the Academy Building.

The next area toured was the section of the building constructed in 1976 to annex the Academy Building and the Benedict House. The two-story brick connector houses the library circulation desk, the Children's Room, book stacks, the Portsmouth Room, a meeting room, a staff lounge and public and staff restrooms.

The final area toured was the Benedict House (or more accurately called the Morton House), a three-story single pile house constructed in 1810). This building contains library staff offices and administration equipment (copier, fax etc.). There are wood floors throughout this building and a three story spiral staircase climbs vertically from the original house entrance. Each room contains a brick fireplace. The third floor houses the duct work for the cooling and heating system. The front porch and exterior of the house has much appeal but is in disrepair.

Following the tour the group reviewed building expense models and it was determined that the city would use the model recently used for the South Meeting House as an initial step toward analyzing the costs to operate the building. It was also decided that the 1995 Library Building Assessment by Attar Engineering would be copied for the Committee to review. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 AM

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy M. Carmer, Economic Development Program Manager