

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
PLANNING COMMISSION
DECEMBER 17, 2015 – 6:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Pritchard, Steinfeld, Sherrard
Alternate members present: Tarbox, Zed
Absent: Fitzgerald, Kane, Munn
Also present: Berry, Kilpatrick, Oefinger, Schneider
Staff present: Reiner, Jones, Gilot

Chairman Sherrard called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

II. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Capital Improvement Program – Review and Recommendations

Oefinger thanked the Commission for reviewing the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). He gave a brief overview of the CIP package and thanked OPDS Staff for their work in preparing this document. He said next year will be a difficult year for CIP funding, and hoped that some important initiatives started by the Town and Board of Education will be able to continue.

Tarbox left at 6:15 p.m.

The Commission reviewed each project with staff.

Detailed discussion ensued on the following projects.

1) Roads, A), B), & C), Pavement Management Program

The Town is entering the fourth year of a five year program for the paving management program. The program is working well, and Schneider hopes it will be extended.

The Planning Commission strongly supported this project.

1) Roads, F) Bridge Reconstruction

The bridge has no load limits at this time. The Commission was unsure of the sidewalk location, based on the description. The write-up should be more concise.

1) Roads, L) Road Underpasses

The Commission asked why the Town must pay for underpass improvements, rather than the railroad. Oefinger explained that the roads still belong to the town, and the road should be maintained for the safety of the citizens. There may be other grant

funds available for funding, so the funding source will be changed to “O”, “To be determined”.

3) Sidewalks, A) Mystic Streetscape – Phase III

The description should set priority of the projects by order of importance.

3) Sidewalks, B) Sidewalk Construction

The Commission said the sidewalk replacement should be an ongoing program, not just a three year project.

3) Sidewalks, C) Thomas Road

The request is to reappropriate CIP funds which expired in 2015. Formal permitting is being completed, but the project cannot proceed until property easements are acquired.

5) Education, A) School Referendum

Oefinger briefly reviewed the School referendum, which is a place holder at this time. The town needs to find replacement property for the Merritt property. The Board of Education has the option to renovate West Side and Cutler as new elementary schools, or demo and build new elementary schools on those sites. Oefinger said they are not sure what part of the funding would be local, so this page is informational only at this time.

5) Education, B) Asbestos Removal

Kilpatrick explained that this is the end of the floor tiles that must be removed. The Commission discussed the cost and reimbursement for abatement in a school versus the cost of abatement for an empty building, with no reimbursement.

5) Education, J) Mary Morrisson

Kilpatrick explained the traffic pattern at the school, with the crossing of traffic. It is not safe because the children must cross in front of the buses.

The Commission strongly supported all of the Board of Education projects.

7) Technology, B) Computer Technology Acquisition-Software Systems

Oefinger explained the importance of the project. The Town and Board of Education are very far behind on updating software systems. Many software programs are outdated with no support, and in jeopardy of losing important historical financial town data. A significant amount of time is also wasted with duplication of efforts because the software programs are not integrated. He expects to lower the cost of this by at least one third, due to the slow process of completing needs surveys and assessments by the consultant.

It was discussed that the financing be moved from “Other Costs” to “Equipment”.

The Commission was in support of this project.

7) Technology, C) Upgrade Radio Systems – Town Police

This project was initiated by the Town Council a couple of years ago. The equipment being used today is very out of date and unreliable.

The Commission very strongly supported this project. The lives of the police officers could be jeopardized without reliable radio equipment.

9) Energy Efficiency and Conservation, A) LED Streetlights

Schneider explained that the energy savings from switching to LED streetlights could be significant.

Tarbox returned at 7:55 pm.

The Planning Commission strongly endorsed the following projects:

- Pavement Management Program
- Board of Education school projects
- Computer Technology Acquisition – Software Systems
- Upgrade Radio Systems – Town Police
- LED streetlights

The Commission discussed the Heritage Park, SEAT Bus program, and Crystal Lake Road project.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. was made by Pritchard, seconded by Sherrard, so voted unanimously.

Jeffrey Pritchard, Secretary
Planning Commission

Prepared by Debra L. Gilot
Office Assistant III