

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**

**R E C E I V E D**  
MAR 20 2013

**Executive Session 6:30 p.m.**

**February 25, 2013**

**Francis Faulkner Hearing Room 7:00 p.m.**

**TOWN CLERK, ACTON**

Present: Ms. Adachi, Mr. Gowing, Mr. Clough, Mr. Sonner and Town Manager Ledoux,  
Recording Secretary; Christine Joyce. The meeting was televised

Ms. Adachi – Moved to open public session and to move into Executive Session. Mr. Sonner – second. Mr. Gowing, the Clerk called the roll - All Ayes.

**CITIZENS' CONCERNS**

A Boy Scout observing the meeting asked the Board about actions that they may be addressing tonight. The scouts observed the BOS meeting until around 9:00 p.m.

Mark Munson of Huckleberry Lane commented Morrison Farm Reuse and the cost of 2.7 million. He was concerned about his taxes. He said Acton has one of the highest tax rates and questions when do we stop paying the money for these projects?

Graham Knowland, Estabrook Road, asked when the board would be voting on the zoning articles. The board will take positions on March 11 after Planning Board hearings. Mr. Knowland spoke about the Town's attempt to rezone the Brookside Shops. He noted Roland Bartl had recommended against the change and it was being reintroduced because the vote at town meeting was unfair. Feels we should wait and address the rezoning changes as issues come up.

**CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE & OPERATIONAL MINUTE**

Ms. Adachi, Vice-Chairman noted that State Rep Cory Atkins will be conducting meetings to hear about the Governor's proposal of additional money to be raised by tax reform.

Mr. Ledoux announced we have been awarded the design award in regard to Miracle Field. Governor has filed a reform bill regarding OPEB for Group one employees. He will continue to research the issue and report back to the Board.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS & APPOINTMENTS**

**SPACE STUDY PRESENTATION**

Mr. Ledoux discussed the process taken to develop this plan. Mr. Charter noted that they are preparing CAD drawings and will be all electronic.

## Final

Jean Kopacz representing Allegro Architecture outlined the process of space planning for the next 20 years.

They reviewed the buildings and looked at potential properties. They looked at the need for offsite moves. Senior Center and Mass Wild Life Building on Harris Street they found 76,665 potential square feet available for use.

They looked ahead for needs within each department over the 5, 10, and 20 year needs.

Mr. Clough asked about the Council on Aging and its needs. They came to the conclusion that the COA proposed demographics have been previously gathered and is viable.

The architects discussed the plans and suggested solutions.

Mr. Gowing noted that the WAL was not mentioned. They said it is functioning well but needs larger reading room for events. Potentially, Windsor Building first floor will become the annex reading room for the WAL.

Mr. Gowing noted the Windsor Building renovations, and DPW building additions, Senior Center and all would be expensive and asked them to discuss the costs. They have not prepared the numbers at this time but will be drawing and developing those costs.

Mr. Sonner asked about the next step for the board.

Mr. Clough asked that the Town Manager's staff felt about this study. Mr. Ledoux commented that staff needs were addressed and that it addresses the future needs for 20 years. Next step would be to get cost numbers and capital numbers.

Mr. Sonner asked about looking at this after Town Meeting, Mr. Ledoux said he agreed due to the schedule of Town Meeting,

Dean Charter has received numbers from Allegro and he wanted to cost out each piece of the 20 year plan and would like to work on this for the next Budget Summit in the fall.

Ann Chang spoke about the Library and the storage used for other departments in their basement. She was concerned about Windsor Ave. building parking issues. She said that she was sure that nothing should be added to the DPW building and felt it was unsafe. Dean noted that it is structurally sound it was reviewed when the solar panels were installed.

Doug Tindal commented on the square foot costs on Windsor which made it not very cost effective at \$500.00 a sq. foot.

Bill Mullin discussed the reorganization of down stairs - he felt it did not answer what is the value proposition. Efficiency, quality, customer service issues and asked if it is in your scope? They said yes.

Barbara Wilson regarding the senior center questioned adding an addition to the Senior Center that has been ruled out due to the parking situation. The architects said they would lose 2 parking spaces and noted the expanding of the parking on the site.

They will begin collecting the numbers to bring back to the Board.

Final

## **OPEB PRESENTATION**

Steve Noone spoke about OPEB and discussed the slide show. He outlined the progress that has been made and noted legislation has been filed. They were charged to have a strategy going forward. They have been working on reducing the liability. He felt we need to put an OPEB factor on our fees. Other ideas for funding; reserves we have, employee contributions, but noted only two states require that - in CT and Washington State. He further talked about bonding requirements.

He noted the next steps available, funding strategies, and funding policies and mechanisms for the future. Once the Actuarial study is complete they will have a better idea of the situation.

Mr. Gowing felt we need a comprehensive approach to this and information from the State on investing the Trust funds we already have.

Mr. Sonner agreed with Mr. Gowing and mentioned that to require the contribution from employees does look like a pay cut. He asked about calculations and at what point do we stop digging us further into a hole.

Ms. Adachi asked about the makeup of the 10,000 numbers? Mr. Noone said he made them up for examples.

Mr. Clymer said it makes it a minimum standard. He hopes the State will get to a reasonable solution.

## **MORRISON FARM DISCUSSION**

Ms. Adachi outlined what she wanted to end up with at the end of this issue. First, what the Board feels about the barn and the house on site. Existing plan looks at the demolition not noted in the 2010 report, and are we on board with supporting the removal of the barn and if we are in agreement on Bonding. She wanted to make sure the Board is involved in the process.

Mr. Barrett gave an overview of the bonding primer in regard to CPC Act. The board had several questions and they were addressed by Mr. Barrett and Mr. Mullin.

Marian Maxwell asked about legislation to allow debt service? Mr. Barrett said yes, he believed so as long as we don't exceed the Town's CPA tax levy (currently about \$783,000).

Mr. Mullin was present to update the Board on the issues, they have received several endorsement letters from various people from large organizations that want to use this proposed space. They had an organic farmer focus group and John Earle came up with a plan for building locations. The barn has received a lot of attention and they have received many letters. Site walk was attended by few. They have a meeting on March 6<sup>th</sup> and another site walk scheduled for March 9<sup>th</sup>. They have sent out notices to Horseshoe Drive and Concord Road residents.

Ms. Adachi said she agrees with the concept and going forward there will be a lot more discussion and it will help to have strong support at Town Meeting.

## Final

Mr. Clough asked about new plan will it be about the barn and asked if this is under Dean's Municipal Properties. Dean said the property is in flux and it is under MP and Natural Resources and there has been work done there. He does have some involvement. He was asked about the Kelleher Report, the barn is good for what it was built for and now it would be used for equipment storage only, he felt it could not be available for public space. Mr. Gowing asked about it being moved, Dean said he felt it was better to keep it as is or tear it down. Dean noted that to move it they would have to address Zoning and Board of Appeals and felt the barn moved closer to the street would not be safe for motorists.

Mr. Sonner asked about taking to Town Meeting or is it something we want to decide before we go to Town Meeting. Mr. Mullin said he would want to wait and it is clear to him that from day one, the barn was coming down.

Mr. Clough spoke about NARA and design, we don't need to know whether the barn stays or goes, and history has shown the layout can be determined afterwards.

Mr. Earle spoke about the plan and he supports it. He felt we need to maintain the farm and it will spawn many possibilities on this site. He suggested that we take down the barn and build back with new barn. The new barn would be a gathering space and have an addition which becomes space for barn dance, folk music concerts, lectures and income and addition of open space with a kitchen, but it retains the character of the site.

Bill Klauer member of the Historical Commission spoke about the current barn being built as an animal barn and if we move forward with a barn with eating facilities under one roof it would not be allowed by the Board of Health. He asked them to think about the barn and its use.

Anne Forbes spoke about her letters and issues of the barn and a lot of the things we are hearing. The plans are exciting and wanted the plans to include what is going on in the building and is not fundable for educational programming under CPA.

Mr. Gowing asked about her letter which mentioned the Register eligibility.

Mr. Mullin said it is not a competition or leveraging for CPA funds

Mr. Sonner wants the house with a farmer in it and what to do with the barn and wanted to look at a plan that would keep the barn alive for next generation. He is cautious of doing that. Can we find another site for the barn at this late date? He thinks we keep the barn and find a place for the new community area.

Mr. Clough discussed the house and the bathroom is on the second floor, if it is being used for other than a residence. His current thinking is to keep it but concerned about the safety of the barn. He felt we could add on to it, and was concerned with the safety of new building attached to old structure. He thinks we have to do what Mr. Sonner suggested. Community gathering space is good, and bonding and tying up CPC Funds. And wants this to come to us as a board and have it go to the Design Review Board. He would like to get a Board position on it.

Mr. Gowing spoke about the maintenance of old buildings. He felt the money used to save this would be ridiculous.

He thinks the potential for light farming on the site and at some later point we would have to shelter the animals.

## Final

He likes the house being used to house a caretaker. He felt that the ice house foundation is a mess.

Ms. Adachi feels we need to address the house next. She agrees to maintain the barn in its present condition would be too costly. She suggested that we have photo's taken and placed in the new barn. The Alarm Stone and the significance of it being placed where it is she did not know the thought behind the placement. She felt comfortable to go forward and use CPA money and to weigh in on the project and let CPC decide eligibility

## **SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS**

### **ALG DISCUSSION / FINCOM LONG RANGE PLAN**

Mr. Ledoux updated the Board on ALG. They work on consensus and bring back to their Boards for discussion. Mr. Sonner - Moved to endorse the plan presented by the Town Manager. Mr. Clough – second 4-1 vote, Mr. Gowing, No – motion passes

Mr. Gowing feels it is the right way to go, but the schools seem to be lush and looked like a 5.3 % increase. The Town was holding to the 2.9 and APS 1.5 and Regional 4.85.

Mr. Ledoux spoke about the Fin Com Long Range Plan. It was discussed and noted the numbers were not generated by us. In terms of the Cherry Sheet he felt their expectations were too high. Fees have been doing well and expense assumptions will be reviewed by staff and staff has been asked to come back to look at this.

Mr. Clough - Moved to support the five changes – Police; from 3% to 2%, Teaching; from 4% to 2.4%, Other Ed.; from 3% to 2.7%, Health Insurance; from 5% to 8% and Fringes; from 5% to 3%. Mr. Sonner - second, UNANIMOUS VOTE

## **WARRANT ARTICLES**

Mr. Ledoux noted that the article order has been changed to reflect the LWV suggestions.

Mr. Sonner spoke about moving zoning articles and the element of not to dictate too much of what people hear, but would like to see more involvement by changing the order of the warrant

They suggested moving Zoning OPEB and CPC closer to the front

## **SELECTMEN'S REPORTS**

Mr. Sonner – Nothing to report

Mr. Clough – CPC meeting discussed what they can afford and get legal opinion. Launch of the new Regional Study Committee and was pleased with what was presented.

Ms. Adachi – cultural leadership award to Barbara Estabrook. ACHC annual audit and Regional Housing will be looking for new host town. Steve said Sudbury will commit for one

Final

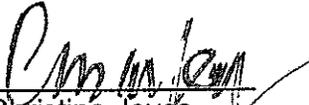
more year, but that it does not mean they won't continue. COD is looking for recruits. She attended the Chinese New Year celebration. Douglas Read A Loud is on Friday.

Mr. Gowing – discussed the receipt of a \$60,000 grant from the Governor's "Challenge Innovation" grant program. Attended Legislator's Breakfast at Library. Funding is down on all libraries. Discussed Cable Advisory Board and plans for changing from analog to digital.

## CONSENT

Mr. Clough - Moved to approve the Consent Agenda - Mr. Gowing - second. UNAMIOUS VOTE

Adjourned 11:30 p.m.

  
Christine Joyce  
Recording Secty

  
Michael Gowing, Clerk  
Date 3/18/13