

*Annville Times Jan 11, 2008 A1*

# Haymarket approves \$2.3M property deal

## Several unknowns remain after landmark vote on Town Center

By DAN ROEM  
droem@timespapers.com

The Haymarket Town Council approved the sale of the Town Center property for \$2.3 million on Monday, meaning residents may soon have part of the so-called "walking town" they want, but at an unknown cost.

The deal with Haymarket-based developer Gerry Kennedy will allow four historic buildings in town to be saved and moved after the April 8 settlement date to the Town Center property.

Kennedy will also restore or refurbish three of the existing buildings at the Town Center, including the current town hall, to accommodate 16 to 18 small businesses.

Part of Kennedy's plan is also to have a one-acre parking lot constructed at the Town Center.

His goal is to have everything ready by Haymarket Day in September.

Unknowns include everything from how much money the new town hall at the Harrover property will cost and where the Town Council will meet after June 30, to just how successful Kennedy's plan will be at bringing in business.

"The majority of the town people want us to save the houses and make this a walking town," council member Ozzie Vazquez said during the 55-minute debate preceding the 5-1 vote in favor of the transaction.

Council member Bob Weir dissented. Vazquez joined fellow consenting council members Shelia Jarboe, Sue Shuryrn, Tasha Sikorsky and vice mayor John Cole in citing a plethora of reasons to support the sale.

He talked in depth about managing risk and how in accepting the deal, the town would know exactly what risks it would take. Without taking Kennedy's

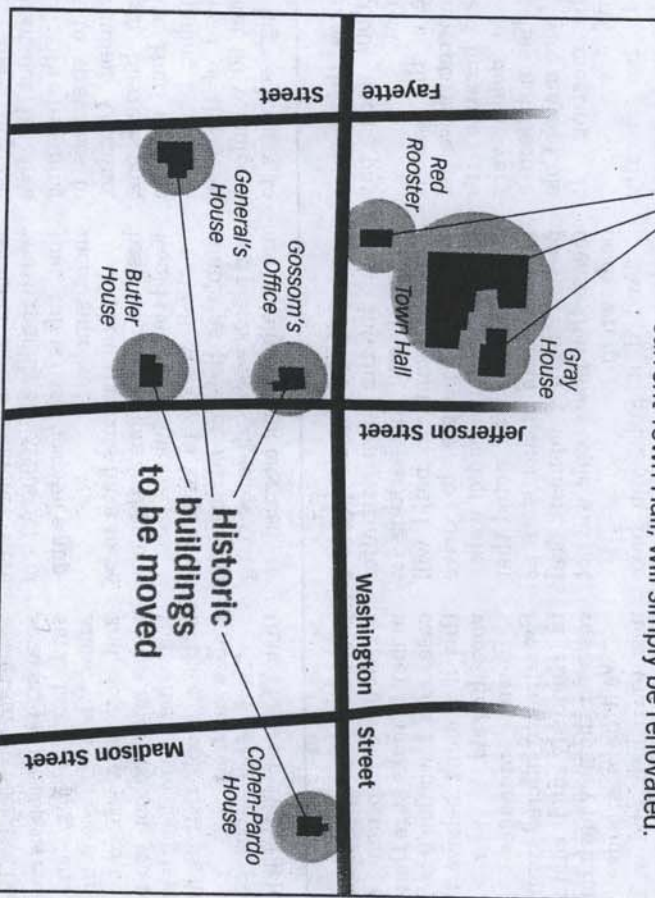
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# Haymarket considers development proposal

The Haymarket Town Council voted in favor of a \$2.3M development proposal on Monday that will bring 16-18 new small businesses to the area. Four historic buildings will be moved to the Town Center property along Washington and Jefferson streets while buildings already on the property, including the current Town Hall, will simply be renovated.

**Renovations; buildings to remain on site**

Washington and Jefferson streets while buildings already on the property, including the current Town Hall, will simply be renovated.



Gainesville Times Staff Graphic/Steve Wheat



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HISTORIC SITE FILE: *HAYMARKET HISTORIC DISTRICT*  
PRINCE WILLIAM PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM  
RELIC/Bull Run Reg Lib Manassas, VA

exactly one year this month, ever have to pay. Nevertheless, many offer, even if it is just the American equivalent of a couple of quarters.

"If people don't have the 40 or 50 cents, they're seen anyway," Irwin explained. "The idea is, a lot of people want to contribute something and want to, in a dignified way, say they paid for their service."

Extending free care locally is part of Irwin's calling too, even though he runs a for-profit pri-

vate practice office in Manassas as his day job.

"We gave a hospital bed to a fellow who was a diabetic," said Irwin, referring to a bilateral amputee who lived with his family on the third floor of a townhouse. "He outlived his insurance and, for some reason, they were going to take his bed away."

Up the three flights of stairs, Irwin and his crew ascended, carrying a bed in parts because it was too big to fit neatly in through the stairwell.

"Well, when you do this business, you learn a lot about how to

get things from one place to another," he said.

Shipping supplies from western Prince William County to places all over the world directly fits into Irwin's know-how. This year alone, the Medical Missionaries sent out 15 cargo containers filled with everything from crutches to stretchers to countries including Ukraine, Moldova, Congo, Sierra-Leone, Kenya, Somalia, Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

The last load of the year, packed by about 60 volunteers ranging from high schoolers to

senior citizens, was scheduled to go to Ghana, another new destination for the Medical Missionaries.

"Oh, it'll help thousands," said Irwin, who estimated the contents of the container were worth roughly \$750,000. "A lot of that stuff is basic hospital equipment, supplies."

Medical contents have to be basic too, much more so than one would typically think.

"Well, we try to keep it as simple as possible because the end places where these are going are usually without electricity or

water," he said.

At the time, Irwin was set to ship himself out, too, only with his destination being his pride and joy in Thomasique, Haiti.

"I think it's important to try to sustain this operation because so many people depend on it," he said, later adding, "and, you know, when you see it up front and close, and you go to these places and whatnot, you realize that what you're doing is so vital to these people that it's hard to walk away from."

"And I personally can't do that. That's why I'm still here."

potential walk-up business.

"Well, we're spending a lot of money to make sure that is the case, and I wouldn't be doing this if I didn't believe that it was," he said.

Town manager Gene Swearingen offered confidence in Kennedy and containing costs for the new town hall.

"We'll have a budget for a new town hall, and we'll just have to live within that budget," he said.

No one knows where the town council will meet before the new town hall is built.

"Lots of questions, no answers and an unacceptable offer," said Weir as he summed up the day's proceedings.

Vazquez offered a different take.

"Well, the way we voted was basically the way the town's people wanted us to go," he said.

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deal, however, the council members would not know if they would ever be able to sell the property for as much money while still saving the historic buildings.

"It's a risk for us to continue to sit in this building," said Jarboe.

Weir countered after the meeting that, "It's one thing to go on heartstrings. It's an entirely different thing to talk to the professionals who do this for a living, and they say that the absolute killer is the parking location and that nobody is going to walk."

Haymarket owes about \$1.1 million for the town hall, and because the town has not paid off the principle it owes on

three bank notes, the town is docked \$92,000 each pay period in interest.

"That's one of the reasons why it's so imperative we get out of here, because it's bleeding us to death very slowly and...it has not been a money maker," vice mayor Cole said after the meeting. "It never has been."

"It would be fiscally irresponsible for us to accept this bid," said Weir, the council member noted for being one of two dissenters last year when Haymarket voted to install a 4 percent meals tax. "At this point, we don't even know what (it's) going to cost."

He mentioned Monday there are no actual dollar figures to back up potential construction costs for a new town hall.

Weir also stressed there is no property owned by the town

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