

**MVC NARRATIVE  
OAK BLUFFS  
NEW TOWN HALL**

**Background**

Since 2000, the Oak Bluffs Town Hall has been housed in the former Oak Bluffs Elementary School located on School Street and Pacific Avenue. While renovations were made to the building in 2000 for the move of town offices, the work done was not intended to provide for permanent accommodation, and inefficient layout and lack of adequate space for current usage, together with the deficiencies remaining from renovation, prompted the need for a new Town Hall. In 2005, the Town Hall needs were first addressed as part of an Oak Bluffs Town Campus Feasibility Study, and included both a renovated and expanded existing Town Hall and a new Town Hall Building.

In 2013, Keenan + Kenny Architects project team of architects and engineers were retained to review the Town Hall needs again. They prepared existing conditions reports for the current town offices facility located at 56 School Street. The existing building, built as a school in 1965 on an existing foundation, is two levels with a footprint of 6,355 and a total of 12,000 SF. The building was generally reviewed for its compliance with current codes pertaining to life safety, accessibility, energy conservation, indoor air quality, and building systems compliance. Although the current structure appears viable for continued use, renovating it would be at greater expense than new construction on the same “footprint”.

Mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems need total replacement and the need for substantial structural upgrading is required to meet codes for wind and seismic loading. Accessibility is complicated by the major grade change from the north to the south and the west to the east of the building, and elevator access is required between the floors within the building. Currently, due to lack of an elevator and a non-compliant stair, the public must exist the first floor and go around the building to access the lower level. Accessibility within the building would require replacement of existing toilet facilities, door widths and hardware, signage and fire alarm systems. An additional stair will be required from the second floor and an additional on-grade exit from the lower level to provide code-compliant egress. The inclusion of a fire suppression system for the entire building is also required.

The first design, developed in 2013 and 2014, was designed in the footprint of the existing structure and provided 18,950 SF of space. It was brought to Town Meeting along with the proposed new Fire Station in April of 2014. The Town Hall project passed at Town Meeting, but failed at the ballot. The Fire Station was funded and completed in December of 2015, on time and under budget.

During 2016, the Oak Bluffs Planning Board conducted public outreach and initiated a survey concerning the 2014 proposal. Considering the survey results and Planning Board’s level of effort, the Oak Bluffs Board of Selectmen reinitiated planning for a new town hall in late November 2016 with the forming of a new Building Committee and re-engaging a project team. K and K Architects again interviewed and

requested input from all Departments and voters who will be using the New Town Hall. The results of the Space Needs Study were reviewed by the Committee, selectmen, and town committee heads and public for input and refinement to establish area and functional guidelines for the future Town Hall building. The program results in a building area with a footprint of 6,740 SF, with 18,160 SF of finished space and a partial basement of 2,800 SF that better reflects the Town's architectural vernacular and improves access for the public. The building was reconfigured to a longer, narrower footprint, and set back from School St. to allow for the additional parking. A drop-off area and handicapped accessible parking are located between Pacific Avenue and School Street to allow direct access to the Pacific Ave. entrance in inclement weather.

This Town Hall Project passed at the Annual Town Meeting on April 11 and at the ballot on April 13, 2017 by a wide-majority.

### **New Town Hall**

Based on several years of planning, review, redesign, public outreach and approval by the voters of Oak Bluffs, the new building will provide a modern, solar ready, energy efficient, low maintenance center for the Town's government for many decades to come.

The Town Hall design is characterized by:

- Four entrances:
  1. Pacific Ave. to the Main Level
  2. School St. to the Main Level
  3. South Existing Parking Area to the Lower Level Permitting
  4. South Existing Parking Area to Town Clerk's Office
- The Lower Level includes the Building and Planning Departments, the Board of Health, Conservation Commission, and the Town Clerk, with a new 6-hour rated concrete vault. A shared Meeting Room and General Storage are also provided.
- The Main Level includes the Town Departments for Accounting, Assessor, Tax Office and Collector, and the Treasurer. A large Main Meeting Room to accommodate approximately 60 persons is adjacent to the building's main three-story Lobby.
- An Upper Level has the offices for the Town Administrator, Assistant Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen Office, and a Planning Board Office plus a large Conference Room and approximately 650 SF of future space.
- A partial Basement of approximately 2,800 SF is included for mechanical space and storage.
- Accessible entrances, restrooms, and a 4-stop elevator provide full use of all levels.
- New parking areas on Pacific Ave. and School St. provide approximately 14 new spaces.
- Sitework is limited to new walks, paving, curbing, and minimal care landscaping improvements.

### **Temporary Facilities**

Temporary Facilities for Town Offices during construction of the New Town Hall, will be in three doublewide trailers located on a Town-owned parcel of land accessible from Pacific Avenue, also via School Street by way of Parish Center property. The Pastor has offered the parking area at the east end of the Parish Center lot for access and parking for the Temporary Town Hall from School St.

The Town offices will be positioned for ease of access from the parking area accessible from School St. Employee parking will be in existing spaces on a portion of the Town land that abuts Pacific Ave. The Town Clerk will utilize the vault in the lower level of the Police Station for her records storage during construction. The Police Station is the former Town Hall and this vault has been used previously as records storage.

The time estimated for Town offices to be in the Temporary Facilities is 18 months, including moving prior to demolition and the duration of construction.

### **Additional information**

The Town maintains a website for the [Town Hall Building Project](#)