

Town of Somerset
Historic Town Hall Committee Ordinance 2008-1

A. Building History

The Historic Town Hall at 331 Main Street is the oldest government building in the Somerset area. Built by Edward Mason in 1886, it was commissioned by the Somerset Town Board, which governed the entire area from 1856 to 1915, when the Village incorporated. Ownership of the building and property has remained with Somerset Township, however, the building's central location in the Village is witness to a shared heritage.

B. Committee Purpose

To preserve and promote the Historic Town Hall by managing maintenance of the building and grounds, and providing public access as deemed appropriate by the Board.

C. Committee Structure

An advisory committee appointed by the Somerset Town Board to be comprised of seven members, one each from the Somerset Town Board, Somerset Village Board, and Somerset Library, and four at-large members. It is encouraged to have one member be a neighbor and another a newer resident of the community. Terms of service/office to be for two years staggered one, two, and three years initially to establish a rotation.

D. Financial Support for the Building and Grounds

The committee will submit a budget to the Town and Village, which will share the cost 50/50. Other financial support may be solicited, including Commemorative Bricks, donations, grants, and fund-raising events.

E. Committee Responsibilities

1. Write a vision statement.
2. Develop a plan to promote and provide access to the facility and grounds.
3. Establish a use and fee schedule to help cover expenses (with respect to rules and regulations of the state, county, and/or insurance).
4. Manage activities and projects.
 - a. Keep a reservation calendar for equal access.
 - b. Monitor use – set limits – know Village and Town rules/restrictions.
5. Develop a maintenance plan for the facility and grounds.
6. Collect and preserve local history as it relates to the building.
7. Seek alternative funding sources.
8. Report to the Town and Village boards at their quarterly joint meetings on use, finances, and maintenance.

F. Building Usage Concepts

1. A regularly scheduled opening of perhaps one Sunday a month in warm weather, April to October, to showcase area history displays, readings and other low impact activities.
2. Special meetings like annual town board meetings, village or other governmental meetings are encouraged so that citizens see this unique facility active and showcased.
3. Gardens and Commemorative Bricks: The gardens may showcase historic plants and styles of gardens. The Commemorative Bricks will honor and/or memorialize local people and organizations as well as contribute to the cost of maintaining the building and grounds.

G. Building Protection Standards

1. Events should be limited in scope for impact on the building, traffic and other basic concerns for liability and inconvenience to the neighborhood.
2. ALL usage must comply with the insurance policy issued for the building.
3. The building is not for storage of miscellaneous equipment, property or materials.
4. To preserve the building's historical integrity, painting, nailing or taping of any materials to the walls or door will not be allowed.
5. No electrical heating devices are to be used in the building at anytime.
6. Usage of the wood-burning stove is prohibited.

H. Potential Future Building Projects

1. Improving access to the building.
2. Having water on the property for gardens and lawn.
3. Acquiring a near-by building with utilities that can serve as a year-round meeting/display space and provide an area for some off-street parking.

Adopted this 2nd day of April, 2008, by the Somerset Town Board:

_____, Ed Schachtner, Chairman

_____, Shane Demulling, Supervisor

_____, Douglas Plourde, Supervisor

_____, Denise Gunderson, Supervisor

_____, Lenny Germain, Supervisor

Attest: _____, Jeri Koester, Clerk/Treasurer