

REGULAR MEETING

Belding-Corticelli Improvement Committee (BCIC)
Friday, August 12, 2016 – 9:00AM
Merrill Seney Community Room
Thompson Town Hall

MINUTES

RECEIVED
TOWN OF THOMPSON, CT.
2016 AUG 18 P. 1:43
TOWN CLERK

PRESENT: J. Blanchette, Chairman
R. Faucher
N. O’Leary
B. Davis
J. Hall
S. Lewis

ALSO PRESENT: M. A. Chinatti, Director of Planning & Development
K. Beausoleil, First Selectman
W. Bugden, CME Associates, LLC
S. Herbert, Selectman
J. Rice

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Blanchette called the meeting to order at 9:00AM.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. July 28, 2016 Special Meeting

(M/S/C Davis/Faucher) to approve the minutes as presented. Carried unanimously.

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

i. Discussion/possible action re CME Associates Supplemental Tasks/Scope/Budget Proposal

W. Bugden gave a review of the tasks:

Task 1: Sediment testing is part of the original scope, but it couldn’t be done in the winter. What CME will try to accomplish is to collect samples to see if contamination levels are significantly different from upstream. He noted that enough samples would have to be taken to make the comparison equal, and that sediment testing is required under the Property Transfer Act. He noted the testing is not an unequivocal statement, and that pollution could have come from upstream. He stated

that, if there proves to be a statistical difference, the owner would have to address that; however, if there is no difference, there would be no need to go any further. He stated that, if testing reveals the need for an Environmental Risk Assessment (ERA), it could take a very long time to get an approved plan.

J. Blanchette noted that Bill Warzecha, at the Committee's July Special Meeting, stated if the Town owned the property such ERA wouldn't necessarily be required, but because the site is privately owned and is in the Property Transfer Act, it is required.

W. Bugden stated that if the property were owned by the town or a non-profit entity, they wouldn't be required to do the ERA. He continued, stating that Bill Warzecha/DEEP responsibility is, if there's contamination, making sure something is done about it if the property is privately owned. He noted that, from an economic development standpoint, ownership by a town/non-profit would be a benefit; however, that he didn't know if it would be good for future owners.

Task 2: Dam structure assessment – if there is an Environmental Land Use Restriction on the property, which is what CME would like to do and DEEP agrees should be done, you need to be satisfied that if a flood comes along the dam won't collapse and send sediment washing downstream. He stated the assessment would also benefit retaining the historic structures.

M. Chinatti noted that the Town was notified yesterday that the property owner is in non-compliance with Dam Safety inspection requirements, and asked if such an inspection could be included as part of this project, to which W. Bugden replied it could.

The Committee discussed the possibility of including that inspection, and ultimate consensus was that, as the dam is located on a separate parcel, not to include the work to address the non-compliance notice but to leave that to the property owner.

J. Blanchette stated if the island retaining walls aren't found to be in good conditions, that could require a lot of money to make them stable. She asked if the ELUR could still be placed on the island, to which W. Bugden responded that the ELUR wouldn't be accepted by the DEEP until they know the walls are stable. He stated most of the walls are in amazing shape but there are a few spots that need repair. He noted there aren't many trees on the island, but there is a lot of brush. He stated CME structural engineers will look at the tree roots when evaluating the walls, noting that the brush would be left to grow, but not to "run rampant."

Task 3: Floodplain Modification – A little more surveying needs to be done in the southern section of the site before submitting the Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) to FEMA. He stated the amendment would, basically, take all of the property that one would envision being built on out of the floodplain, even out of the 500-year floodplain. He noted there would be no development restrictions from a floodplain perspective, and noted that floodplain would have been really problematic, but the survey proves the key areas are not in the floodplain.

Task 4: This is an “open-ended” task, and CME wants to discuss a variety of different actions to promote redevelopment – could do a pro-forma, possibly a market analysis. The Committee may wish to discuss whether it may be beneficial to bring in an expert in the field to perform those tasks.

J. Blanchette stated the Committee needs to decide what tasks it wants completed, and if the Committee wants to include the dam safety inspections. She noted that, if Tasks 1 – 3 are completed, that would leave an approximate balance of \$2,900; she then asked if the Committee wanted to use that for Task 4, or for the non-compliance inspection.

The Committee discussed issues regarding the dam and the value/detriment to economic development if the Committee were to go with the non-compliance inspection and the future issues of dam maintenance/repairs.

(M/S/C Davis/Lewis) to approve completion of Tasks 1 – 3. Carried unanimously.

J. Blanchette asked if the balance of +/- \$2,900 should be applied to Task 4, or does the Committee want to wait until Tasks 1 – 3 are completed.

W. Bugden stated the Committee might want to consider, though he does not know if DECD will agree, going after other monies, and that there are a lot of other DECD, MSC, DOT, etc. programs that could be useful for a lot of potential ancillary things that would benefit the neighborhood as a whole. He stated the Committee could possibly use the remaining funds as a “springboard” to get more money to do a more robust marketing study. M. Chinatti will look into that while Tasks 1 – 3 are on-going.

W. Bugden continued, stating that the Committee could do nothing with the remaining funds/Task 4 because it is not clear at this point what the actual balance will be after Tasks 1 – 3 are completed. He stated results of Tasks 1 – 3 could be available for next month’s regular meeting. He then discussed sampling locations.

(M/S/C Hall/Lewis) to not earmark remaining funds for any specific tasks at this time. Carried unanimously.

N. O'Leary asked about future responsibilities for the structures, to which W. Bugden responded that the island is in the best shape. He stated he is not sure who the State would "go after", and he is not sure it would be high on the State's priority list.

ii. Discussion/possible action re setting date of Public Information Meeting

J. Blanchette stated her opinion that the Committee will need a chance to review the RAP, which could be done in September, and review the results of Tasks 1 – 3 in October.

W. Bugden stated CME could possibly get tasks 1 – 3 done and provide a report at the September 9 meeting, but he is not sure he can get CME's structural experts out there because they are quite busy now.

B. Davis agreed that the setting of the public informational meeting should be left open for now.

J. Blanchette stated the Committee could review Tasks 1 – 3 in September, the RAP in October, and schedule the public informational meeting for sometime in November.

W. Bugden stated it would be best to go over the additional tasks in September, which could have an effect on the RAP.

4. CORRESPONDENCE - **None**

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

S. Herbert stated, re any remaining funds, the Committee might want to be a little _____ on the potential before scheduling the public informational meeting.

W. Bugden stated there was some discussion in the past re the Town using the ballfield or using part of the property for a fire department, one of the things Bill Warzecha and Mark Lewis will want to do is ensure there are liability protections on the property. He then asked if, in looking forward, there is still any interest on the part of the Town to do some public/private partnering, to which B. Davis stated his opinion that this project should be finished prior to thinking about that.

W. Bugden stated that when B. Warzecha talks about some of these programs there aren't a lot of ownership situations that apply to the

programs. He stated it is a lot of great ideas for liability protections to promote re-use, but for them to be even possible there may need to be municipal or non-profit entity ownership of the property.

J. Blanchette stated the September agenda will include results and discussion re Tasks 1 - 3, and discussion with Bill Warzecha and Mark Lewis, CT DEEP, re best ways to address environmental issues on the property. She noted that the September meeting will be a very long meeting. She stated that, beginning with the October agenda, Remaining Budget Discussion will be an item on agendas going forward.

J. Blanchette stated that, if the municipality took the property and cleaned it up to the required standards, the municipality could turn around and sell the property to a private party.

6. ADJOURNMENT

(M/S/C Faucher/O'Leary) to adjourn at 10:07AM. Carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. A. Chinatti, Director of Planning & Development