

June 26, 2012 9:03PM

Belmont calls for third vote on purchase

BELMONT— Selectmen have announced a special TownMeeting to ask residents for the third time to approve the purchase of the Northway Bank building, and to approve the closure and relocation of part of Mill Street.

If voters approve the two proposals, the bank building would become the new town office building and the town bandstand would be moved to the discontinued section of the street, town officials said.

Twice in past years voters have been asked to buy the building, which was built in 1940, for town use. In 2008, when the building's owners' sale price was \$300,000, voters defeated the proposal. Two years ago, with the price dropped to \$275,000, voters again defeated a request to purchase the building.

The owners of the building have told town officials that the price is now \$250,000, and the selectmen say there is money to pay the cost in a capital reserve fund, said Town Administrator K. Jeanne Beaudin.

If voters approve, the town offices would be moved there from the current cramped quarters at Town Hall at 143 Main St., a building that was built in 1910. The present town offices are cramped, and the second floor of the building is unusable for town officials, Beaudin said. The building has been renovated numerous times, and a roof brace was installed a few years ago to keep the upper structure intact, she said.

"There's just no space for anything there anymore," she said.

The second question to voters asks for approval of the town's plan to relocate the Mill Street Extension and move the town bandstand to that small street area, which abuts the bank building on two sides. The street section would be relocated to behind the town library, she said.

The town has just begun its long-planned Belmont Village Revitalization Project, which is designed to energize the village area and create a service and recreational center to provide for the needs and enjoyment of the community.

The revitalization project plan does not include the two proposals coming before voters, but the building purchase and street change, if approved, would further improve the village,

Beaudin said.

"Going forward, these changes and the revitalization would all tie in nicely together," she said.

The deliberative session part of the meeting will be held July 23 at 6 p.m. in the Corner Meeting House. Voting will take place on Aug. 21 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Belmont High School.

- - - - -

Dan Seufert may be reached at dseufert@newstote.com (<mailto:dseufert@newstote.com>).