



## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Select Board

**FROM:** John C. Curran, Town Manager

**CC:** Clancy Main, Assistant Town Manager

**SUBJECT:** Masonic Hall Study Update

**DATE:** September 10, 2021

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On 8/23 in the Town Managers report the Board was updated on the Masonic Hall study. Currently PRA is in the process of documenting the existing conditions and is awaiting results on a HAZMAT study. Before moving forward on to the next part of the project, I wanted to give an in-depth overview to the Board.

Currently no future use for the building has been decided. Over the course of the next year the Capital Facilities Study will begin the process of looking at a programmatic fit for the building. Currently it is inhabited by the food pantry and will be for a set period upon completion of a license agreement with them.

The Town is looking to complete a baseline study that would entail what is needed in regard to structural repairs, envelope upgrades to yield a weather-tight building with a minimum 20-year lifespan, sitework to improve the aesthetic nature of the property, and mechanical/electrical/plumbing/fire protection/accessibility upgrades to fully bring the building up to code. The baseline study would match the Town's current use and occupancy of the building (food pantry). It is important to understand that these changes while significant will not address the extraordinary changes and cosmetic upgrades that would be necessary for a more permanent use.

These renovations would be focused on replication of the existing use of the building and not propose any interior modifications to accommodate a new program. The end result of this baseline study would allow the Town to operate the Masonic Hall in the manner it is used now but would ensure the structure, envelope and other items to support the current occupancy are brought up to current code and constructability standards.

A budget and potential schedule for what is found in the baseline study will be included in the final report, as well as any conclusions reached about limitations of use resulting from accessibility concerns. As an example, that there are concerns from preliminary observations that the study will determine that the third-floor area cannot be used as a publicly accessible space.

The initial structural study will also be reviewed and investigated further with a structural engineer to review a possible need for immediate emergency repairs.

In addition, the study, can investigate additional impact, costs, and schedule to support any change in occupancy or upgrades that might be desirable to the Town.

An alternative to this approach and a much less expensive approach would be to approach this as a band aid approach and make the minimum repairs necessary to allow for the current use to limp along in the building. However, the recommended approach is trying to reflect the desire of Town meeting to permanently salvage and repair the Masonic Lodge so that it can be enjoyed by future generations. It is important to temper expectations about what this entails.

Data as of 05/25/2021

County	Town	Age Group	Population	Proportion of town population	Individuals with at least one dose	Individuals with at least one dose per capita
Middlesex	Concord	16-19 Years	898	5%	1,031	>95%
Middlesex	Bedford	16-19 Years	680	5%	578	85%