

Community Economic Development Committee
Gray, ME 04039
March 25, 2008

Gray Town Council
Gray, ME 04039

Dear Gray Town Councilors:

Earlier this year, the Town Council directed the Community Economic Development Committee to conduct a survey of the citizens of Gray addressing the future uses for property that Gray owns in the Village Center area (Stimson Hall Complex, Pennell Institute Campus).

Attached is a brief report providing information received from the survey questionnaire. We received 330 surveys from citizens and 13 survey forms from former Pennell Alumni who no longer live in Gray. The report contains two tabulations listing the results of the questionnaire, a summary of comments, a listing of vision concepts and a couple of architectural renderings submitted with some surveys.

After tabulating the results of the five questions posed to the citizens, there is a consistent message from the citizens in support of the preservation of both Stimson Hall and the Pennell Institute buildings. Many citizens stated that these historic buildings are an important part of our community's heritage and that the buildings should serve as the centerpiece for future development.

When reviewing the "comments" section of the surveys, the results were similar to the specific questions. Regarding Stimson, 27 said we should sell Stimson and 38 said we should preserve it while 41 said we should sell it with restrictions. Most importantly, 90 respondents said we should preserve Pennell and 52 said it should be used as Town Hall. Another 48 and 40 respectively said we should use it for the Historical Society and share it with the Historical Society and Town Hall. It is important to note that not all the surveys had comments, thus the numbers were less.

The CEDC recognizes that the survey is the first step in the process to develop alternatives for the future use of town properties. However, prior to proceeding with the vision concept and project development stages, we ask that the Council review the survey results and reaffirm that you support proceeding with the vision concept development stage before we initiate that process at our April meeting. Conceptually we anticipate that our charge will be to prepare 4 to 5 concept plans for further review by the Council and Citizens.

Kind Regards,

Jeanne Carpentier
Chair, CEDC

Cc: Tracy Scheckel

Downtown Survey Packet Information

- 1. Survey form utilized**
- 2. Tally of survey results**
- 3. Copy of letter to Pennell Alumni**
- 4. Tally of results obtained from Pennell Alumni that no longer live in Gray**
- 5. Summary of Comments submitted with Survey**
- 6. Summary of Vision Concepts submitted with Survey**
- 7. Copy of Architectural Renderings submitted with the Survey**
- 8. Summary of Comments - Tally**

Help the Town of Gray decide the future of Pennell Institute and the Town Hall Campus!

The Town Hall Campus

Town Hall, Stimson Hall, and the old Post Office sit on 2 acres on Shaker Road in a prime commercial and economic location. Stimson is on the National Register of Historic Buildings, and is in need of rehabilitation. The Town Hall and the old Post Office are functionally obsolete, and are both in need of extensive renovation to meet current standards for public buildings.



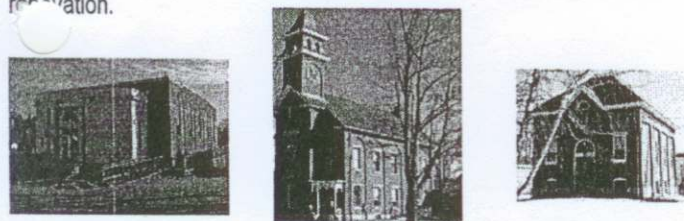
The Old Post Office
Circa: 1960S

Town Hall
Circa: 1960S

Stimson Hall
Circa: 1900

The Pennell Campus

The 1886 Pennell Institute with its 1950s additions, the Lab Building, and Newbegin Gym share this 7-acre site on Main St. In addition to the buildings, the property has Town recreational fields. The original Pennell Institute and Lab building are also on the National Register of Historic Buildings and are currently in need of extensive rehabilitation and repair. The Newbegin Gym is in better condition than its neighboring buildings, but would benefit from some updating and renovation.



Newbegin Gym
Circa: 1937

The Pennell Institute
Circa: 1886

The Anderson Lab
Circa: 1897

TELL US YOUR VISION

These Town-owned properties can provide economic growth or address community needs for our children, adults and senior citizens. We want to know your ideas for their future.

Please give your vision by submitting this survey and any additional comments no later than March 15, 2008 to:

The Gray Community Economic Development Committee
Gray Town Hall, 6 Shaker Road, Gray, Maine 04039
The Gray Transfer Station, or
The Gray Public Library

Surveys are also available on-line at www.graymaine.org

You also may contact the Community Economic Development Committee:

Jeanne Carpentier, Chair – 657-7365 or jlc@cscfme.com

Ralph Wink, Secretary – 657-3452 or ewink@maine.rr.com

Jack Goosetrey, Member – 428-3206 or jgooset1@maine.rr.com

Don Hutchings, Member – 657-4338 or meloontheflorist@yahoo.com

Tracy Scheckel, CEDC Council Liaison - 657-7077 tscheckel@graymaine.org

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Please circle the one response to each question that you most agree with.

- Is it important to Preserve Stimson Hall?
 - Important
 - Not important
 - No opinion
- Assuming it is important, how should we accomplish this?
 - Lease or sell Stimson to private developers with restrictions to preserve the historic building
 - Keep and restore Stimson for Town use
 - No opinion
- Is it important that Town Hall be located in the Village?
 - Important
 - Not important
 - No opinion
- Is it important to preserve the Pennell buildings?
 - Important
 - Not important
 - No opinion
- Assuming it is important, how should we accomplish this?
 - Lease or sell Pennell to private developers with restrictions to preserve the historic buildings
 - Relocate the municipal offices to Pennell and renovate the historic buildings
 - Turn Pennell over to the Historical Society
 - No opinion

Additional Comments

Name / Address / Phone # (optional)

Town of Gray

CEDC SURVEY TALLY SHEET

Total Town Tally Sheet Summary Downtown Survey		GRAND TOTAL
QUESTION 1: Is it important to Preserve Stimson Hall?		
A Important		265
B Not important		39
C No opinion		20
QUESTION 2: Assuming it is important, how should we accomplish this task?		
A Lease or sell Stimson to private developers with restrictions to preserve the historic building		122
B Keep or restore Stimson for Town use		163
C No opinion		24
QUESTION 3: Is it important that Town Hall be located in the Village?		
A Important		237
B Not important		64
C No opinion		19
QUESTION 4: Is it important to preserve the Pennell buildings?		
A Important		292
B Not important		24
C No opinion		6
QUESTION 5: Assuming it is important, how should we accomplish this?		
A Lease or sell Pennell to private developers with restrictions to preserve the historic buildings		41
B Relocate the municipal offices to Pennell and renovate the historic buildings		207
C Turn Pennell over to the Historical Society		104
D No opinion		9

SURVEY LOT #
Total Tabulation – Survey
from Citizens

**TOTAL SURVEYS CAST AND
COUNTED IN THIS LOT:**

___330___

Tracy Scheckel
17 Yarmouth Road
Gray, Maine 04039
207-657-7077

February 27, 2008

Dear Members of the Pennell Institute Alumni Association,

By charge of the Gray Town Council, The Gray Community Economic Development Committee (CEDC) is conducting a survey addressing the future of the Pennell Campus, Stimson Hall, the Town Hall, and the Post Office on Shaker Road. The town now owns all these properties, and is seeking direction from it's citizens as to how to make the best use of these real estate assets.

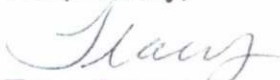
The initial survey is enclosed and is very general in nature. The Committee's intent is to tabulate the results and bring forth another survey with more specific options, as determined by the participants. With input from the second survey, the hope is to bring forth a referendum question in November of this year. Although this is a rather aggressive schedule, I am confident that we will prevail. There is so much excitement about this project.

Even though you are non-voting, out-of-town members of the Alumni Association, I, as Council Liaison to the CEDC, feel that your wisdom and input is important to our research. If you agree, please complete the survey and mail it to **Town Hall at 6 Shaker Road, Gray, Maine 04039**. Our deadline is March 15th. You may also choose to go to the Gray Town website www.graymaine.org, under **Hot Topics**, there is a link to the **CEDC Survey** where you can e-mail your responses to the CEDC. It is fine to just type your responses in the body of the e-mail and send it along.

If you have any questions, you may contact Town Hall 207-657-3339, or me 207-657-7077. Another housekeeping note, Donna Hill was kind enough to print labels for me to use. If you can provide an e-mail address for future correspondence, I will forward it to her, and use it to keep you informed as to the progress of the survey.

I look forward to hearing from you and thank you in advance for your participation.

Respectfully,



Tracy Scheckel
Gray Town Council

Town of Gray

CEDC SURVEY TALLY SHEET

Tally Sheet Summary of Pennell Alumni (Non- Residents) Downtown Survey		GRAND TOTAL
QUESTION 1: <i>Is it important to Preserve Stimson Hall?</i>		
A Important		9
B Not important		1
C No opinion		1
QUESTION 2: <i>Assuming it is important, how should we accomplish this task?</i>		
A Lease or sell Stimson to private developers with restrictions to preserve the historic building		4
B Keep or restore Stimson for Town use		7
C No opinion		0
QUESTION 3: <i>Is it important that Town Hall be located in the Village?</i>		
A Important		4
B Not important		4
C No opinion		3
QUESTION 4: <i>Is it important to preserve the Pennell buildings?</i>		
A Important		10
B Not important		1
C No opinion		1
QUESTION 5: <i>Assuming it is important, how should we accomplish this?</i>		
A Lease or sell Pennell to private developers with restrictions to preserve the historic buildings		1
B Relocate the municipal offices to Pennell and renovate the historic buildings		6
C Turn Pennell over to the Historical Society		7
D No opinion		0

SURVEY LOT #
Non resident Pennell Alumni
Tabulation

**TOTAL SURVEYS CAST AND
COUNTED IN THIS LOT:**

13

COMMENTS FROM SOME SURVEYS RETURNED

- When I moved to Gray, it wasn't nearly as ugly as it is now
- Old fire station building is a treasure
- Other towns seem to be able to restore historic buildings, what's the matter with us
- Very few quaint towns left in Maine..Gray is one of these
- Buildings are part of our past; they should be part of our future
- Key services should be within walking distance of the Village Center
- Old Rite Aide building should be new Town Hall (multiple comments)
- Use Pennell for Library (multiple comments)
- Newbegin and Ball Fields should stay as town recreation center (multiple comments)
- Historical Society belongs at Pennell (multiple comments)
- Town offices should be moved to be near the new post office (multiple comments)
- Seek advice from Libra Foundation (multiple comments)
- Private developers will not maintain integrity of our town
- A town with no pride in its past has no heart
- Look to South Portland "Brick Hill" for good example redeveloping old buildings
- "Remember Union Station" (multiple comments)
- Boston Globe once described Gray as a "threadbare town North of Portland" / put money into revitalizing!
- Encourage Developer to build quality buildings, not a cheap metal box
- Please consider that it's time to move on. (New Buildings)
- Turn Pennell and Anderson Lab into an Historic Inn and operate for non-profit
- Put Town Office up by Hannaford
- There is little left in Gray that is beautiful. We should keep those that are.

- Town is not a Real Estate Business....sell the properties and get them back on the tax map.
- Look forward to the opportunity you will be providing for generations of citizens
- Invest in the children
- We the citizens of Gray have done an atrocious job of maintaining these grand old buildings. They need to be transferred to someone that has the financial resources, commitment and skills to give them the care they need and deserve. (multiple comments)
- This survey should have been done by the Council two years ago
- What a shame to maintain so much empty space
- Lets not waste more time on consulting fees to make these decisions (multiple comments)
- Pennell is only remaining "crown jewel"
- Taxes are not sentimental
- First and foremost we need a building plan that is driven by need and fiscal responsibility
- Gray is one big eyesore
- Old Post Office could be used as a teen center
- Why did the Town of Gray purchase another building it doesn't need?
- Stimson Hall and Pennell were gifts to the Town of Gray
- The Historical Society is needed in this town
- Let's not turn this into a mountain of problems
- The once pretty Town of Gray has already been painfully compromised, please save what is left
- We already have plenty of that which is ugly, lets hold on to that which is beautiful even if it takes some tax money
- No more studies on what to do, but get several architectural renderings to help make decisions
- Historical Society does not have resources to improve and maintain Pennell
- Stimson Hall is the only place for meetings
- Move the town office out of the village
- Sell all town owned property that we do not use or want to maintain

- Tear down Anderson Lab and build a nice Gazebo or park on it
- The Pennell Campus is more exciting than Pineland and it can become financially independent and then some.
- Gray has the potential to be a walkable village
- Get rid of the old buildings
- With the new businesses being spread out, the idea of saving Main Street is gone. Sentiment does not pay the bills.
- As traffic patterns continue to evolve in the Community, it provides Town Planners an opportunity to correct some planning mistakes of the past.

These are some of the comments written in on the survey forms. Many comments which repeated survey questions or offered suggestions already mentioned were omitted from the comments.

Vision Concepts - Survey

Pennell Property

Main Property & Building

1. Relocate the athletic fields to a less populated part of Gray.
2. Construct new commercial buildings/housing complex in athletic field area behind Newbegin Gym
3. Construct a new addition to the back of Pennell – generally same footprint as the newer of the existing sections – (single story segment)
4. Relocate Library to this building
5. Utilize as Town Office & Historical Society
6. Use as Historic Inn
7. Construct a new building to the back of old Pennell creating a tee shape arrangement with a new entrance for both buildings in the back of the existing building that would also connect the old and new buildings (same concept as 3)

Newbegin

1. Build an addition to the existing Newbegin Gym for community center

Anderson Lab

1. Expand the Anderson Lab building
2. Lease to Gray Water District
3. Use as Historic Inn
4. Commercial Use
5. Historical Society
6. Tear down replace with a Gazebo or park

Stimson Hall Complex

1. Demolish old Post Office and existing town office
2. Build an addition to the back and west of the existing Stimson Hall creating a horseshoe shaped complex that would allow better utilization of the existing building (stage area, second story and basement)
3. Build an L-shaped addition to the back of Stimson Hall – (same concept as 2.)

Gray Historical Society

1. A portion of the Pennell building
2. Old Fire Station – Main Street (Clark Block)
3. New building adjacent to old Schoolhouse next to Animal Farm
4. Anderson Lab.
5. Stimson Hall

Town Office (New) – No suggestions for using existing town office

1. New Stimson Complex
2. New Pennell Campus
3. Build new facility at Fire/Safety complex located adjacent to the recycle center.
4. Build new facility next to Hannaford store
5. Buy old Rite Aid Building
6. Build new facility next to new Post Office

Library

1. Expand the library at the existing site
2. Move to Pennell building

Old Post Office

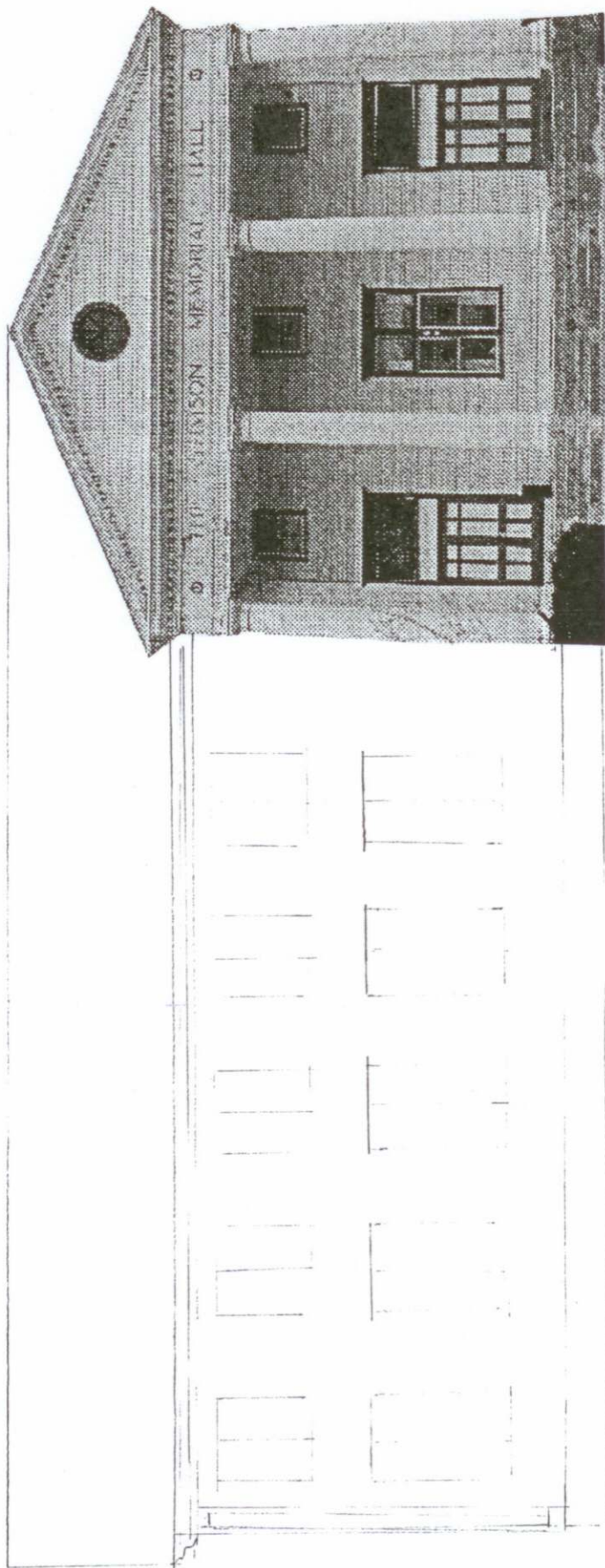
1. Use as food and clothing place
2. Use as a teen center
3. Tear down

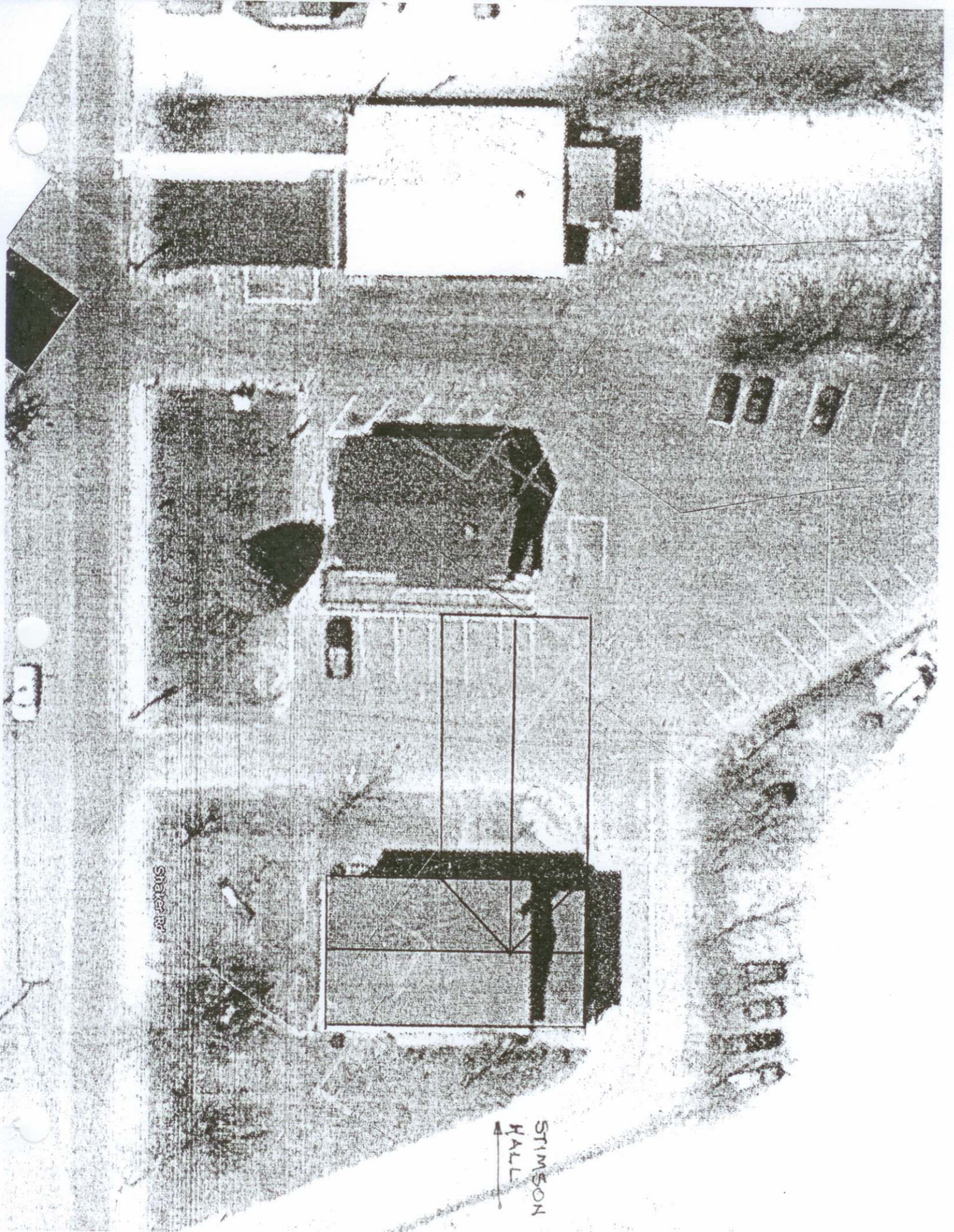
Green Field Site

Buy 40 acres of undeveloped land and make long range plans to construct a municipal complex

General Financing Plan

1. Tax dollars – bonding
2. Obtain government grants
3. Sell/Lease Stimson to pay for Pennell improvements
4. Sell/Lease Pennell to pay for Stimson improvements
5. Sell/Lease Stimson and Pennell complex to pay for green field site
6. Exchange land and property at the Pennell Campus and the Stimson Complex for new athletic fields, Newbegin expansion, money, a design concept endorsed by the community and a long term lease agreement for the Town Office @ either Stimson or Pennell

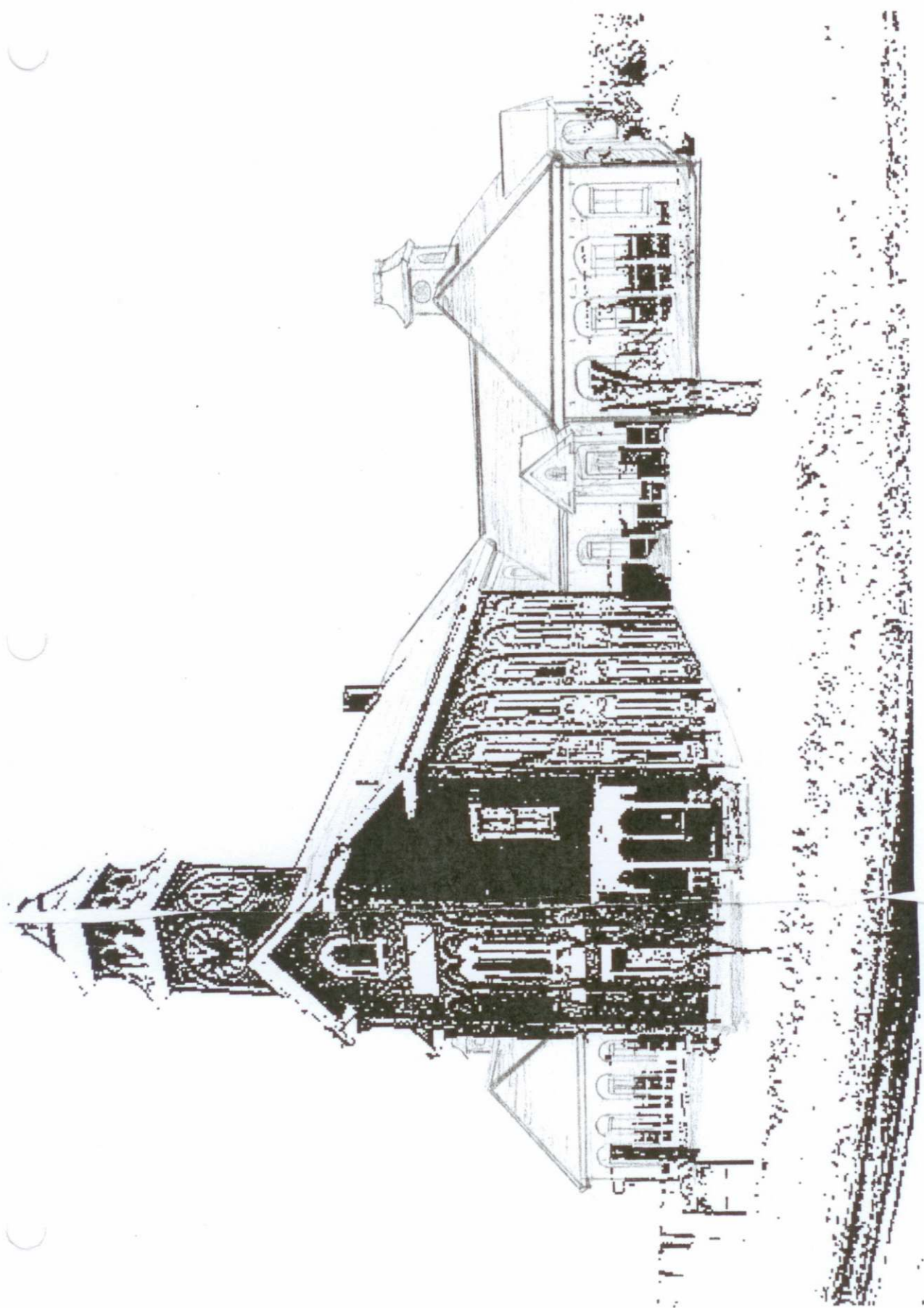




STIMSON
HALL
↑

Shaker Rd

MONT



Summary of Comments - Tally

For the Current Town Hall Campus, Including Stimson

Sell All	27
Level All	4
Build New	4

Regarding Stimson

Preserve	38
Sell w/ Restrictions	41
Save for Town Use	5
Give to Historical Society	2

Regarding Post Office

Sell	20
------	----

For Pennell Institute Building

Preserve	90
Use for Town Hall	52
Use for Historical Society	48
TH and Hist. Soc. Share	40
Lease / Sell w/ Restrictions	9
Community Center	6
Give to Library	8
Use for Lodging	3

Regarding the Lab Building

Demo	3
Restore	1
Give to Historical Society	1
Sell	1
Useless	1