

Request for Expressions of Interest For Purchase/Lease South Franklin Congregational Meeting House 762 Washington Street, Franklin, MA

The Town of Franklin is pleased to present this Request for Expressions of Interest (REI) for the purchase or lease and redevelopment of 762 Washington Street. The Town-owned property consists of one (1) parcel totaling 28,550 SF (0.655 acres) with a wood framed building with 1,620 SF finished interior floor area.

The existing structure, constructed c. 1856, and land was originally owned and used for religious purposes beginning in the mid-eighteen hundreds, by the First Congregational Church of Franklin, which ceased using it and deeded it to the Town in 1972. The Town constructed a water booster pumping station on a small portion of the parcel, and used the building and remaining property for a municipal historical museum until 2007, when the museum was relocated to Downtown Franklin. The Town has not made use of the property and building since 2007, other than use of the property for the water booster pumping station mentioned above.

In 2015 the Town contracted with Civitects PC to develop a [*Comprehensive Investigation and Analysis of Existing Conditions \(May 2015\)*](#). The resulting report included assessments of the building's architectural, structural, plumbing, mechanical and electrical assets, identified code concerns and accessibility issues, and recommended appropriate repairs and improvements. More recently the Town contracted with LLB Architects of Worcester, MA to conduct an [*Existing Conditions Report and Peer Review document \(September 2020\) of the former South Franklin Congregational Meeting House*](#). Both documents are available for viewing and downloading on the Town's website.

The Town has no current or anticipated use for the Property, other than the water booster pumping station, and wishes the building and remaining land be put to productive reuse. The Town has chosen to proceed with a REI at this time to solicit informal, yet serious proposals, subject to the process detailed herein, from qualified developers and other interested parties who wish to purchase or lease and redevelop the property.

The REI process is critical for a better understanding of existing market conditions, the formation of potential development options for the property, and the identification of community priorities. This process will provide the community with the information needed to ensure a meaningful and productive public process, which should lead to a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) in late spring or summer 2022.

The Town will consider reuse and redevelopment concepts for the property, except the continued operation of the water booster pumping station, which would put the property to productive use, and preserve the building's historic exterior. The reuse and redevelopment will be subject to a permanent historic preservation restriction and/or an affordable housing restriction.

Each Expression of Interest must include a letter of interest, and project description/narrative. The letter of interest must be signed by the principals, describe the proponent's interest in the property and the general intentions concerning the future use of the site. This letter shall also contain the nature and status of the organization acting as the proponent (whether a non-profit or

charitable institution, a venture, a corporation, a business association, or a joint venture) and the jurisdiction in which it is registered to conduct business. The project description must include narrative that provides an overview of the proposal, the experience and qualifications of the development team, and the capabilities the developer can marshal to achieve project objectives. A description of expected financial benefits to the Town, both short-term and long-term, must be included in each Expression of Interest. Ultimately, the developer selected will be responsible for payment of real estate and personal property taxes on the building, land and contents, or lease payments to the Town if appropriate.

Open House/Site Tours. The Town offers you the opportunity to learn more about the site through participation in one of two Open House and Site Tours scheduled for the following dates/times:

- Monday, March 14, 2022 between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.
- Monday, April 11, 2022 between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

Property Description and Condition. The Town invites you to examine the information contained within the two assessment documents mentioned above; both documents can be found on the Town's website

- (<https://www.franklinma.gov/administrator/pages/special-projects>).

Expressions of Interests Submission Deadline. The Town hopes to hear from individuals and organizations who will present compelling and appropriate proposals for the use of 762 Washington Street. Please submit Expressions of Interest to the Town Administrator's Office (contact information below) by April 29, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator
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