

TOWN OF SUDBURY COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

PROJECT SUBMISSION FORM

Submitter: **Rosemary B. Harvell**

Date: **October 30, 2009**

Group or Committee Affiliation: **Town Clerk's Office**

Submitter's address and phone number:

Purpose: **Historic Preservation**

**Town Hall
322 Concord Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
978-639-3359**

Submitter's email address: **harvellr@sudbury.ma.us**

Project Name: **Climate Control, Fire Suppression and Shelving for Sudbury Town Hall Vaults**

Project Description: **Proposal to upgrade two small vaults with climate control and fire suppression**

Costs:

Fiscal Year	Project Cost	CPC Funds Requested	Other Funding Sources (amount and source)
2010	1 HVAC System Serving both vaults \$36,000	\$36,000	
	Fire suppression system \$14,000	\$14,000	
	Custom Shelving \$3,897.14 per vault \$7,795	\$10,000 \$7,795	
	Total	\$ 67,795	\$67,795

Vaults are fireproof rooms. When equipped with appropriate climate control systems and fire suppression systems. Vaults are necessary and mandated to protect and preserve the historic, cultural, and archaeological resources in the possession of the Town of Sudbury. The Town of Sudbury currently has two vaults, one of which is accessed daily and contains active permanent documents and one which is accessed less frequently but contains documents going back more than 370 years. Unfortunately, only a small percent of Sudbury's permanent records can be housed in these vaults due to their small size. Our vaults are not equipped with either climate control or fire alarm or fire suppression systems. Therefore, the historic records remain at risk. It is essential for the Town to provide adequate security, fire protection and climate control to preserve our historic, permanent town records and artifacts are essential to ensure permanent protection of the historic resource.

For Community Preservation Committee Use:

Form Received on: _____

Project Presented to CPC on: _____

Reviewed by: _____

Determination: _____

T O W N O F S U D B U R Y

Office of the Town Clerk



SUDBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01776

November 4, 2009

To: Community Preservation Committee Members

From: Rosemary Harvell, Town Clerk

I appreciate the opportunity to submit for your consideration, a proposal to upgrade the two existing Town Hall vaults to provide efficient archival shelving for town documents and an appropriate environment for their protection and preservation.

Vault Requirements

(Reference: Technical Bulletin 1, 3)

Chapter 66, s.11 MGL requires the officers in charge of state departments, county commissioners, city councils or selectmen to provide fire-resistant rooms, safes or vaults for the safekeeping of the public records of their governmental unit (2 Op. Atty. Gen. 1899, p. 48). Pursuant to s. 1 of this statute, the Supervisor of Public Records is authorized to promulgate standards for the construction and use of these vaults, rooms and safes (8 Op. Atty. Gen. 1929, p. 594). These requirements are presented in Technical Bulletin 1 which is included in the project submission packet. A fireproof room is a vault. Since town records are required to be kept and to be available, there are no alternatives to vault storage for these records. In addition to providing the protection from building fires, vaults must be equipped with appropriate climate control systems and fire suppression systems.

The Town currently has two vaults for record storage that do not meet the standards promulgated by the Supervisor of Public Records. The upgrade and maintenance of these vaults is vital to the continued preservation of the town records even if a new vault is constructed in the Town Hall.

Existing Town Hall Vaults

(Reference: Assessment of Record Storage Conditions by Harold R. Cutler, P.E. and Chapter 66: Section 7. Custody of old and other records)

The vault located within the Town Clerk's office area is accessed throughout the workday and contains both active and inactive permanent documents as well as active documents with mandated non permanent retention requirements of months or years. For

example, election ballots and materials must be secured and protected prior to an election and voted ballots and election materials such as voter lists and wardens books, must be secured and protected after an election for a period of 22 months for a State election and for 30 days for a local election. This vault also contains many volumes of vital records which are necessary to create certified vital records. Census documents are also among the active records secured as they are produced for mailing and when they are received back for processing. Mailing and processing the census is mandated by the State and many of these documents contain information that is not public record. Unfortunately, a large volume of permanent records that require the safety and security of vault protection, but are rarely accessed for information are also stored in the office vault as there is no storage available in the second vault. The storage of these records severely impacts the active use of the office vault.

The second vault is located in the basement of the Town Hall. This vault provides storage for documents that are accessed less frequently. These are permanent historic records dating from when Sudbury was founded more than 370 years ago to present times. This vault is overfilled and it is difficult to access the records easily. This vault, if equipped with climate control, fire suppression and appropriate shelving, would remain as the most appropriate housing for the most ancient of town documents and records that are accessed infrequently. In this way, the climate would be maintained in the most efficient manner.

The shelving in these two vaults is make shift and not made to fit the spaces. This makes it difficult to store documents efficiently and makes access to the records difficult. The vaults are not equipped with climate control, fire alarm or fire suppression systems. Documents housed within these areas remain at risk. It is urgent for the Town to provide adequate security, fire protection and climate control for our permanent town records and artifacts to ensure preservation of our historic resources.

Specifications and Projected Project Cost

(Systematics, Upstairs Town Hall Vault Shelving Summary)

The Building Inspector, Jim Kelly and the Sudbury Permanent Building Committee were consulted on this project and provided engineering expertise and guidance in obtaining and verifying accuracy in vault planning, specifications and costs.

Historic Criteria for Vault Project

(Reference: SPR Bulletin NO. 3-92 January 21, 1992, SPR Bulletin NO. 2-96 June 6, 1996 and Technical Bulletins 1, 3, Community Preservation Coalition Bulletin)

Permanent records are by their nature, of historical and cultural importance to the Town. The Town Hall itself is located in a historic district. In 2008 and 2009, the CPC and the Historical Commission affirmed their commitment to the preservation of this historical resource by presenting and supporting articles for vote at the Annual Town Meetings. First, at the 2008 ATM to conduct a preservation survey of the Town Hall and at the 2009ATM, to appropriate funds for the repair, treatment and preservation of several volumes of ancient documents.

Several municipalities have received funding from Community Preservation Committees in their communities for the construction of new vaults and the upgrading of existing vaults with climate control and fires suppression and the restoration of permanent records. The Towns of Lincoln, Mendon, Lexington, Hudson and Westford are some of these communities. Several other towns have submitted proposals this year to their communities for these initiatives including Wayland, Westford and Salisbury.

As custodians, department heads and committee chairmen are legally responsible to protect their records from fire, flood, vandalism, theft and environmental damage. Secure storage in fireproof rooms with climate control, fire suppression and appropriate archival shelving satisfies this requirement. Providing fireproof vaults to secure town records has been mandated by the State since 1899. Sudbury's ancient records were saved from destruction when the Sudbury Town Hall burned to the ground in 1929 because the records were stored in a vault. We must provide adequate and secure archival storage to protect and preserve our historic town documents not only because we are legally required to do so, but to maintain this historic public resource for future generations.