

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

November 15, 2010

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The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Chair Catherine Kolnaski.

I. ROLL CALL

Members present were Janet Downs, Marian Galbraith, Peter Ganacoplos, Catherine Kolnaski, Bob Peruzzotti and Ralph Whitney. A quorum of members was present.

Absent were Bill Hart, Mary Kelly, Dana Parfitt and Archie Swindell.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Public Works Director Gary Schneider and Project Management Specialist Holly Bridgham.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letter from Lighthouse Voc-Ed Center

Members discussed a letter from Lighthouse Voc-Ed Center and Boys & Girls Club expressing interest in use of the building. The letter does not specify whether the organizations wish to buy or lease, but Mr. Oefinger noted that the Town has no interest in being a landlord.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF November 8, 2010

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

IV. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Evaluation and Refinement of Potential Uses

Mr. Oefinger reported that the Town has had inquiries about the property from the Islamic Center, the Born Again Evangelistic Outreach Ministry, the DEP, and a local architect looking for medical office space for a client. In 2007-2008, the Town received several unsolicited calls about possible conversion to condominiums. The Town Manager suggested two approaches to the reuse issue: 1. solicitation of ideas from outside sources and 2. identification of the committee's preferences for reuse with consideration given to the wishes of neighbors. He recommends the second approach, adding that it is probably advisable to present any agreed-upon use to the City Planning & Zoning Commission for approval before any recommendation to the Council, since most uses would require a change to Zoning Regulations.

Mr. Schneider distributed a chart titled "Order of Options to be Established by Committee" which includes reuse possibilities identified at previous meetings.

It was decided that the DEP, the CT Department of Economic Development, the City of Groton, and various educational institutions, including Project LEARN, UConn, and the University of New Haven, should be approached to determine their interest in the property. Initial contact may consist of a simple phone call to be followed up by a formal letter.

2. Identification/Survey of Community Interest

Content and delivery method of a possible survey were discussed, as was the area to be covered. It was decided that Ms. Downs will draft a survey in the form of a letter to be mailed to residents of the area surrounding the school (bounded by Broad Street, Mitchell Street, Baker Avenue and Thames Street). The draft survey, which will ask residents to indicate their preferences from among the committee's identified uses, will be discussed at the next meeting.

3. Other

Members decided that due to the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, the November 22 meeting will be canceled.

V. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Submitted by

Janet Downs, Task Force member