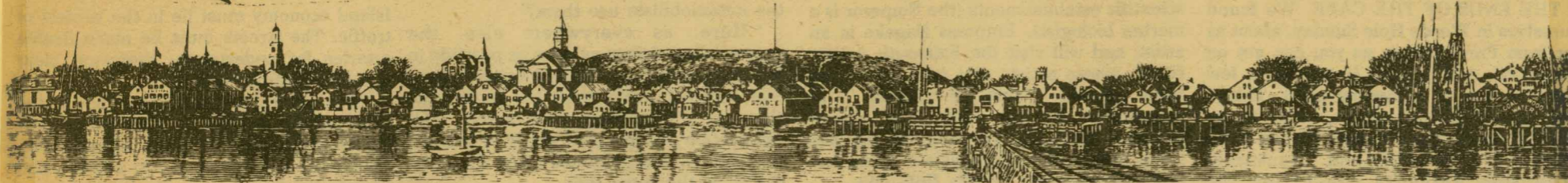


November 6, 1975

# PROVINCETOWN ADVOCATE



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Thursday, October 2, 1975

**ARTICLE 8:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen, pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 14, of the Massachusetts General Laws and any other enabling authority, to purchase for historical landmark and other municipal purposes the land located at Commercial Street, Provincetown, Barnstable County, Massachusetts, known as the Old Center Methodist Church property and for this purpose to appropriate the sum of \$135,000.00; that to raise said appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen is hereby authorized to borrow \$135,000.00 pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 7(3), of the Massachusetts General Laws, and to issue at one time or from time to time, bonds or notes of the Town therefore, and to authorize the Committee for the Acquisition of the Old Center Church Historical Building to apply to any appropriate State or Federal Agency for grants to be used towards the acquisition of said land and/or reconstruction of the building thereon, any grants so acquired prior to the sale of said bonds or notes shall be applied to reduce said authorized indebtedness to the extent that such grants are applicable to the acquisition; or to take any action relative thereto.

(Requested by the Board of Selectmen and the Committee for the Acquisition of the Old Center Methodist Church Historical Building)

## \$135,000 Article Nov. 12

# Chrysler Purchase Before Voters

Taking another giant step towards Provincetown's purchase of the former Chrysler Art Museum, the selectmen voted unanimously Monday for a November 12 special Town Meeting on the acquisition.

The selectmen had already been informed of a tentative \$135,000 price tag on the structure, which first housed the Center Methodist Church and later failed as an entertainment complex. The \$135,000 price was confirmed yesterday by Josephine Del Deo, who serves on the committee investigating purchase of the building to convert it to a multipurpose gallery and museum. The building is owned by the First National Bank of Cape Cod, whose trustees approved the \$135,000 price Tuesday.

"The price is a good figure, a fair figure," Del Deo said yesterday. "The town would be ridiculous to refuse it."

### Selectmen Approval

Four of the five selectmen gave their full approval to the purchase Monday, but Warren Alexander, selectmen chairman, said many legitimate business questions needed settling before he also endorsed the acquisition.

Town acquisition of the imposing white-painted wood structure, which dominates its stretch of Commercial Street, would save the building and stop "the worst kind of commercialism" in that area of town, Del Deo told the selectmen 11 days ago in the first airing of her proposal.

### Building Uses

She said the building would be used during the next two years as home for the Provincetown Library, which is being renovated, and then as a gallery for the

Provincetown Art Association's permanent collection, exhibitions of the Group Gallery, and historic collections drawn from the Firemen's Association, the fishing industry and as a center for the Provincetown Historical Association.

The idea immediately caught on with the selectmen, townspeople at that meeting, and this week with the bank. Bank officials said last week they had half a dozen serious offers of at least \$160,000 for the building.

John Roderick, an official of the bank's Provincetown branch, said yesterday the bank would like to see the town buy it. "We'd like to do what's best for the town. We would not like to see it go for a sandal shop, but if that's what it comes to . . .," his voice trailed off.

Del Deo yesterday said the bank made several concessions in setting the price. They lost interest and insurance money and used out-of-pocket expenses to operate the building this summer, she said, referring to the \$135,000 price which covers the mortgage.

Discussing the "strong campaign" that would be mounted to win voter approval, Del Deo said the project "appeals to something very basic in the community; the whole concept of the town as it ought to be." She said the costs and all the things planned for the building would be outlined during the campaign.

Both Del Deo and Cyril Patrick, another member of the purchase investigating committee, said having it would be a one-shot expense for taxpayers.

"We don't want to see this become a

bottomless pit into which the town pours revenue. We are just asking the town to buy the building," Del Deo said Monday, adding it can be a very good revenue producer, but would have to be gradually set up.

Among the things discussed before the selectmen Monday were the bids for construction of library shelves in its temporary quarters and the library reconstruction. Both bids were opened last week and must be settled by the end of the month.

With the agreement of Joseph Lema, who is a library trustee and served on the purchase investigating committee, the selectmen decided the bids could be accepted but construction delayed until after the special Town Meeting had decided the acquisition issue.

The bids for shelves specify Town Hall, but it was agreed there would be no problem in having them built at the former Chrysler building.

The remaining stumbling block that was discussed involves delaying library construction until late this year while the shelf contractor works on relocating the books.

Cyril Patrick, also on the investigating committee, gave a report on the building's condition. During reconstruction in 1974 the side walls were rebuilt, steel stairs added to reach the second floor, and new wiring, lights, and exit windows and doors installed, he said.

The biggest building condition problem is an interior foundation wall which needs

buttressing, he said. Another question mark concerning the heating system was apparently successfully settled Tuesday when, according to Patrick, it was run at full pressure.



Looking west from belfry of Center M. E. Church. Souvenir of Provincetown, Mass. First Landing Place of the Pilgrims, Nov. 11, 1620, o.s.

*Having a good time.*

*Elmer.*