

Islesboro Island News

July/August 2022

\$5.00



MBPC Update 8/4/22

At its meeting on Wednesday, August 3rd, the Select Board approved plans presented by the Municipal Building Project Committee (MBPC) for three building projects intended to provide additional space for health and safety services on Islesboro. These include a new building for the Health Center, to be located at

the west end of the Municipal Building parking lot; the renovation of the space vacated by the Health Center in the Municipal Building for use by Public Safety; and a Public Safety Garage located above the Narrows on Meadow Pond Road.

The estimated cost for the entire project is \$3,500,000. The breakdown is as follows:

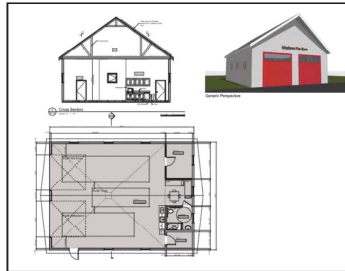
• Health Center building	\$2,488,000
• Public Safety renovation in Municipal Building	100,000
• Public Safety	432,000
• Contingency and fees	480,000
	\$3,500,000

It is expected that the renovation cost will be met through a combination of public and private funds. Fifty percent of total, \$1,750,000 will be covered through the acquisition of a 20-year bond, to be paid down with tax-levy funds. The balance, \$1,750,000, will be raised through contributions from Islesboro residents, both year-round and seasonal.

MBPC...continued on page 4



new health ctr front



Up-island garage



Mary Grinnell with Andrew Wyeth at Islesboro Town Hall (now Islesboro Historical Society) in 1962.

Mary Ella Rolerson Grinnell

When I brought Normajeane, my new bride, to Islesboro, we encountered a whirlwind in the ferry line. It was Mary Ella Grinnell, brimming with energy and welcoming us with rapid fire friendliness and quick island stories. As usual, Mary was all about island history.

Mary Ella Rolerson married Doug Grinnell and when World War II hit, they visited my folks, Midge and Burke Welldon, in Delaware. Doug was in the military, stationed in Norfolk, I believe, and the Grinnells spent several happy days being great company when Doug had the chance.

Mary Ella...continued on page 4

A Ferry Unusual Summer

By John King

So far, the summer of 2022 has been a pretty rocky one for the Maine State Ferry Service. As of this writing, mainland media reports that between May 9 and July 24 the MSFS had to cancel 29 regularly scheduled runs throughout Penobscot Bay. The Courier-Gazette reported 20 Islesboro runs were cancelled during the week of July 25.

This comes as no surprise. Back on May 9th Maine DOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note issued a written notice to the island communities served by the MSFS of possible service interruptions as the result of staffing issues in part the result of the pandemic. Per Coast Guard regulations, if a boat is not staffed with the requisite Captain, Engineer, Ordinary Seamen, Able Bodied Seamen and deckhands it may be able to go from point A to point B but it may not be able to carry cars or passengers. Indeed, that has occurred on the Islesboro run.

At an Advisory Board meeting on July 14th, MSFS General Manager Mark Higgins indicated staffing is down approximately 20% of normal as the result of the pandemic and other out of work issues. Unemployment in the State for the month of June stood at only 3%. There are no easy short-term solutions to this problem. Pay, while not unreasonable, is governed by the state's contracts with its unions. Potential employees are subject to random drug screenings (per the Coast Guard); for some that's a deterrent. The crews generally work one week on and one week off which means if one is not an island resident the job requires personnel to be away from home half the year. On the other hand, most folks consider the benefits, particularly health and retirement benefits, as quite good.

Higgins did provide some good news, however. First, the Executive Department implemented, as of July 1, an incentive program for staff with the idea that deck personnel will receive an incentive payment by not missing regularly scheduled shifts. In addition, the MSFS is initiating a program to attract more entry level personnel with a framework not only to retain those personnel but have them proceed through the ranks from deckhand, to ordinary seaman, to able bodied seaman, and, if possible,



The Maggie in dry dock- scheduled to return 8/10-12-ish

Nakomis Nelson photo

even farther. With luck this will meet with some success.

Our situation is not unique. Advisory Board member Hank Berg, who is the General Manager of Casco Bay Lines indicated Casco Bay has encountered similar personnel difficulties. Further afield, Washington State DOT, which operates the Washington State Ferry Service was hit particularly hard by the pandemic. It reportedly

experienced 1,017 lost runs between March of 2021 and December of 2021. It recently reported on July 19 that it was "incrementally adding service" at that point, in part, based upon its ability to "recruit, hire and train new employees..." The message here is we are not alone and we owe a debt of gratitude to everyone at the MSFS who helps to make our service work as well as it does.

There has been considerable discussion at Board meetings about communications between the MSFS and its clientele, particularly when things go awry. The MSFS is well aware of everyone's desire to know, as soon as possible, when things are not going according to schedule. Unfortunately, on occasion, no one, including the MSFS, knows of snags until they occur -resulting in no prior notice whatsoever. The MSFS does make an effort to advise people of issues through its 511 text messaging system and encourages people to sign up for notifications at <https://newengland511.org>. Many have found Facebook effective when people on the scene Grindle Point or Lincolnville and post updates.

Finally, on another note, at the request of the legislature's Joint Transportation Committee DOT is performing a "global" review of the ferry service which includes the current 50% operating subsidy from the highway trust fund. That subsidy is approximately \$6 million per year and its loss or reduction would have a significant impact on user costs.

Ferry...continued on page 6



Sure we can fit it...no problem!

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<i>Photography by:</i> Peggy Coyne, Jeff Glotzl, Lexy Martinez, Margie Mills	

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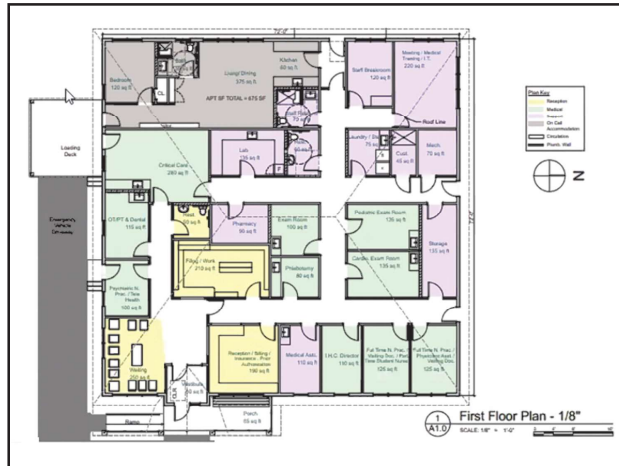
MBPC... continued from page 1

The Select Board expects to submit the complete proposal to the Town for a vote at a Special Town Meeting in September or October, 2022. If the vote is approved, the schedule for the Municipal Building Project is anticipated to be as follows:

- Fall 2022 – Stephen Blatt Associates hires a construction manager for the Health Center building, does construction design.
- Fall 2022 - Construction of the up-island Public Safety Garage begins.
- Spring 2023 – Construction of the IHC building begins.
- Winter 2024 – Renovation of the Municipal Building for Public Safety.

Throughout this process the Municipal Building Project Committee will inform and engage the Islesboro community through a variety of means – meetings, mailings, Zoom presentations, social media, and a website - <http://townofislesboro.com/committees/islesboro-municipal-building-project>

Submitted by the Municipal Building Project Committee



New Islesboro Health Center floor plan

Mary Ella... continued from page 1

When my grandfather, Islesboro-born Waldemar Veazie, died in 1969, Mary wrote a touching tribute poem, which we still cherish. Here's part of it:

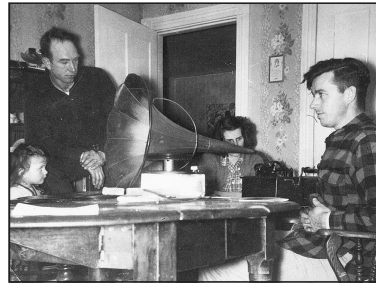
“...The sky in the East
Is not too red or too grey.
This will be my appointed day
So I must return again,
To the harbor where first I sailed.
I want to return to my childhood home
Where I lived before my work called me to roam.”

Some of those lines fit Mary too. Mary had a lifelong interest in Islesboro and its people, and she loved to talk about both. When I retired to our family home here, she would often call or write about episodes in our town, interspersed with family trees. The calls were great fun and resembled the letters she would write – pages crammed top to bottom with thoughts and info often written vertically and horizontally in the margins. On the envelopes too!

When the Islesboro Historical Society was putting together our 50th anniversary history update, “Tales and Treasures,” it seemed only natural that we include her in the book’s dedication. And so, we did, along with the photo that Mary took at the first meeting of the society.

Lately, of course, her calls had dropped off, but Mary was never far from my thoughts. She’s still there. Whenever I think of our history.

Submitted by Doug Welldon, Past President, Islesboro Historical Society



An early gathering of Island historians studying a “talking machine”. This photo, dated February 11, 1951, shows Islesboro Historical Society co-founder Jesse Rolerson on the right. Jesse’s sister, Mary Ella Grinnell took the picture and was also co-founder of IHS. At the bottom a note indicates “1st Historical Society meeting at Grinnell’s West Side,” and identifies others in the group as Joan Rolerson and youngster Dawn Grinnell, as well as Mary’s husband Doug Grinnell.

the Island Market

SPECIALTY PIZZAS

<p>Small (12") Large (16")</p> <p>Supreme Pepperoni, sausage, peppers, black olives, mushrooms, onions</p> <p>Meat lover's Pepperoni, sausage, ham, bacon, ground beef</p> <p>Spicy Italian Pepperoni, salami, capicola ham, peppers, black olives, onions, banana peppers</p> <p>Cheeseburger Thousand Island, ground beef, tomatoes, pickles, red onion</p> <p>BBQ chicken BBQ sauce, Cheddar, chicken, bacon, red onion</p> <p>Buffalo chicken Buffalo sauce, chicken, red onion, gorgonzola</p> <p>Chicken Bacon Ranch Ranch, chicken, bacon, tomato, red onion</p> <p>Hawai'i Five-O Pineapple, ham, bacon, red onion, banana peppers</p>	<p>\$13.99 \$22.99</p> <p>Margherita Tomatoes, fresh mozzarella, fresh basil, Parmesan</p> <p>Veggie Extravaganza Spinach, mushrooms, tomatoes, black olives, red onions</p> <p>Spicy Veggie Tomatoes, onions, black olives, peppers, banana peppers</p> <p>Greek Kalamata olives, spinach, tomatoes, feta, red onion</p> <p>Rhoda Special Pesto, spinach, mushrooms, black olives, feta</p> <p>Tania Special Pesto, tomatoes, ricotta, artichoke hearts, spinach</p> <p>White & green Arugula, ricotta, fresh mozzarella, Parmesan, olive oil and garlic</p> <p>Fun Guy Crimini mushrooms, fresh mozzarella, Parmesan, gorgonzola</p>
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BUILD YOUR OWN

<p>Three cheese (mozzarella, provolone, Romano)</p> <p>Additional toppings</p> <p>Choose your sauce</p> <p>Marinara Alfredo Pesto BBQ Ranch Buffalo Olive oil & garlic</p> <p>Choose your meats</p> <p>Pepperoni Sausage Bacon Ham Salami Ground beef Chicken</p> <p style="text-align: center;">734-6672</p>	<p>Small (12") \$9.99</p> <p>Choose your cheese</p> <p>Three-cheese blend Fresh mozzarella Ricotta Parmesan Feta Goat cheese Gorgonzola Vegan Chao (add \$2)</p> <p>Choose your vegetables</p> <p>Tomatoes, mushrooms, red onions, black olives, kalamata olives, rainbow peppers, roasted red peppers, banana peppers, pepperoncini, jalapenos, spinach, arugula, artichoke hearts, sun-dried tomatoes, garlic, pineapple, pickles</p>	<p>Large (16") \$14.99</p> <p>Choose your crust</p> <p>Hand-tossed Thin crust Gluten-free (add \$2)</p> <p>Choose how it's baked</p> <p>Take and bake (Finish in your oven, 12" only) Golden brown (Crisp with a light oven char) Extra crispy (Deep brown with a crunch)</p>
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islesborofood.com/islandmarket 7:30 – 5:30 Mon – Thu, 7:30 – 7:00 Fri & Sat