

https://fredericksburg.com/news/local/vfw-members-ask-city-council-to-help-with-cost-of-study-before-building-renovation/article_9f59075b-5005-5db7-8ca5-8b055074f657.html

ALERT TOP STORY

VFW members ask City Council to help with cost of study before building renovation

Taft Coghill

May 13, 2022

More than two dozen members of VFW Post 3103 were present at City Hall on Tuesday night as their commander, Todd Taylor, addressed Fredericksburg City Council.

Taylor voiced his concerns about an \$8,000 archaeological study required by city code before the VFW building at 2701 Princess Anne St. can be renovated.

He requested that, given the various community uses of the VFW building, the study requirement be waived, or that the city pay for it.

Some city officials expressed concern that waiving the fee would set a precedent for other organizations with similar requests.

City Councilman Matt Kelly pledged \$1,000 of his personal funds to assist with the archaeological study, and council directed City Manager Tim Baroody and his staff to explore additional ways to help.

“I understand the staff position that if you open the door to one, you open the door to more,” Kelly said. “That is a legitimate point to make in this conversation. I also agree with some of the points made by the VFW regarding what the building is used for and how it is used as a community asset ... There needs to be a broader conversation amongst the council on how we want to deal with this.”

People are also reading...

- 1 Police arrest 3 wanted people after simultaneous standoffs in Spotsylvania**
- 2 King, Daniels run away with Historic Half victories**
- 3 Commanders buy land, draw up plans for \$3 billion 'mini-city' stadium complex in Woodbridge**
- 4 A 17-year-old died by suicide hours after being scammed. The FBI says he was targeted in 'sextortion' scheme.**

The archaeological ordinance was adopted by City Council in recent years and is considered an important part of achieving council's 2035 vision for the city.

Kelly noted there have been multiple important discoveries on construction sites, including the remains of Civil War soldiers at the site of Riverfront Park in 2015.

Kelly said every time an archaeological study is conducted "we learn about our community, where we've been and where we're going."

VFW Post 3103 has been in Fredericksburg since its inception in 1943. The building was constructed in 1953 and its last expansion was in 1964.

Since that time, there have only been repairs and upkeep. The building has the same layout and many of the same fixtures as it did in the mid-1960s.

"What would your home look like today if it were built to code in 1964 and had no changes?" Taylor said. "What code changes do you think happened in that timeframe with plumbing, electrical and structural requirements? ... These are the things we are faced with continually, and are asking the city of Fredericksburg to help us close the requirements to get the needed construction and renovations completed."

Taylor said construction plans include a 4,000-square-foot building adjacent to the existing structure. The original building will also be renovated.

Silver Companies, a local developer, is the primary donor for the project.

Silver Companies vice president for planning Jervis Hairston said he's unsure what the total cost will be because they have yet to finalize a site plan approval or obtain a building permit.

"Remember, we are a nonprofit and we have requirements that are mandated to be filled yearly," Taylor said. "So any funds that are captured during a year typically have already been allocated to these requirements. We have little extra in funds to set aside for these additional building costs."

Taylor noted that many community services are held at the VFW. It is a polling site for Ward 4 residents during elections.

The city donated the lodge property to the VFW by a deed of gift in 2003, subject to the right to use the lodge as a polling place, according to Sonja Cantu, the city's public information officer.

The property will revert back to the city if the VFW ceases to exist or attempts to convey to a third party.

The VFW is also a meeting place for Disabled American Veterans and the Marine Corps League. Taylor said veterans gather there to work out emotional issues attributed to post-traumatic stress disorder. Alcoholics Anonymous meets there, and it's a site for homeschooled children to study dramatic arts.

"Where would these groups meet if the VFW in Fredericksburg were not available?" Taylor said. "What impact would there be in the city without these services?"

Kelly said it's important for city officials to send the message that they support the veteran community. He said oftentimes he hears the phrase "thank you for your service," uttered to veterans but it becomes cliché if there is no action behind it from the city and community.

“This project needs to be completed and finished,” Kelly said. “We have the Silver Companies who have done yeoman’s service in trying to bring this project forward ... I think the community needs to make a commitment and I think there may be some wiggle room for us where we can assist.”

Taft Coghill Jr: 540/374-5526

tcoghill@freelancestar.com

Around The Web



The #1 Mistake That Makes Bad Knees Worse (Watch)

Arthrozene



The Ins and Outs of Travel Insurance

AAA



REVCONTENT



4 Airports to Avoid for Connecting Flights

AAA



Place a Bottle in Your Parked Car's Tire if Traveling Alone, Here's Why

Livestly





One Simple Method To Keep Your Blood Sugar Below 100

Health Truth Finder



Everyone Wanted to Date Her in the 70s, This is Her Today

Livestly



Renowned Phd Economist Who Called the 2008 Crash Makes Next Major Prediction: "S

Rogue Economics



What You Need to Know About Renewing Passports

AAA



Celebrities Who Were Secretly Incredible Athletes

American Upbeat

By Taft Coghill

I've been covering Fredericksburg area communities since 2002, mainly as a sports reporter. I occasionally cover local government, as well.

