

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

November 29, 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, Catherine Kolnaski, Bob Peruzzotti and Archie Swindell. A quorum of members was present.

Absent were Peter Ganacoplos, Bill Hart, Mary Kelly, Dana Parfitt and Ralph Whitney.

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

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: None.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF November 15, 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 Draft Survey of Community Interest in the Property

Mr. Swindell feels that uses outlined in the survey should be more general and noted that certain uses are not possible. He suggested that it is too soon for a survey and that the committee should be responding to proposals. Ms. Galbraith responded that she would like to get a sense of what the neighbors would prefer.

Mr. Peruzzotti has contacted Project LEARN; they are not interested in the property at this time.

There was consensus to remove the specific uses in parentheses; "Residential use" will be eliminated and the three examples will become separate categories.

Mr. Swindell mentioned a suggestion made by Ken McBride that the building be used by a consortium of non-profit organizations. This raises the question of who would own and maintain the building under this scenario. The desirability of surveying the entire Town was discussed, as was the possibility of including questions about preferences for keeping the existing building and public or private ownership.

It was noted that this survey will not be the only opportunity for public input.

Ms. Bridgham reported that she and Mr. Schneider have contacted DEP, UNH and UConn to determine their interest. UNH has just signed a contract with Mitchell College and is not interested in the property at this time. UConn would like more information. It was decided that Ms. Bridgham will send a letter, based on a draft distributed to the members, to UConn and DEP along with the Building and Site Analysis.

Ms. Bridgham noted that in response to a question about the possibility of subdividing the property, the Town engineer has prepared a map showing a subdivision of nine lots. The map was distributed to the members.

Mr. Oefinger suggested approaching the Bill Memorial Library board about the possibility of trading lots 8 and 9 for Tract V which is now owned by the library.

It was suggested that once the survey is distributed, information on the property, including the Building and Site Analysis and the Supplementary Information, should be available at City Hall, Town Hall and the library.

Mr. Oefinger noted that he will post this information on the Town's web site. He added that two church groups have expressed interest in the property.

Mr. Swindell would like to see an economic analysis showing taxes generated by each use.

Mr. Oefinger responded that six to eight residential condominiums would probably generate the most in taxes.

It was decided that the next agenda should include discussion of the revised survey and the area to be included.

Members discussed the value of a visitors' center or a small business incubator. The Town Manager will contact UConn to determine if there is any interest in the incubator concept.

The members recognized Betsy Gibson, who suggested that the survey should include a larger area of the City than is currently proposed.

Mr. Oefinger offered to provide a map at the next meeting so that this can be discussed.

There was discussion of putting the survey on-line. Ms. Downs will send the revised survey to Mr. Swindell who will put together an on-line survey.

2. Other

Members decided that due to scheduling conflicts, the December 6 meeting will be canceled. The next meeting will be held on December 13.

V. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Submitted by

Janet Downs, Task Force member