

MINUTES

GOVERNMENT CENTER PLANNING WORKING GROUP

June 15, 2016

Present: Phil Bergeron; John Boscardin; Curtis Givan; Dianne Izzo; Mary King; William King; Sheila McGauvran

Absent: Dr. Philip Auger; Nicole LaFontaine; Gary Tedeschi

Also in attendance was Liz Dolan, Town Economic Development Administrator and Steve McKendall, Asset Management Commission member.

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Chair Dianne Izzo.

II. Approve minutes of May 11, 2016 meeting: Motion by Mr. Givan, seconded by Mr. King, to approve May 11, 2016 meeting minutes unanimously approved.

III. Public Comment: No comments.

IV. Updated Communications Policy and Plan:

- a) Review/discuss Richard Welch Report to Asset Management Commission: Included in packet of information for tonight's meeting, Ms. Izzo shared the report Mr. Welch distributed and read from at the June 2, 2016 AMC meeting and a copy of the Independent article about his resignation as the AMC Liaison to this Working Group. She opened discussion stating that the comments and message conveyed by Mr. Welch are not accurate and do not reflect the opinion or the findings to date of this group. Ms. Izzo further stated that misstatements and misinformation by people not authorized to speak on behalf of the Group published in newspapers and on Facebook, like those by Mr. Welch who as liaison only reported once to the AMC, is the basis for having a communications policy and plan in place.

Ms. King would like it to go on record that she takes **strong exception to** Mr. Welch's statement in his report to the AMC that says, "I do not get the feeling that the school administration whole heartedly endorses this as an end plan" when addressing joint occupancy of town and school in one location and that Mr. Welch is wrong in his assumptions and his statements are an inaccurate representation of the School Department's willingness to participate in the process and its outcome. All agree that Mr. Welch asks legitimate questions at the end of his report, however, these are not questions for this Group to answer.

- b) Vote on Communications Policy & Plan: Ms. Izzo asked if members were in agreement with the revisions made to the Communication Policy and Communication Plan based on

the discussions at the last meeting. Ms. King asked that the address be corrected for the former administration building to 100 Fairway Drive; 150 Fairway is the High School. Motion to accept policies with address change unanimously approved.

V. Survey: review/discuss/vote updated draft: Ms. Izzo asked that the Group take each survey question in order for the discussion which included:

1. Mr. Boscardin said that question 1 is putting the cart before the horse on the location of the new Government Center; what if there is nothing available for the listed location? Mr. King said that in his sample of 6 using a similar question, he received 2 for Quonset, 1 for Post Road and 3 for Wickford, with one qualifying a second choice. He feels that this question is a “litmus test for preconceived notions” and without allowing citizens to provide their opinion there will be claims of the “fix is in”. Mr. Boscardin suggested alphabetizing the list and asking for top 3 choices.

3. Remove

4 & 5. Combine into single question.

Mr. Bergeron would like to have a question asking the frequency of use of Town and School offices; example: How often do you visit Town Hall/School Administration?

7. Remove

Group agreed that in the opening statement for the Survey the word concept should be removed and replaced with possible locations for.

VI. Report to Town Council:

A. Each member of the Workgroup contributes to the Report: It is important that all members have input into the final report to the Town Council. The proposed outline was how Ms. Izzo envisioned the report would be comprised and would include a bibliography of reports/articles/documents used as source material for the report and links to those documents for public viewing electronically.

B. Match topics and Workgroup members or make assignments: Ms. Izzo asked for members to volunteer for the topic of the report they wish to write; if no volunteers, topics will be assigned. Volunteers found for all topics.

Mr. Givan has researched item I. - Survey of Available Potential Locations - B. Other sites - and distributed the report of his findings to the Group. Findings included:

- There are turn-key properties available in Quonset
- Building on Post Road corridor is complicated by National Grid Easement – (former Sea View Railroad), which relief was granted for the Rte. 403 Project that allowed new poles and overhead wires to be constructed. Mr. Bergeron explained that DPW and EDAB are working with National Grid on the feasibility of relocating identified portions of their easement.

- State Police Barracks building may become available in two years and is a viable location; however, the current building is less than 5,000 sq ft and would require an addition on the rear of the building and is required to connect to Town sewer system.

The question was asked if the Wickford El building is going to be included in Wickford Village Sewer project. Mr. Bergeron said that it was removed from the project. If the Wickford El proposal falls through, the Town would be responsible for the entire cost of a system tie-in with a potential million dollar cost.

Ms. Izzo thanked Mr. Givan for the report and the other members for their work in developing a final report. Discussion of the final report will continue at the next meeting.

VII. Schedule next meeting: Next meeting set for July 13th at 5:00 p.m.

VIII. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn unanimously approved at 6:04.