



## Town hall upgrade on track

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PROVINCETOWN — Inside the Provincetown Town Hall auditorium yesterday, preservationist Eric Dray pointed to an enlarged photo of a dance held in the same space many, many years ago.

In the photo, a bright bowl of a chandelier hung above the dancers' heads and the ceiling had a three-dimensional coffered design.

Neither of those features are part of the second-floor auditorium today. But they will be, with the completion of the interior renovations of town hall this fall, said principal architect Wendall Kalsow yesterday.

The \$6 million town hall renovations — both inside and out — began late in 2008 after a structural engineer warned that the Victorian-era building was unsafe. Town officials moved their offices in November 2008 from 260 Commercial St. to trailers on Jerome Smith Road.

Last summer, construction workers completed the \$1.1 million exterior renovation of town hall. That fix-up included shoring up structural weaknesses and painting the outside more historically accurate colors: light green with cream and deep red accents.

Workers are on track to complete the interior renovations, at a cost of \$4.9 million, in October or November, said Kalsow. The inside upgrades to the 124-year-old building include heating, plumbing, electrical and fire-suppression systems, and a new handicapped-accessible entrance, he said.

The result: a working town hall, a place to hang the town's million-dollar art collection and a historical building to be proud of, said Dray, who is chairman of the town historical commission. "This is going to be a museum," he said.

The renovation has been funded primarily by town Community Preservation Act funds and by property tax debt exclusions. A Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund grant of \$50,000 will partially pay for the coffered ceiling and chandelier, said project architect Mark Almeda.

MARY ANN BRAGG