



DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING & ZONING
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Dear Building Committee and Planning Board

Walter Vail and Brian Packish requested that I share with the results of my periodic inspection of the town owned assembly buildings. I was also asked to inspect the highway barn and the town's wastewater building. This will not be a comprehensive evaluation; its purpose is to provide information on the state of town buildings which can be used to help create a maintenance plan for these buildings as well as identify which buildings need updating or replacement.

These inspection reports are similar to the reports that I do as a part of my job as building inspector except that I have included comments on things not having to do with safety e.g. rotted trim or leaky roofs etc. I will be happy to provide answers to any questions you have regarding the state of these buildings.

Sincerely,

Mark Barbadoro
Building Inspector, Zoning Enforcement Officer, ADA Coordinator

Condition of the Oak Bluffs School

General conditions:

The school has been regularly inspected by Building, Fire and Health Departments. The result of regular inspections combined with proactive management has kept the building in a well maintained condition.

The harsh winters of the last two years has taken a toll on the low slop roof which covers 75% of the building. This has resulted in minor leaking which has damaged some of the ceiling tiles. The school maintenance department is aware of the leaks and have had repaired the leaks that were discovered. When I went on the roof to inspect I discovered that the beehive drain covers were removed and not replaced. The lack of drain covers could result in ponding and more leaks.

The building has experienced frequent failures and replacement of the of the sewer grinder pumps. An investigation was conducted to determine if a cross connection was the problem. It was determined that is was not likely a cross connection however the frequent replacement of the pump is indicative of inordinately long run times which could be the result of a running water leak. One of the clues that a leak is occurring is that the temperature of the pump chamber is hot in summer and winter which indicates continuous running of hot water.

The school has underground heating oil tanks similar to the tanks that are used by gas stations. I asked school staff if they were aware of the last time these tanks were inspected for leaks and they were not aware of when the last inspection took place.

Safety:

Building and fire regularly inspect this building for safety deficiencies and the school is good about fixing problems. One deficiency detected was that the school is using temporary partitions to section off rooms to accommodate the current student load this has caused two or more classrooms to have insufficient access to the required number of exit access doors. Exit doors on the library need maintenance.

Accessibility ADA:

The school is accessible.

Recommendations:

The school should consider hiring a flat roof contractor to annually inspect and repair the roof until a new roof is needed. It is possible that a plumbing leak is wasting an inordinate amount of hot water. Further efforts should be made to determine if a leak is present and repairs should be affected.

Condition of the Police Station

General conditions:

The police station was built in 1965. Despite its age the building is in satisfactory condition. The heating system is contemporary and fuel efficient. The roof appears fairly new and the siding appears to be in good shape I asked the chief and several police department staff members if they felt that the building is sufficient to serve their needs. All parties indicated that no significant changes were needed. I also asked what was wrong with the building insofar as the condition was concerned.

One staffer reported a bad smell which was detectable at times in the winter. This smell could be the result of rising damp mold odor driven by the stack affect. There is a leak at the intersection of the connecting room from old town hall to old police station. The staining was evident but the damage was nominal at this point. The hot water was disconnected from one of the sinks in the accessible bathroom. There was a broken window in the basement. There was disconnected wiring in the basement by the service panel.

Safety:

Although an alarm system is not a requirement in a building of that size it is recommended that a fire alarm panel type system be installed with smoke detection. The officers use the basement as a locker room and an alarm would allow additional time for evacuation if needed. if an alarm system is installed it would be a good time to relocate the smoke detectors in order to meet design standards. Many of the exit access doorways do not have the required lever type door hardware. Emergency lights are out in a few locations.

Accessibility ADA:

The building is accessible from an ADA perspective but several elements do not meet design guidelines. The parking access isle is undersized at 60". It should be 96". The ramp has a small bump at the end which should be ground smooth. Handrails should be installed on both sides of the ramp. The sink trap and stops should be padded in the bathroom. Many doors do not have accessible hardware. The bathroom signage should be relocated to the latch side of the door.

Recommendations:

The roof leak should be fixed before permanent damage results. Replace the broken window. The doors need maintenance and door hardware should be swapped to levers for safety and accessibility. Minor plumbing repairs are needed in the accessible bathroom. The ramp bump should be fixed and handrails added. Emergency batteries should be replaced.

Condition of the Council on Aging

General conditions:

Assessors records place the construction date of the Council on Aging at 1975 but the building may be older than that. The Council on Aging building appears to have undergone a total renovation/ addition in 2006 and appears to be in good condition. I asked the COA Director Rose if they felt that the building is sufficient to serve their needs. Rose indicated that she felt that the building serves the needs of the elderly. She indicated that the bulkhead to the basement was an area where trespassers congregated and she thought that extending the roof over the stairs and adding a door would help prevent loitering.

The exterior of the building is generally in good condition but there were maintenance items that need addressing. Although the siding appears to be in fair condition the soffits and fascia were moldy and in some areas the corner boards were rotted. The gutters were a mixture of wood and aluminum and were missing in places and downspouts were missing. The accessible ramp and main stair guardrails are rotted and need replacing.

The interior areas of the building have received periodic painting and appear to be in good shape. The kitchen floor is worn and needs replacing. The kitchen cabinets are residential grade and are worn and delimiting.

Safety:

Due to its size the building was not equipped with an alarm and smoke detection system. The emergency lights are broken in various locations

Accessibility ADA:

The accessible parking spaces are not striped and the parking signs need to be raised. The main stair handrail does not extend beyond the edge of the stairs as required by code and the brackets are incorrectly installed. Accessible signage needs to be placed on the latch side of the bathrooms.

Recommendations: a maintenance plan should be created to keep the building from degrading. Suggested upgrades include extending the existing the rafter tails or installing gutters to prevent water running down the back wall of the pantry. Installing a small roof assembly and a door over the basement stairs would keep trespassers out.

Condition of the Oak Bluffs Library

General conditions:

The library was built in 2005. Although the library is a relatively new town building it is showing signs of premature wear and tear. The roof is leaking in several locations and both the cooling system and the boiler has leaked or is leaking as well. Many ceiling tiles are stained and there is standing water in the emergency stairwells. The carpets are stained from the leaks. Drywall has been cut out in places where sprinkler pipes have frozen or otherwise needed servicing. The boiler room is cluttered with debris. A poorly designed cooling system has resulted in the need for mini-splits throughout the building. The alarm panel was defective which resulted in the need for a new alarm system which has recently been installed.

Safety:

A new alarm panel was installed this year and the building is fully sprinkled. Some of the emergency lights have been broken and the backup batteries have failed in many locations.

Accessibility ADA:

The building is fully accessible

Recommendations:

Attention to the roof and Heating/cooling leaks should be implemented immediately. This building needs a maintenance plan that includes periodic painting and carpet cleaning should be implemented to protect the town's investment.

Condition of the Oak Bluffs Highway Barn

General conditions:

Built in 1980 the Highway barn is unique among the buildings I inspected because it is largely a storage repair facility. Despite its age and condition the building serves its purpose adequately. The building is rarely visited by members of the public but public meetings are held in the building and therefore the building should be made accessible. Because the highway director is responsible for maintenance of all town buildings and he has firsthand knowledge of the maintenance items in the building and the resources available to repair and maintain the building as the need arises.

Safety:

Because the building contains combustible materials it an alarm system is recommended. The emergency lights and exit signs need new batteries.

Accessibility ADA:

Because the building is open to the public an accessible parking space must be striped and a parking sign must be installed. The bathroom is large enough to be accessible but hardware such as grab bars need to be installed as well as accessible signage. The paving at the main entrance needs to be reworked so that a wheelchair can enter.

Recommendations: effect the accessibility changes as specified repair the emergency lighting and install an alarm system.

Condition of the Oak Bluffs Fire Department

General Conditions:

Built in 2015 the fire department is state of the art. Its condition is nearly perfect and it will serve the town for many decades to come. It is not complete however several items remain outstanding. There is a leak in the “t joint” at the corner of the rubber roof. Another leak is occurring at the intake vent of the HVAC system. This could be a flashing problem or it could be that rain is entering the vent intake and leaking through the ductwork.

In addition to the roof punch list item there also remains 3 or more outstanding items to be completed on the site plan. A bicycle rack is needed. The fence between the fire station and the neighbor needs to be extended. A blind needs to be installed on the back transom.

Safety:

The building is safe

Accessibility ADA:

The building is accessible.

Recommendations:

The punch list items left to complete are few. It is time to finish the list.

Condition of the Wastewater facility

Built in 2002 the wastewater treatment facility is in good condition and well maintained. I asked wastewater manager Jim Monteith if the facility is serving the needs of the department and his response was that the size of the facility is determined by the capacity of sewage that the facility treats and that is under review at the moment.

It should be noted that there is a right of way which bisects the wastewater property. The road layout will create zoning setback issues which could prohibit future growth of the plant. I recommend that the road layout be addressed in anticipation of the eventual expansion.

Safety:

The building is safe

Accessibility ADA:

The building is accessible.

Recommendations:

None.

Condition of the Town Hall

General Conditions:

The town hall was built in 1965 and is in a state of disrepair. The building was never laid out to be a town hall and the current floor plan is inefficient and does not serve the town's needs. Problems include;

- Rotting floor in the main entrance
- Many wooden windows have rotted and are screwed shut causing venting problems
- Main ramp to first floor cracked and crumbling
- Room heater in the lower level nonfunctional most of the winter
- Main furnace failed 6+ times last year and may need to be replaced (even when functioning it is badly unbalanced causing ½ the building to be 80 deg. And other half 50 deg)
- AC functions in ½ the building causing those lucky enough to have windows to install window ac which is an unnecessary expense of energy.
- Floor tiles cracking may be asbestos.
- Friable asbestos cover steam pipes in the basement.
- Most of the doors within building are unlockable causing a security risk
- Damaged ceiling tiles
- Water damage from prior leaks caused crumbling drywall
- Bathroom fans are broken creating a health risk.
- Decades old tile in bathrooms. Grout has absorbed urine and the smell cannot be removed.
- Many broken light fixtures leaving offices dimly lit.

Safety:

- The alarm system does not appear to be tested I cannot locate the inspection reports.
- smoke alarms are not laid out to meet NFPA 72
- Emergency exit signs have failed and numerous remodels have caused the signs to be misleading
- Emergency lighting has failed throughout
- Main service panel in main foyer has exposed main conductors. Exposing an unwary person to 200 amps and 240 volts which is dangerous!
- Exposed wiring in boxes throughout the building which is hazardous.
- Door hardware has been replaced with incorrect equipment which does not meet code for use in an emergency.
- Fire partitions have been cut to create service windows in walls which is not allowed in an unsprinklered building
- A lack of adequate heating has caused staff to be forced to use space heaters. Last year this resulted in a minor fire in an office see photo
- Last year the furnace was blowing smoke combustion byproducts throughout the building. If the heat exchanger may have failed which can cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Rooms which were not designed as office space and have no ventilation are being used due to a lack of space and poor layout.

Accessibility ADA:

- Main Handicap parking space is out of spec. improper slope, no access isle, and improper signage.
- The route to the main ramp is out of level and too bumpy
- The ramp is cracked and too bumpy. No handrails
- The lower bathroom is entirely un-accessible. The upper bathroom lacks handrails, plumbing protection, fixtures are not accessible and a new toilet is needed
- The stairs are not accessible
- An elevator is needed
- Door hardware is not accessible
- Door arrangement is not accessible
- Signage is not accessible
- Door threshold are not accessible

Recommendations:

The town hall continues to have ADA complaints filed against it and has been modified through the years in a haphazard manner. Either the town should hire a design professional to address the deficiencies and create a plan to completely renovate the building or a new building should be built.