

MINUTES
SELECT BOARD
TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
Tuesday, August 4, 2020 – 5:00 PM
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

Present: Tyler Ward, Karen Hatcher, Bill Taylor

Also Present: Rodney Bartlett, Nicole MacStay, Alison Kreutz

Chair Ward opened the meeting at 5:05 PM, following a few technical difficulties.

Chair Ward explained that live viewing via Channel 22 and Ustream was not available due to a system upgrade, but a recording of the meeting will be uploaded to Ustream, per usual. The meeting was live streamed on the Town's official Facebook page.

Affordable Housing Proposal – Hope Taylor & Peter Laroche

Hope Taylor said volunteers had been working on a “2-pronged” idea for new sustainable, affordable housing using town-owned land. The buildings would be built by local contractors & tradesmen who, rather than charge for the work, would own part of the completed construction (“sweat equity”). Ms. Taylor said she and Sharon Monahan surveyed Evans Flats (vacant land located at the end of Evans Road) as a location, and architect John Catlin made drawings of a potential development that would feature 4 buildings with 16 units total. The units would be small, with 2 bedrooms, and all would have identical layout. The land involved wouldn't run into wetland buffer. She said Peter Laroche reviewed the plans drawn by John Catlin and, with Belletete's help, priced them out. There were three possibilities:

First, strictly builder owned: Materials would be bought with a bridge loan, the buildings would be constructed and, and after bridge loan is paid off, the buildings would be “condo-ized.” Estimated price of materials was \$850,000, with a unit price of \$53,000, and return of 8.5 % to investors/tradesmen.

Second option would be to have the whole development built by investors, in which case the price would double to \$1.7 million. The cost per unit would be \$110,000, and net return would be 4.5%.

Thirdly, there are refab/modular house kits available from \$38,000 (Ms. Taylor said she specifically looked at options from Camelot Homes) and using prefab would cut down construction time. Unit price would be \$51,000, with investment return of 8.7%.

Ms. Taylor said, since they started working on this project seven months ago, they have found two investors who are very interested in the idea, so there is the potential for construction be completed using half sweat equity and half investor funds, in which case a bridge loan might not be necessary. She acknowledged that it would be important to speak to abutters.

Chair Ward temporarily lost connection due to weather.

Ms. Hatcher thanked Ms. Taylor for her hard work and “taking the initiative.” She asked for clarification about the Town's contribution and the management of the properties.

Regarding management, Ms. Taylor “it would be just like any other condo association” - a committee would be established to run things. Ms. Taylor said the Town would be paid for the land: “we would negotiate a price and go from there” but said she wasn't sure what needed to occur from a legal standpoint.

Ms. MacStay said that, in order for the Town to make decisions regarding with town-owned property, a 41-14A process needs to be implemented, during which the Select Board would hold two public hearings. The Select Board can put out a Request for Proposal before implementing the 41-14A process in order to see what interest/other ideas are out there. If the Board is interested in pursuing the idea about Evans Flats, “that might be a model...you want to look at.”

Select Board Minutes

8/4/2020

pg. 2 of 4

Mr. Laroche asked, if the Town was able to get full market value for the Evans Flats land for this project, would the Town consider providing the sewer/water hookup at a lower rate, or reducing the tax rate on the property for a set amount of years?

Ms. Hatcher said the Select Board needed to determine if they were interested in going forward with the process before discussing those details.

Mr. Taylor said “if we work out something that adds 16 units of low-income housing to the town, it’s a good thing.” Once the process was started, if multiple proposals came in, they would determine the best option for the town.

Ms. Hatcher said there has long been a need for affordable workforce housing, so having “any proposal to look at is really exciting.”

Chair Ward, who missed some of the presentation due to connectivity issues, said it would be good to hear from the public when more information about the proposed project is available. Ms. Taylor said she had a lot of additional information she could provide. Ms. Hatcher said the process should be determined so “then we can figure out next steps.”

Ms. MacStay explained RSA 41-14A is a state law that determines how towns can acquire and sell property. Two public hearings must be held before the Select Board can make any decisions. Mr. Bartlett added it requires review and input from the Planning Board and Conservation Commission.

Mr. Taylor said what Ms. Taylor has “is pretty complete” but the Select Board members need to establish a way to review the work that has been done so far.

Via Facebook, Carol Nelson asked “if there are 10 local builders, would there be 10 owners? That sounds rather cumbersome.” Ms. Taylor said yes, there would be as many owners as there were contractors.

Mr. LaRoche added the units are only about 620 square feet to keep them affordable.

Via Facebook, Bill Kennedy asked is Evan’s Flat was in the Greater Downtown TIF District and if funds could be used for the project. Mr. Bartlett said it was not in the Greater Downtown TIF District.

Via Facebook, Steven Graves said he wasn’t sure how it brings more affordable apartments downtown. Ms. MacStay said Evans Flats is off of Evans Road, which is relatively close to downtown.

Via Facebook, Carol Nelson asked if the land was where the Town puts the overflow of snow in the winter. Ms. MacStay confirmed, and said there are other areas where snow could be stored if the land was sold.

Chair Ward asked for confirmation that all work that had been done so far was done on a volunteer basis. Ms. Taylor confirmed.

Via Facebook, Sasha Dube asked why the building on the corner of Route 101 and Elm Street was “just rotting.” Ms. MacStay said the property owners have chosen not to do anything with the building.

Chair Ward said the Select Board would arrange to look at all the information that had been put together about the project.

Ms. Taylor and Mr. Laroche thanked the Board for their time and consideration.

Tropical Storm Update - Chief Walker

Chief Walker said Tropical Storm Isaias is heading our way, but the rain will not be as severe as originally forecast. Expected in the area are 25-35 MPH winds and 2-3 inches of rain, but it should be “out of here and

sunny by tomorrow.” Prep work has been done by DPW & PFR, which is “good practice” early in the season, even if there is no serious tropical storm activity from this storm.

COVID-19 Update

Chief Walker said we’ve been fortunate that our area has not been “super-impacted” by the Corona Virus. Currently 18 residents have tested positive, which is a little higher than surrounding communities, but “not a bad rate.” The state has made the ‘COVID-19 Summary Dashboard’ available, which has some great statistics and map of cumulative positive cases as well as a map of current positive cases. There are less than 4 positive cases currently, so “we’ve been fortunate the number of cases has gone down.” MCH is partnering with the Town for its ‘MaskUp’ campaign, assisting communities with informational outreach. Table stands, window clings and posters encouraging people to wear masks are being distributed to businesses.

Ms. Hatcher gave a shout-out to the EDA members who have been distributing materials to about 100 local businesses. Ms. Hatcher she noticed that many businesses already had signage requesting that people wear masks: “A lot of our businesses have already done this good work.” Ms. Hatcher encouraged any business owners who had not received materials yet to reach out to her.

Chief Walker said the Governor’s reopening orders cover the wearing of masks within businesses. Nashua did a local mask ordinance that was challenged but the ordinance was upheld. There are multiple towns also looking at mask ordinances, including Keene. Keene’s Planning Licensing and Development Committee reviewed their plan and acknowledged the issues around enforcement. Regarding Peterborough, “we have been very fortunate with the level of responsibility of businesses....and the folks in our public spaces” regarding mask use.

Ms. Hatcher noted that all the towns considering ordinances have university or colleges, so it makes a sense for those communities as they have students coming back from all over the country. She acknowledged it’s really difficult for towns to create an ordinance and then enforce it, and said the pressure needs to be on the state and not on towns, but at the moment “we’re doing well.”

Mr. Taylor added that it’s got to be up to “personal responsibility,” and in all those places with ordinances, people can use an excuse that can’t be questioned by police. He said he wouldn’t want to be in the position to question people without masks on.

Ms. Hatcher said a retail chain had determined and posted that masks were required, but people were coming in unmasked, and when someone complained, they were told it’s not enforceable because it’s not a state-wide mandate. She asked Chief Walker if there was any recourse in instances like that.

Chief Walker said it comes down to enforcement issues and people coming into the community who are uninformed. Residents who encounter problems should let Chief Walker or Chief Guinard know – a formal process has been developed for investigating those types of complaints. People should take action to protect themselves from unsafe behavior.

2020 Assessment to Sales Ratio and Proposal for Partial Statistical Update

Mr. Bartlett said he, Mr. Smith, and Ms. MacStay had discussed the Assessor’s memo regarding partial statistical update.

Ms. MacStay said June 20th tax receipts did really well, with a 94% collection rate. Assessor Marybeth Walker noted real estate sales have been higher than assessed values, and she was concerned about the equalized ratio. Mr. Smith had pointed out unit sales are down, and there are fewer sales on the market, which may be attributable to COVID-19. Homes on the market are getting “snapped up very quickly” by out-of-state buyers. Ms. MacStay said Mr. Smith recommended leaving it be for the moment to give it time to see if it’s a true pattern.

Chair Ward said, “we don’t want to get caught off guard like in 2018” when the town-wide revaluation sent the assessed values way up for some property owners, the continued that it was understandable to wait if sufficient data wasn’t available. Ms. Hatcher agreed, and said “we don’t know how long the COVID cloud

will last.” Mr. Taylor said he agreed as well, from a real estate standpoint. The Board made a general agreement to not pursue a statistical update at this time.

Authority to Borrow for Publicly Owned Systems (DWSRF)

Mr. Bartlett said the DES State Revolving Fund is a funding mechanism that many communities use, and Peterborough has been offered a loan of \$4.047 million (which was authorized at Town Meeting for the Cold Stone Springs project) with an interest rate of 1.296% over 20 years. It comes with 10% principal forgiveness offer from DES, so 10% of what we borrow will be forgiven, which means at the end, the Town would only be borrowing \$3.6 million. “Excellent offer, and better than what was received from USDA Rural Development.” He recommended going forward, but needed Board approval.

The Select Board reviewed and adopted the provisions of Form 2A: Authority to Borrow – For Publicly Owned Systems; Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, specifically section 1.

Motion: Chair Ward made the following motion:

That the person holding the position of Town Administrator, currently held by Rodney Bartlett, is hereby designated as the Authorized Representative of the of the Applicant for the purpose of filing an application for a loan in accordance with New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules Chapter Env-Dw 1100, furnishing such information, data, disbursements, and documents pertaining to the applicant for a loan as may be required; and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application and if such loan be made, is the designated Authorized Representative of the Applicant responsible for furnishing such information, data, and documents pertaining to the loan.

Note: Mr. Taylor seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Bartlett said he will provide an update regarding the our final fundraising package on August 10th, following a meeting that morning with the Drinking Water Ground Water Trust Fund Commission.

Mr. Taylor asked about the original anticipated interest rate. Mr. Bartlett answered that the original estimate was 4%.

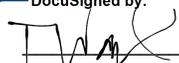
At this point, both Chair Ward and Ms. Hatcher experienced technical difficulties due to the weather and lost internet connection.

Motion: Mr. Taylor a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:03 PM.

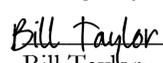
Note: Both Chair Ward & Ms. Hatcher communicated with Ms. MacStay via SMS text message they were in favor of adjourning. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alison Kreutz, Department Assistant

PETERBOROUGH
SELECT BOARD:

DocuSigned by:

Rodney Ward 87...

Karen Hatcher

DocuSigned by:

Bill Taylor 415...