

DRAFT MINUTES
GROTON HEIGHTS SCHOOL REUSE TASK FORCE
REGULAR MEETING
CITY MUNICIPAL BUILDING, CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

January 3, 2011

Page 1

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Chair Catherine Kolnaski.

I. ROLL CALL

Members present were Janet Downs, Marian Galbraith, Bill Hart, Mary Kelly, Catherine Kolnaski, Dana Parfitt, Bob Peruzzotti, Archie Swindell and Ralph Whitney. A quorum of members was present.

Absent was Peter Ganacoplos.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger and Project Management Specialist Holly Bridgham.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Several members reported that they had inquiries about the tour of the school that was conducted by the Town Manager for Project LEARN. The Mystic River Press and Groton Patch have both expressed interest in the progress of the task force.

Mr. Oefinger reported that at the tour, he got the impression that LEARN officials would prefer Groton Heights to Noank School because of the condition of the building and the proximity to I-95. He believes that they may have two years left on their current location in Waterford, but that due to heating problems, they may be interested in moving earlier. LEARN has scheduled a meeting for January 4, 2011, and Mr. Oefinger has asked for any information to be relayed to him as soon as possible. He added that the program consists of middle school grades 6-8. The Town Manager described how LEARN obtains funding for its magnet schools. He added that if they decide that Groton Heights is suitable, the Town would probably retain ownership and enter into a long-term lease with LEARN in an arrangement similar to the Eastern Point School lease. He noted that LEARN's time-line should be clearer after tomorrow's meeting and added that the State will certainly have input into any decision that is made.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF December 20, 2010

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Galbraith, seconded by Mr. Peruzzotti and so voted unanimously.

IV. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Review of Revised Letter

It was agreed that the survey will be available on-line on January 10, 2011. Printed copies of the survey will be mailed to neighborhood residents on the same day. The deadline for returning the survey will be revised to February 10, 2011 and the letter will indicate that the survey will be available at the Bill Memorial Library. Mr. Swindell will contact BML Director Hali Keeler to make those arrangements.

2. Responses to Solicitations of Interest in the Property

No response to the task force's letter has been received from either UConn or DEP. It was noted that a new commissioner will be taking over at the DEP and that it may be worthwhile sending a new letter once new leadership is in place.

3. Other

Ms. Bridgham reported that Public Works Director Gary Schneider has been contacted by the Groton City Police Department with a request to use the Groton Heights building for a three-day training exercise in February. The property was used for a similar exercise last year with no problems.

Since the request falls outside the area of responsibility of the task force, Mr. Oefinger will contact Mr. Schneider about this issue.

Mr. Hart reported that he has been questioned about a rumored offer from the Boys and Girls Club to buy the property. Mr. Oefinger responded that he knows of no such offer.

It was decided that since the task force needs the results of the survey to proceed, the next meeting will be scheduled for February 7, 2011. The agenda will include an update on the survey response.

At the suggestion of Ms. Galbraith, Mr. Oefinger agreed that he will make arrangements for a press release regarding the survey to appear in the Groton Times.

V. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Peruzzotti, seconded by Mr. Whitney and so voted unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Submitted by

Janet Downs, Task Force member