

To the Yachats City Council,

We reach out to you again to stress the urgency of the Little Log Church Museum repair project. We face a hard deadline in early January. The time for inaction has passed. We need to be on the agenda for the January 6, 2022 City Council meeting.

On December 7, 2021, the Parks and Commons Commission voted to recommend to Council to commit to the repair project for summer 2022. They voted with the knowledge, as we have repeatedly communicated to the City, that such a commitment needs to be made in early January. This deadline exists so that the contractor (with whom we believe we qualify for a special exception to the standard bidding process per ORS 279C) has sufficient notice to schedule the repair work.

We understand that Council, as expressed at the August 18, 2021 meeting, desires "community input" for this repair project. It has been communicated to us that Council might not wish to discuss the Little Log Church Museum repair project until some undefined community input occurs.

However, Council has taken no action in the four months since to solicit input — or to even establish what such input would look like beyond complying with standard public meeting processes.

The Little Log Church Museum is a City-owned building. City Council further established in Goal A of the City's Comprehensive Plan that the City will protect this historic structure. The City has a clear legal and fiduciary responsibility to maintain this public building. By extension, City Council is responsible for setting policy to protect and maintain this building.

The Little Log Church and Museum Board consists of seven members who volunteer our time to make this historic building accessible to the public. We are not professional project managers or engineers or community coordinators. Our by-laws, established in City of Yachats Resolution number 304 on September 16, 1997, charge us with directing facility functions such as presenting local art and hosting weddings and special events.

In no way, shape, or form do we exist to shepherd and manage a six-figure repair project.

It is regrettable that Council and the City have let it fall to us to seek out and coordinate with engineers and other specialists to investigate the condition of the facility and chart a path forward.

Nevertheless we have diligently taken up this work, in spite of a number of obstacles, and brought it to the finish line where we have a clear scope of work and a plan to repair this historic City-owned building.

Furthermore we must emphasize that we have no viable alternative at this time. This plan is based on the current condition of the building. The structural investigation, presented to Council in August, highlighted the dire situation and the risk in delaying repairs for another year. We have no guarantee that we would be left with any path forward by waiting any longer. We do not know what such a path would look like — if it even exists, which we have every reason to doubt.

Years of deferring maintenance brought us to where we are today. That responsibility is not owned by this City Council or management, but shared by many over the years. Still, we are where we are today, with this Council responsible for the course forward.

On a number of major City projects in recent years, from the Oceanview Drive transition to the farmers market contract to the vacation rental cap, the City Council has integrated community input as part of regular Council meetings in their decision making process. Indeed it is why Council meetings are public. It is why regular meetings exist. It is why City Councilors are elected: to listen to and represent the community in public meetings.

The Parks and Commons Commission held a public meeting on December 7, 2021 in which this project was on the agenda, discussed, and voted on. This recommendation was further passed on by the chair of the commission via memo to the Mayor and City Manager.

It is standard operating procedure to have a commission hold a public discussion of a City project and then vote to recommend to City Council to take action. That process has been followed here.

We are requesting, in accordance with these well-established standards, and with consideration to the project's early January deadline, that the Yachats City Council take up this conversation at their January 6, 2022 meeting.

Sincerely,

The Little Log Church and Museum Board

Karl H. Christianson, Mary Crook, Katie Johnson, James Kerti, Vicki Martin, Carl Foster Miller, Leon Sterner