

To: Community Preservation Committee
From: Properties Team, West Acton Baptist Church
Re: Budgets for 2014 CPC Grant Applications
for Fire Safety Upgrade and Ceiling Restoration
Date: February 24, 2014

- (1) When the West Acton Baptist Church's Properties Team applied for a grant to restore the upper level ceiling, we made two points to the CPC:
 - a. OMR's Master Plan from the 2013 CPC grant included cost estimates for many of the actions they recommended, and those estimates were deliberately on the high side because at that early planning stage for their client it would have been unwise to low-ball those costs.
 - b. The preliminary proposal we obtained for the ceiling restoration seemed very low, so we used OMR's cost estimates for the project in our grant application, and indicated that we would research qualified restoration painters and obtain additional proposals for the ceiling.
- (2) As amateurs, we turned to the Massachusetts Historical Commission's web site, which referred us to Massachusetts Preservation's web site for a list of qualified contractors. We eventually realized that this list was from firms promoting themselves and did not constitute any analysis or endorsement of their qualifications, except their agreement to abide by the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines. Apparently there really aren't any established guidelines for the professional qualifications of restoration painters, which Tory Beyer confirmed.
- (3) After the holidays we resumed our search, turning for word-of-mouth referrals to your committee members Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Tory Beyer, and Walter Foster, as well as a contact one of our team members had from her work with her local town's Historical District Commission. We invited three firms to the site, interviewed them and asked questions during their examination, and received their proposals last week.
- (4) Two indicated that the repairs, preservation steps, and painting were not huge and expensive projects. The greater cost by far would be the staging (scaffolds) required to do the job. One firm also advised us that, if we had other projects in that room requiring the use of staging, we would be wise to obtain our own staging contract so that other vendors could also use the staging while it was up, under the staging company's insurance, not the painters'. Those other vendors might involve fire safety system upgrades that would be mounted up high, as well as the church's own two projects of painting the walls and trim, and installing up-to-date audio-visual equipment and speakers.
- (5) If we can do that, it would mean that the ceiling work would be the primary job taking the longest time, but the staging cost might be pro-rated among the other projects. We'll hold off on getting staging proposals until we know whether Acton Town Meeting approves our ceiling application, and we may very well not schedule the combined projects until early 2015 in order to be able to coordinate with other vendors, hopefully during their slow season.
- (6) These contingencies continue to make it difficult to come up with a firm budget at this time. However, the proposals we've obtained are still a comfortable margin below OMR's figures for the ceiling restoration.
- (7) With the 2013 belfry restoration project, now completed, we had applied for \$20,625, which included a 10% cost overrun margin while it excluded our 10%. The actual cost came in noticeably lower, at a total of \$16,050. Deducting our 10% of \$1,605, the net cost to the Acton CPC is \$14,445, which is \$6,180 less than we had applied for.
- (8) The attached spreadsheet addresses both the 2014 fire safety upgrade proposals, and the ceiling restoration proposals. It shows that, even with a 20% margin for cost overruns and incidentals like permits and completion certificates, we can project both to be less than the OMR estimates we applied for. In addition, like the 2013 belfry project, we may again find a way to come in noticeable under budget.
- (9) **Therefore we would like to reduce the amounts we have requested for each grant, as shown on the accompanying spreadsheet..**

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy L. Hoover, Moderator
and Properties Team Chair
West Acton Baptist Church