

Facilities Optimization Committee
MINUTES
June 16, 2020
via Google Meets

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

Attendance:

Committee Members: Rick Bertasi, Gayle Weinstein, Steve Ezzes, Chris Spaulding, Denise Harvey, Ken Edgar, Richard Wolf, Hillary Koyner, Rone Baldwin

Guests: Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz, Assistant Superintendent Ken Crow, Members of the Public

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Ms. Harvey to approve the minutes as amended from the June 2nd meeting. Seconded by Ms. Weinstein. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of Weston's Plan of Conservation and Development:

-Mr. Edgar said that the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Dr. Spaulding and Mr. Luiz did a great job with obtaining grants for sidewalk connectivity of Town Center and with the Town Center and the Schools. The POCD includes a future Village District with an expanded Town Center, which will all be zoned for commercial use. The District encompasses both sides of Weston Road, running from the traffic light by School Rd. down to the 4 corners of the intersection of Weston Rd. and Norfield Rd. The Robinsons, who own the shopping center property, also own considerable property that will be zoned commercial within the Village District. The Town is exempt from zoning, but the District includes the Jarvis property which would enable the Town to sell or lease it for commercial purposes. The idea is to move Town offices out from Jarvis and free that space for something that is revenue producing. Milone and MacBroome have recommended moving the Onion Barn. Although zoned for commercial use, the plan is to not have buildings adjacent to Hurlbutt Elementary School, maybe a sculpture park. The bus depot should get moved, and the space repurposed. If we continue to use Hurlbutt as an elementary school, this raises issues with safety. One of the features of a village district is that the Planning and Zoning Commission will control the look of buildings so that they are not developed in an hodgepodge manner. The Plan also includes senior citizen friendly housing across from St. Francis church. Ms. Harvey asked about the next steps. Mr. Edgar said that the Planning and Zoning Commission needs to get started on changes to zoning rules. Dr. Spaulding said that the town had reached out to the BOE, Parks and Rec and the library board about phase 1 sidewalk pathfinding and impacts to fields. All groups were fine with proposed impacts. Mr. Wolf commented that what happens at Hurlbutt will have significant impact on what happens in Town Center.

Discussion regarding the scope of work and documents for an RFQ:

-Mr. Bertasi drafted an outline for an RFQ. It is designed to solicit information from potential vendors who can demonstrate their experience with similar projects. Subsequent to the RFQ would be an RFP which would have a pretty tight scope of work. There was a question regarding how tight the scope needs to be. Mr. Luiz reviewed and thinks it looks good; it may need some more detail on the written portion regarding the actual services we want them to provide. He said that he has some consultants for us to reach out to. He will also put the RFQ out on the State of CT bid portal.

-Mr. Baldwin asked about the level of detail that we have to agree to about the scope at this point. Mr. Luiz said the more specific you can be the better response you will get. It will also allow you to have better conversations with the firms during our interviews and will help us tweak the scope of work as we

go through the interviews. Mr. Baldwin wanted confirmation that the final scope of work and RFP will be refined based on our discussions. He doesn't want to waste time or money on studies that have already been done.

-Mr. Baldwin said it was important for us to figure out what we are comparing these options to. He feels we need to establish a baseline and a commonality of view.

-Ms. Weinstein said that that everyone who bids will get all the documents from the previous studies because none of us wants to reinvent the wheel or redo work that has already been done. We are down to 2 options. As far as baseline numbers, Silver Petrucelli already did the work and it has been refined by the schools facilities committee. The Schools know their current operating costs by building already, so we can work as a team to define our baseline. The big question for her is what additional spaces are needed to make these grade configurations work. She feels that should be where we spend our money.

-Mr. Baldwin said that he still was confused as to what the baseline is. If we make no changes, what is the spend under the current facilities that we are going to do or not do. Mr. Bertasi clarified that the baseline is if we made no changes, what would be the operational maintenance costs and likely outcome of not doing anything over the next 10-20 years. Mr. Baldwin stressed that we need commonality of view for what's required for existing facilities.

-Mr. Wolf would like more of an emphasis on an educational consultant at this point, rather than the space planning and facility analysis side. He would like to see some expertise with educational models that will require less square footage and fewer classrooms. Ms. Weinstein asked the BoE to weigh in. Dr. Craw said that we may need some experience with educational components but feels the District does not need an educational consultant, as the current administration has the knowledge and experience. Mr. Luiz said that one of the firms he has been looking into has an "educational planner" on their team. Ms Harvey noted that the expertise would be helpful to see how space is utilized. Ms. Weinstein made it clear that it is not this committee's decision as to how the BoE structures learning.

-Mr. Edgar asked about the timing of the project, and said he'd like to see the RFQ before it is sent out. Mr. Bertasi will work on the outline of scope of work and we will discuss it at our next meeting, or potentially as a special meeting next week.

Any new items:

-Ms. Weinstein asked if it was possible to change the night of our meetings, as Dr. Pesco has a conflict on Tuesday nights. No decision was made.

Adjournment:

Mr. Edgar made a motion to adjourn at 8:05. Seconded by Mr. Baldwin. Motion carried.