

Town Center Buildings Issues to be Addressed

This document has been created by Michael Storrs a member of the Town Center and Library Building Committee in an attempt to identify building issues the committee may want to consider. It is compiled from comments made by town employees and tenants who work in the building, from notes and proposed changes by Black River Design for the 2023 proposal, from a 2018 Facilities Assessment Report from Breadloaf Corporation and from personal observations by committee members.

Safety Issues

There is no accessible fire escape from second floor other than the main staircase. The present fire escape requires people to open the large window in the break room and then climb through the window. There is no lighting or signs directing people to this fire escape.

The fire alarm system does not meet code and regularly fails testing and requires maintenance.

Steps are needed in the Radiate Art space to access the fire escape window.

There is no sprinkler system in this building

Smoke and carbon dioxide sensors should be hardwired and connected to a monitoring agency.

Automatic lighting in stairwell should be installed that comes on when power goes off

Review the locations and adequacy of all fire extinguishers and add additional ones in kitchens

The door from the main stair to the first floor lobby swings in the wrong direction, into lobby space

Storage closet on lower level within egress stairs is not permitted by NFPA requirements

The door, its frame, and wall between the boiler room and the remainder of the floor is not 1-hr fire rated.

Post Office Roof

Post Office roof has leaks and roof membrane may be past its expected useful life

Water Intrusion from Rain and Flooding

Water enters building through stone foundation walls and floor during rain and flood events. This is possibly degrading the basement floor.

Holes on post office foundation block walls allows flood waters to enter pipe trench and basement and also allows access to the building for rodents and insects.

Some improvement with exterior storm water system may be required

If the cost of renovations reaches a certain level it may trigger local zoning requirements and FEMA recommendations for flood mitigation.

Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning	
	Air conditioners are past their expected useful life. They use refrigerant that is banned for new equipment and difficult to obtain for maintenance. They provide no ventilation with outside air which contributes to air quality issues. Two studies in recent years by Black River and Breadloaf have recommended these AC units be replaced with cold weather heat pumps that would provide heating, cooling and ventilation with outside air.
	Air quality in workspaces is not acceptable. Town employees have expressed need for windows to be opened for ventilation and for screens to be used when they are open. Opening windows in an air conditioned space increases energy use. Town employees have also noted that the ventilation ducts in the whole building should be cleaned routinely. Black dust has been noted coming from these ducts. Air quality would likely be made worse if the windows are improved.
	The air quality in the basement including the Radiate Art space is not acceptable. There is high humidity and bad smells.
	Heat in the Radiate Art space may be inadequate.
	The Historical Society tenant has requested some improvements to their archive room where artifacts from Richmond's history are stored to control temperature and humidity.
Windows	
	Windows are old and drafty and are hard to open and close. Some windows do not close properly. Town employees tape plastic over some windows in the winter to reduce drafts.
	Historical Society tenant has requested low E glass in windows to protect their collections from harmful rays of sun
Security	
	Security improvements may be needed to the building while maintaining ease of public access.
	Upper floor elevator can not be locked out. This allows access to any floor of the building when outside door to the building is not locked.
	Easier access to the building is desired by staff and tenants during non- office hours possibly with a key pad system
	Can the window at the present fire escape be locked to prevent entry?
	Install automatic motion sensitive lighting to entrances after hours and possible surveillance cameras.
Building Layout Reconfiguration	
	Town Employees
	Space should be reconfigured where the Town Manager, the Assistant Town Manager and a possible new administrative employee can be located in proximity to each other.

	Zoning has requested more acoustically private workspaces for three people, where they can each communicate with the public.	
	Better access to copier is needed when town clerk's office is closed. Finance directors office is is used for circulation to access copier by multiple users.	
	Town employees have expressed a desire for a larger space for public gatherings.	
	Police Department	
	The police department space may need modifications to make it more efficient and better serve the needs of the police officers	
	Tenants	
	Senior center has expressed a desire for a shared space for events with up to 30 people.	
	MMCTV has expressed a desire for some changes within their current space.	
	Radiate art has expressed a desire for a space for larger gatherings, possibly a shared space with other users.	
	Storage	
	Town center staff needs storage space outside of basement. Current storage space is spread out and could be consolidated.	
	Space in basement for storage by baseball, soccer, girl scouts, and possibly future cheer squad may be adequate but equipment has been damaged due to water, mold, and mildew.	
	General Issues	
	Exterior doors on the front and side entrances do not open and close properly and should be replaced.	
	Exposed Romex wiring is not code compliant and would likely be required to be replaced in any area of renovation	
	Bathrooms in basement are not ADA compliant	
	There is no ADA compliant access to the basement	
	Comments	
	Town employees have desire to remain on first floor for easier collaboration and ease of public access. Public access to the police department is also important which may present a conflict.	
	Kitchenettes on first and second floor may be underutilized, and one or both of these rooms could be converted to other uses.	
	Radiate Art and Community Cares Camp currently share an office on the second floor.	
	General Maintenance Issues	
	Post Office dock back frame is rotting from top down	
	Bathrooms in post office and main building are in need of upgrades and should be cleaned consistently. Fixtures are old and often need repair and plunging.	

	Many ceiling tiles in post office and main building are sagging, dirty, and with mold. Members of town staff have had asthma attacks associated with these tiles	
	The front and side entrances to the building need to be cleaned thoroughly and regularly. Carpet is worn and dirty and should be replaced.	
	Walls and woodwork should be cleaned regularly and painted when needed.	
	Fluorescent lighting should be replaced with more efficient LED lights	
	Lights and fans in bathrooms should be made motion sensitive so they are not left on all night.	
	The Black River 2023 proposal mentioned work on vault roof and other work on vault. This needs more investigation	
	Exterior bricks need repointing	
	Exterior soffits and corbels need scraping and painting	
	The library handicap entrance needs improvements.	
	A pad for dumpster was proposed by Black River	