

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT  
FUNDING APPLICATION 2013

PROJECT NAME: Build The MAC

SPONSOR ORGANIZATION: Minerva Arts Center

CPA CATEGORY: Open Space and Recreation Land

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$1,550,000 CPA FUNDS REQUESTED: \$ 175,000/ 11 %

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Minerva Arts Center is a 501(c)3 established in December 2010 and most recently operated in the former Incarnation Church on Massachusetts Avenue in North Adams for 18 months. Successfully staging 14 community productions, 5 concerts, and full summer workshops for youth, the MAC had tremendous support and a unique following until zoning restrictions made that location not viable. Our mission is to promote the importance of an arts-based education by providing high quality arts programming, to inspire creativity in our community, and to offer opportunities for students and adults of all ages to realize their true artistic potential. The MAC wishes to continue providing the community with an indoor and outdoor venue that will lend itself to educational and professional use in the arts and interpretive sciences including agriculture and access to the trail systems maintained by the Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation, as well as the planned bike path, and access to the Hoosac River.

a. The goal of this project is to develop a multi-use community arts complex with the primary focus on a state of the art indoor 250 seat performance space and additionally, an outdoor educational summer stage, that would provide access for community arts related programming. Our concept includes teaching gardens, outdoor green space, including picnic tables, with trail and river access. Other opportunities include hosting a year-round, farmers market, seed swap, and/or food subscription program. The goal is to bring talented organizations together at a community crossroads for arts and educational opportunities.

b. Williamstown is in need of a community driven, centrally located space for both artistic and agricultural learning to create, share, and explore as one community under "one roof".

\* Arts Education: Minerva's, Artistic Director, Kathleen O'Mara, has worked in the Northern Berkshire community since 1996, DBA, Minerva Stage. Having 20 years of 'in-town' business experience, it is evident that a performing arts complex, and a destination of arts culture, for the community at large is needed.



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION- continued

Arts programming and after-school offerings within neighboring school districts is limited in the scope of what our talented, high quality performance -capable students are truly destined to achieve. The MAC intends to continue to support regional youth by offering year- round quality training in performance (theatre, music, dance), visual, and "natural arts". A home for Minerva youth to create their work.

### \*Community and Professional Theatre Year-Round 250 Seat Theatre Use:

The Minerva Arts Center, in collaboration with Professional Theatre companies, will provide year-round community and professional performances. With a shared calendar and affordable access to the facility, there is a need to provide a year round destination for entertainment in our community, where every week there will be "something going on at The MAC!" Initial concepts include: performances, concerts, youth nights, arts-related films/ lectures. A home for professionals in their art to share their work.

\*Agricultural Crossroads: Currently there is no land used for community gardens with an opportunity for learning and exploring. This new open and accessible venue will offer these opportunities. Returning the land to the community as open space, the MAC intends to provide a central location for community members with an appreciation for natural resources. Teaching gardens, agricultural activities as well as access to trail systems and rivers, will be at home at the MAC.

c. Build The MAC would serve the following populations in our community:

- (1) Youth and adults in our greater region, interested in arts programming.
- (2) Professional Theatre Directors, Choreographers, Playwrights, Musicians, Technicians and Management by offering a work space and performance venue.
- (3) The community of agricultural, and organic growers, and naturalists, who would be enabled to share at the crossroads.
- (4) For the larger community, gatherings such as meetings, conferences, and celebrations would be possible; and finally,
- (5) Tourists, by adding to the cultural variety available in the Berkshires.

d. The Master Plan of 2002 states that "we (the Town) need to provide a wide range of recreational activities", and "given the importance of our natural setting, and Williamstown's identity, protecting scenic vistas and preserving open space and access to it" is important. Build The MAC project is consistent with these goals. The Master Plan 2002 also states that "our cultural resources, in performing arts and museums add value to cultural life and they are significant economic resources." Build The MAC project is focused on improving accessible cultural experiences as well as an open natural venue for the community to share.

Build The MAC project is new development within the existing town center, another goal of the Master Plan 2002.

## 1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION - continued

e. Build The MAC project will improve the quality of life for residents by:

- (1) offering the community affordable performing arts education and experiences;
- (2) providing attractive open space with access to the planned bike trail;
- (3) offering a community use venue for groups who desire indoor and outdoor space for an event, e.g. arts fair, lecture, performances, concerts, celebrations; and
- (4) creating an attractive and accessible use of property in a central part of town offering a visually appealing and welcoming gathering place.

## 2. PROJECT READINESS/FEASIBILITY

a. Build The MAC is ready to proceed once funding is in place. The land to be acquired is identified and sellers in agreement with price and usage. The following steps have been made:

- (1) Preliminary concept drawings of site layout and building use have been created. (See attachment)
- (2) Relevant professionals have been consulted regarding the concept, land use, building use and renovation costs.
- (3) A Scoping Meeting has been held with Andrew Groff, Building Inspections office and town officials including Peter Fohlin, Jeff Kennedy and Mike Card have been informed of the project.
- (4) A general contractor has been consulted and it is in their opinion that the cost estimate is feasible.
- (5) Preliminary Project Plans and budgets have been created.
- (6) Environmental study has been conducted, and the land has been determined clean.
- (7) A Survey has been completed and the boundaries have been confirmed.

b. The project will proceed as it continues to achieve its goals. The first step is to purchase the property. This will be accomplished through fund raising efforts, grant opportunities, capital campaign, and a loan. Once funding is in place for each phase, that phase will be implemented. The estimated time of completion for the project build out is set for September of 2015.

### 3. PROJECT TASKS/IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Working Project Task and Implementation Schedule:

#### 2014

1st Qtr &  
2nd Qtr

Fundraising and Acquisition  
Complete project plans/begin RFP process

3rd Qtr

Relocation of MAC Treasures (on going fundraiser)  
Clear and prepare open space  
Complete RFP process for building and landscaping renovation

4<sup>th</sup> Qtr

Landscape open space on property for river and trail access  
Begin main building renovation

#### 2015

1st Qtr

Continue on main building renovation  
Marketing efforts for site use

2nd Qtr

Complete main building renovation  
Parking plan implementation  
Obtain leases for main building and outdoor venue use of space

3rd Qtr

Tenants open in main building, e.g., café/bakery, boutique  
Begin use of main building and grounds

4<sup>th</sup> Qtr

Begin outbuildings  
Complete outbuildings and implement uses  
Begin agriculture program  
Begin after school programming and weekend workshops

#### 2016

1st Qtr

The MAC is in full operation with a full schedule of events

#### 4. PROJECT TEAM

The advisory board for this project includes the following professionals in our community;

Minerva Arts Center Board of Directors:

Kathleen O'Mara (Artistic Director) has taught, directed and produced performing arts workshops, events, and productions in the Berkshires since 1996. Kathleen has artist in residences in Los Angeles and at the Yale Center for British Art. Kathleen has developed new works, created academic performance pieces, and has directed hundreds of youth and adult productions around the country. Kathleen has navigated The Minerva Arts Center from conception in 2010 to currently securing a new home for the MAC.

Edward Cating (Executive Director) has worked in professional and community theatre throughout the Berkshires. Edward served as Production Manager for WilliNet Cable Access TV from 2006 to 2011, and as Executive Director of The Minerva Arts Center since its inception. Edward received his academic training in theatre and art from Southwestern University and The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Laurie Brenner (Chief Financial Officer) is President of Financial Firebird Corporation, in addition, she is the property manager for 150 North Street Associates in Pittsfield. Laurie, an accomplished pianist, has accompanied many local productions, with organizations such as, The Minerva Arts Center, elementary school choirs and her annual residency at Mount Greylock Regional High School. Laurie received her MBA degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Advisory Board: Jim Briggs, Dawn Broadwell, Joe Finnegan, Don Goodrich, Elinor Goodwin, David Lachman, Barbara McLucas, Eric Nottke, Lucy Pavalock, John Storey, Kathy Thompson, Sandra Thomas, and Tristan Wilson.

#### 5. SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDING

In addition to requesting \$175,000 Community Preservation funding, the project will also launch a capital campaign, and apply for state and federal grants.

The anticipated funding is:

Capital Campaign	\$ 650,000
Grants	\$ 225,000
Mortgage	\$ 500,000
CPA	\$ 175,000
Total	\$1,550,000

## SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDING- continued

Grants: We will be applying for grants from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, including a grant from the Cultural Facilities Fund; the National Endowment for the Arts; the Fund for Williamstown; Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and others as identified.

We are engaged in conversation with three local lending institutions to research and discuss mortgage opportunities and rates. We will launch a capital campaign for the project in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014.

The uses of these funds will be allocated as follows:

CPA	\$ 175,000	Land build-out/landscaping	\$ 100,000
		Building Renovation	\$ 75,000
Grants	\$225,000	Planning/Design	\$ 25,000
		Building renovation	\$ 200,000
Capital Campaign	\$650,000	Acquisition	\$ 150,000
		Planning/Design	\$ 75,000
		Building Renovation	\$ 425,000
Mortgage	\$500,000	Acquisition	\$ 500,000
Total Sources	\$1,550,000	= Total Uses	\$1,550,000

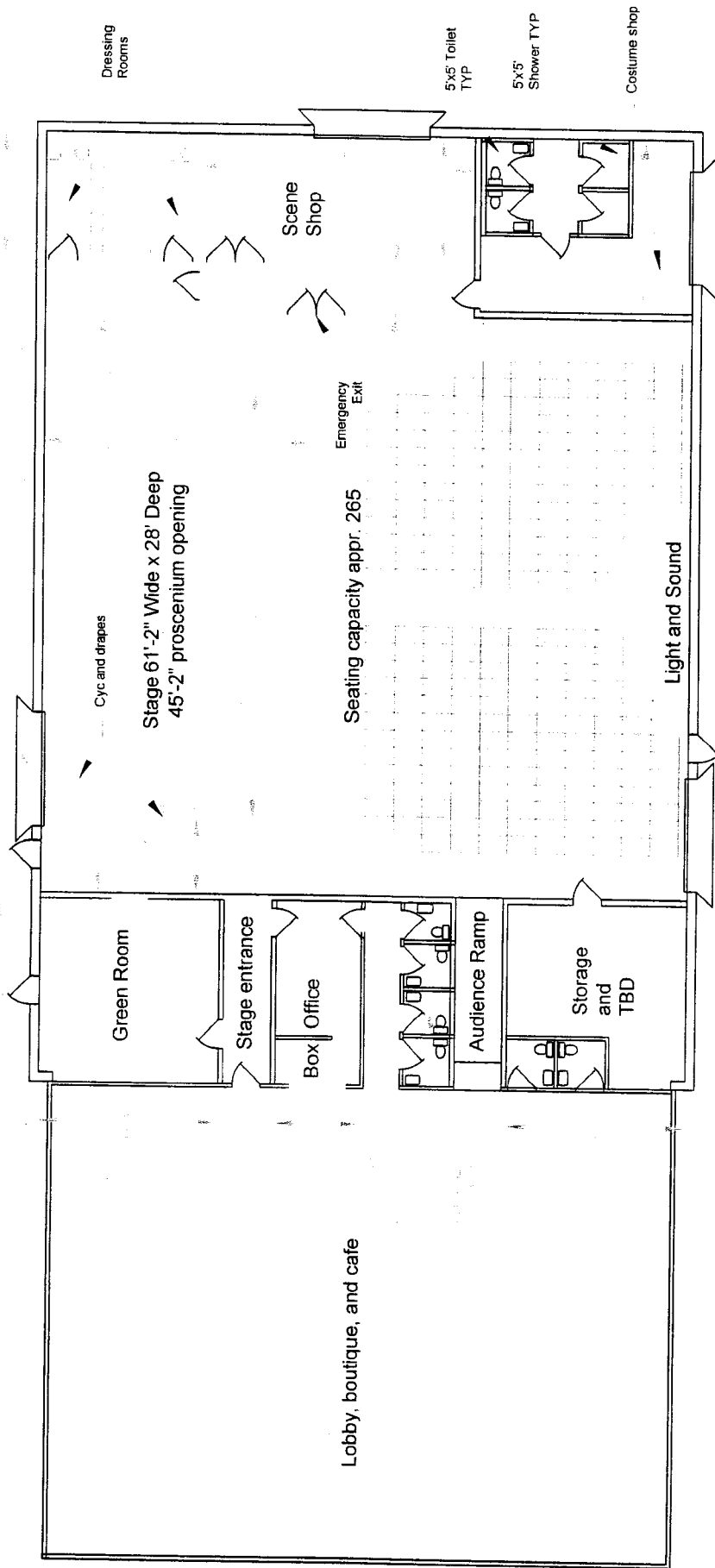
## 6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

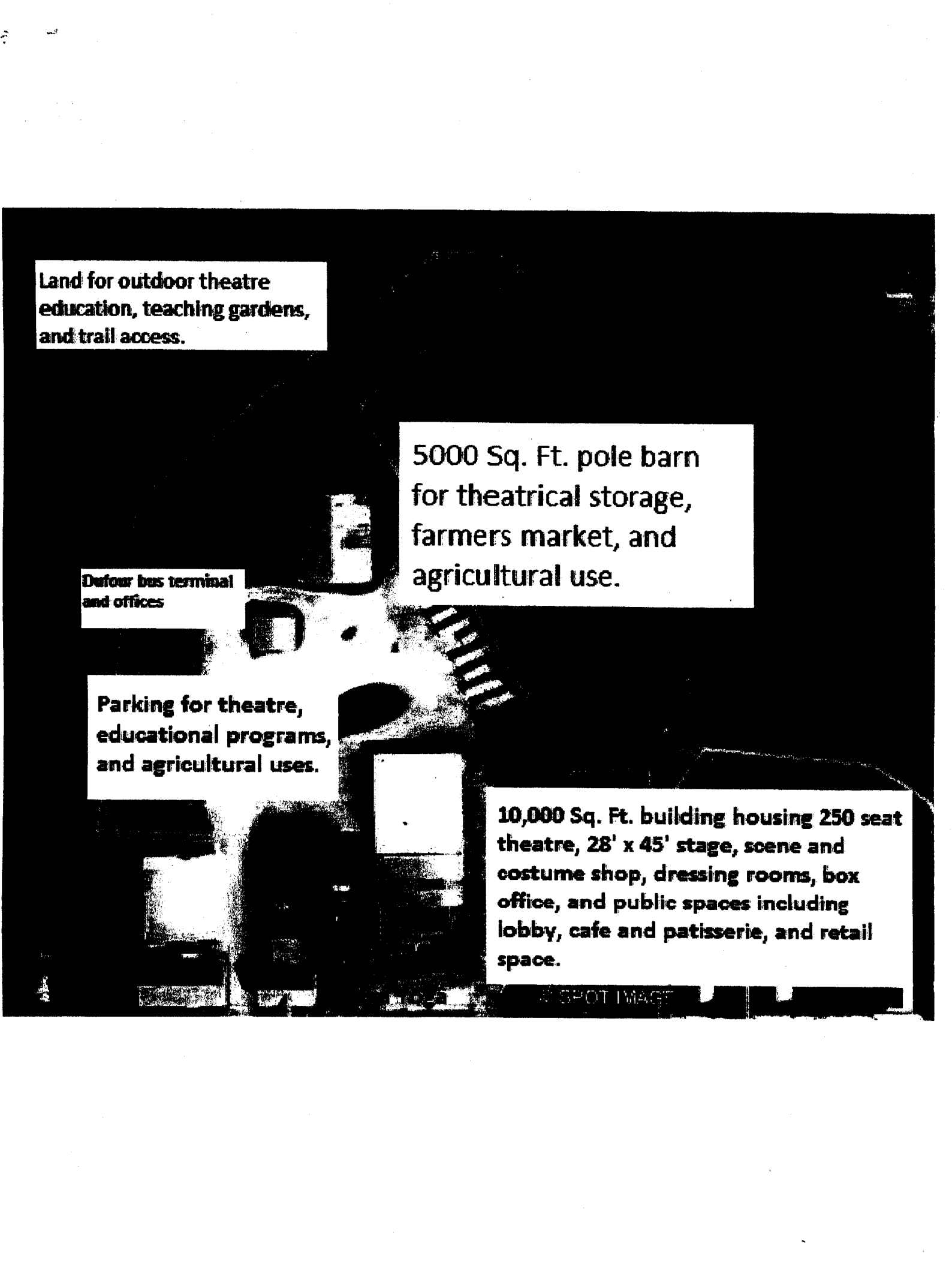
The Minerva Arts Center is currently offering after school and weekend workshops to 24 local youth. The "Minerva Family" enjoyed a celebration of coming together at this year's annual Holiday Walk. Minerva students will present a production on December 21<sup>st</sup>, showcasing this season's workshops. The event will include performance work for the Musical Theatre Troupe, Minerva Voices and The Gleekers!

Visit our web site for more information about Minerva Arts Center at:  
[www.minervaartscenter.org](http://www.minervaartscenter.org)

## 7. CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Land for outdoor theatre education, teaching gardens, and trail access.**

**5000 Sq. Ft. pole barn for theatrical storage, farmers market, and agricultural use.**

**Dufour bus terminal and offices**

**Parking for theatre, educational programs, and agricultural uses.**

**10,000 Sq. Ft. building housing 250 seat theatre, 28' x 45' stage, scene and costume shop, dressing rooms, box office, and public spaces including lobby, cafe and patisserie, and retail space.**

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# THE TIME IS RIGHT!

## What we plan to do:

The objective of this project is to develop a multi-use community arts complex with the primary focus on a state of the art performance space indoors and an outdoor space that would provide access for community arts related programming and organizations. Additional concepts being considered and not limited to:

- Café/Bakery/Boutique/ Arts library
- Teaching gardens
- Housing year round farmers market/seed swap/ food subscription
- Artist 'cottages' along property line. 10x20 structure housing each art form.
- Outdoor green space and amphitheater

## How we are going to do it:

- Generate community interest and involvement in the project.
- Raise \$150,000, which will allow us to purchase and operate the property until completion of construction and renovations.
- Execute a Capital Campaign to renovate the existing structure and create a state of the art 250 seat theatre, lobby, rehearsal and support facilities, and related site improvements, as well as fund the salaries of four full-time staff for the first two years after completion.

## What we have done so far:

- Performed initial site feasibility review
- Analysis of financial needs to purchase and operate facility through construction
- Met with various professionals and interested parties, including building and energy consultants, theatre professionals, community partners, and town officials
- **What's Next:**
  - Develop Architectural Drawings and Comprehensive Site Plan
- Meet with State and local officials to review public funding options and building requirements
- Establish committees to move the project towards completion

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!:

Please join us in creating this wonderful cultural center that will provide much needed education and arts facilities for our children and our community, and will be a cultural attraction to bring others to Williamstown. There are many opportunities to get involved.

## WE CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

## MINERVA ARTS CENTER

P.O. Box 441 North Adams, MA 01247 | 413.441.6120 | [www.Minervaartscenter.org](http://www.Minervaartscenter.org) | [buildthemas@gmail.com](mailto:buildthemas@gmail.com)