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The Advocate, Thursday, March 19, 1981

Museum repairs approved

Special Town Meeting voted March 11 to transfer \$30,000 from the personal services budget of the Cape End Manor to repaint and repair the Provincetown Heritage Museum.

Town Meeting voted in 1975 to purchase for \$135,000 the immense old building, then owned by a bank.

At that time Josephine Del Deo, chairman of the museum's board of trustees, and others advocating buying the building promised it would be self-supporting within two years.

Despite a \$65,000 federal grant and admission fees, the museum has cost the town more than \$40,000 in the last five years. Some people at the Special Town Meeting opposed spending any more money on the building, which Herman DeSilva labeled a "white elephant."

After Del Deo made a detailed statement of the museum's finances and predicted it will pay 91 percent of its operating expenses with next year's fees, Joseph Cabral rose to rebut her points.

Cabral said Del Deo in 1975 "made a false statement when she said the tax payers would not be liable in any way. She told a lie."

After Cabral, DeSilva rose to further attack the museum. He said the town would be better off if it sold the museum for \$1 to "some historical association."

But the calmer words of Town Manager Bill McNulty

and Selectman Mike Coelho prevailed.

"I look at this as an investment the town has made," McNulty told the meeting. "If we are going to maintain our investment we should spend for recoppering, caulking and painting. I'd like to say we could do it for less, but \$30,000 seems to be the amount needed."

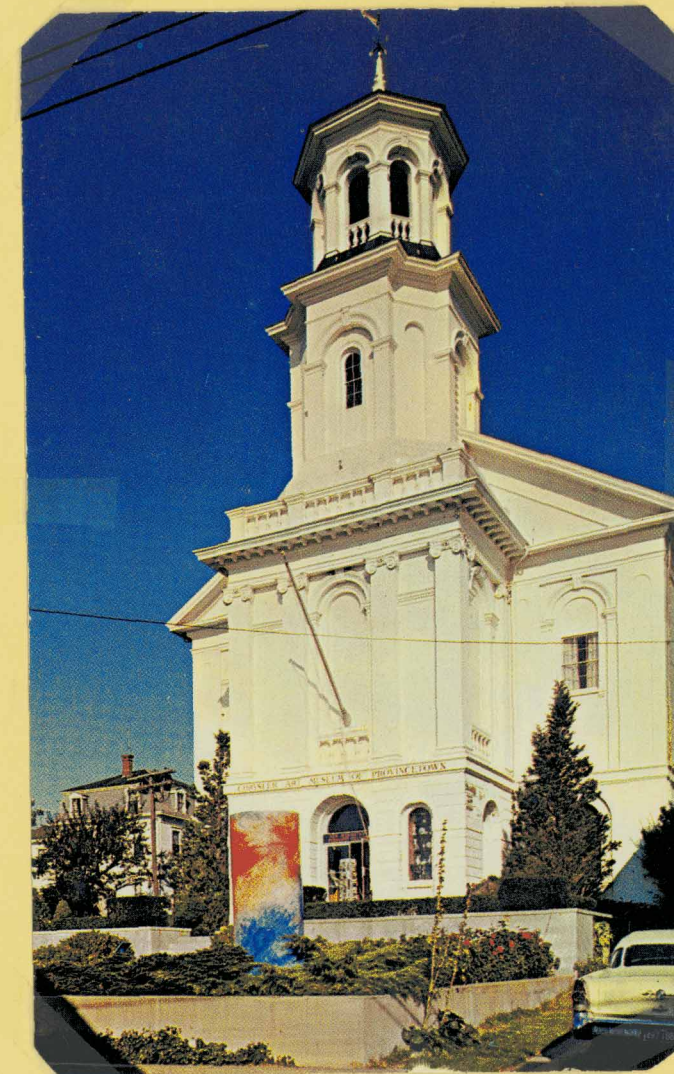
Coelho, speaking for his first and only time of the night, rose after DeSilva had spoken.

"This is a town building," Coelho said, "and its condition reflects on the town. I'd like to see it painted because it is becoming an eyesore. When the voters voted to buy it, they voted for the responsibility of maintaining it."

Del Deo rose once more to answer a question asked by Antonio Ferreira, a finance committee member, about future costs at the museum. "This is an economic venture," Del Deo said. "Vision yields rewards. Hopefully the building will earn its next round of improvements." Del Deo said the Rose Dorothea scale model now under construction at the museum will draw crowds.

When the \$30,000 transfer came to a vote it was passed overwhelmingly. After the museum got its money, Munro Moore moved to adjourn the meeting until the next night as it was 11:41 p.m.

As the crowd left Town Hall, Del Deo, who fought for the museum with grim determination, was all smiles.



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When it was the Chrysler Museum