

## **Green Garden Township will NOT be moving forward with the Town Hall project**

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**Existing Town Hall: Parking Lot Paving, HVAC, Septic Grant: \$58,312**

**Existing Town Hall: Renovation Grant: \$500,000**

Grant for Parking Lot Paving, HVAC, Septic: **approved October 28th 2022**

Grant for Renovation: **approved May 22nd 2023**

The Current Township Board, after taking office on May 19<sup>th</sup> 2025, was made aware that the former Board committed to \$132,708.29 of invoices for the renovation project with no construction work started: it was only for engineering, architecture, site plan, feasibility study, testing, and a permit that was submitted to Will County but not approved. The former Board had 2 years to start the project and took no prompt action in 2 years to renovate. Despite this inaction, one former Board member has blamed the new Board for this expense and has claimed the project can be completed now- even though no construction was started under their leadership in 2 years. As a result, the new Administration and Township has inherited the costs and responsibilities of the previous Board's lack of progress.

The former Board only uploaded \$22,245 of invoices for Grant reimbursement in these 2 years. The Township was re-imbursed for this amount- while \$110,463.29 of invoices were used up and not approved for Grant reimbursement. It is the previous Board who obligated the Township to these invoices- not the current Board.

The project went way over budget: The Original Renovation Cost was \$996,055.50. This would have cost the Township \$437,743.50 out of pocket. It was later brought down to \$648,789.

However, with the reduced price brought down to \$648,789, the Township is responsible for **additional costs**: traffic study, field engineering & layout, dewatering, site demolition, tree removal, general excavation, soil stabilization, temporary erosion control, fencing, landscaping, site utilities, septic system, asphalt paving, site concrete, structural steel, millwork, roofing, fire suppression system, and if any, mold remediation, Cost: \$100,000 or more. This brings the total cost of this existing Town Hall renovation to about \$750,000 or more.

The former Board did not secure a permit nor start any construction or renovation in the 2-2 ½ years once the Grants were awarded. The project was put on hold by the former Board on March 5 2024. To renew or change the scope of work now would require: following all Federal Procurement Guidelines, revised Architectural Design Plans (original 56 pages), and a Project Manual issued for Bids (original 328 pages).

The current Board was not in favor of this renovation, and prior to the election, spoke about three other possible options and was elected by the residents because of this. The following are a few of the reasons the current Board was not in favor of this costly project:

1. The existing town Hall was deeded to our Township for township business use only, and once we stop using it, it reverts back to the family that deeded it's use to us. We cannot sell the property and realize equity in the future. We felt this would be a waste of taxpayers' money and Township money.
2. The Town Hall is only 2,000+ square feet and because it sits on only 1/4 acre of land we cannot expand the square footage of the building, nor does it have adequate parking space.
3. Public Safety Concern: The building is approximately 37 feet from Monee-Manhattan Road. Parked vehicles to the street are approximately 20 feet away. With the Will County Road Expansion project approved, the road will be widened with increased traffic, and the existing Stop Sign, which currently slows down the traffic, will change to a Traffic Light, allowing traffic to pass at 45 mph or more.

### **New Town Hall Building Grant request and timeline: December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026**

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| 5-19-25 | New Board assumed office.   |
| 6-9-25  | First Board Meeting.  |
| 6-26-25 | Special Meeting of the Electorate/Residents to discuss 4 Town Hall Options.   |
| 7-14-25 | Board votes to pursue Option 3: Build New Town Hall on 6 acres owned by Township based on the discussion and surveys from the 6-26-25 Special Electorate Meeting.   |
| 7-17-25 | Application is submitted to Will County to transfer Grant from existing Town Hall renovation project to the new Town Hall building project.   |
| 8-13-25 | The day before a meeting to decide if the County would transfer the Grant to the new Town Hall, a Will County Official, who was not involved in the project, speaks to the Director of Accenture ( <i>person in charge of the Grant on behalf of Will County</i> ) and gives opinion that we <b>cannot</b> complete the project on time (December 31 <sup>st</sup> 2026). |
| 8-14-25 | Director meets with Will County to discuss Grant transfer to the new Town Hall.   |
| 8-15-25 | Will County denies our request to transfer Grant away from the renovation of the old Town Hall to the new Town Hall. Reason: "feasibility and timeliness." They were concerned we <b>cannot</b> complete it on time.  |
| 8-18-25 | Received denial email and immediately called Director of Accenture.<br>Detailed discussion: She mistakenly thought the Will County Official was involved in the process- so once corrected, she told the Township Supervisor to continue with the two County meetings we had scheduled, and she would see what she can do, but no promises.                               |
| 8-21-25 | Board (Civil Engineer) meets with Will County Land Use: Land Use says no issue to secure permit and opinions were, no issues getting project completed by 10-31-26.   |

- 8-25-25 Board (Civil Engineer) meets with Will County Highway Dept: who also says no issue to secure permit and opinions were no issues getting project completed by 10-31-26.
- 8-25-25 Called Director back and updated her on the two positive Will County Meetings.
- 9-8-25 Call from Director of Accenture saying Will County changed their mind and thinks the new Town Hall option will be best for the community so they are now approving it.
- 9-8-25 However, Will County moves the timeline to complete the new Town Hall to July 31<sup>st</sup> 2026. Reason: "feasibility and timeliness." They were concerned we cannot complete it on time. The County said they wanted time to "reallocate" the Grant if we did not complete it on time.
- 9-17-25 Request to have Will County go back to October 31<sup>st</sup> 2026 (previously revised from 12-31-26) timeline so we have adequate time to complete the new Town Hall.
- 9-18-25 Request denied.
- 9-22-25 Workshop Board Meeting: discussed the move-up timeline and expressed concern that we cannot complete the project 3 months sooner. Original completion timeline was December 31<sup>st</sup> 2026, then revised to October 31<sup>st</sup> 2026, now July 31<sup>st</sup> 2026.
- 9-30-25 After careful consideration, the Board concludes there is NOT enough time to complete the project by July 31<sup>st</sup> 2026, with an Occupancy Permit approved by Will County by August 14<sup>th</sup> 2026.

After many hours of investigation and discussion with the Town Hall Building company, Civil Engineer, and others, the Board concludes not to pursue the new Town Hall building project or the existing Town Hall renovation project. Reason: neither project can be completed within the revised Will County timeline of July 31<sup>st</sup> 2026. If it is not completed on time, the Township will not receive any Grant money. The Township would be responsible for the total cost of the new Town Hall (\$750,000), or the cost of the old Town Hall (\$648,789) plus an estimated \$100,000.

The Township Board does not believe it is in the best interest of the Township to try to meet this shortened, unrealistic timeline.

Supervisor sends email on behalf of the Board to Director of Accenture informing her that the Township Board has decided not to proceed with the New Town Hall Project Grant because of the July 31<sup>st</sup> 2026 construction timeline.

Township Board Grant email:

To: Director of Accenture in charge of the Grant/Project on behalf of Will County

After careful consideration, Green Garden Township has decided not to proceed with the New Town Hall Project Grant.

Initially, both the Township Board and our community were optimistic about completing the project, ensuring invoices were paid, and the necessary time needed

for grant funds to be dispersed by December 31 2026. However, the timeline was later moved up to an October 31 2026 construction completion date; and then unexpectedly shortened to July 31 2026.

I was informed that this change stemmed from Will County's concerns about "feasibility and timeliness", and their need to reallocate the grant if the project could not be completed on schedule. Unfortunately, reducing the timeline by an additional 3 months due to a timeliness concern is inefficacious and compromises our ability to deliver the project successfully on time.

While the Township was confident in meeting the October 31 2026 timeline, the revised July 31st timeline is not feasible. Therefore, we must respectfully withdraw from the grant opportunity.

On behalf of the Green Garden Township Board.  
Dean Christofilos, Township Supervisor