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TOWN CLERK

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Mill Sites Redevelopment Advisory Committee (MSRAC)
Friday, October 14, 2016 – 9:00AM
Merrill Seney Community Room
Thompson Town Hall

PRESENT: J. Blanchette, Chairman
S. Lewis
R. Faucher
J. Hall
N. O'Leary (arrived at 9:04AM)

ABSENT: B. Davis

ALSO PRESENT: K. Beausoleil, First Selectman/Ex Officio Member, M. A. Chinatti, Director of Planning & Development, W. Bugden, CME Associates, J. Guskowski, CME Associates, S. Donohoe, Liaison for Property Owner

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Blanchette called the meeting to order at 9:02AM. Prior to continuing with the agenda, she commented on the thorough job M. A. Chinatti does on meeting minutes. Other members agreed.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. September 9, 2016 Belding Corticelli Improvement Committee Regular Meeting

(M/S/C Lewis/Blanchette) to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried; R. Faucher abstained due to his absence for the 9/9 meeting.

3. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA – N/A

4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- i. Redevelopment/Remediation Report Update.

W. Bugden, re 630 Riverside Dr., elaborated on his previously emailed update, which members received with agenda packets. He stated reports resulting from the previously approved supplemental work will be forthcoming in the near future. He stated it does not appear an ecological assessment will be required for the river. He stated that CME was approached by UCONN, seeking brownfield-related engineering projects for its senior students to do as Senior projects. CME submitted some

projects, including both 630 and 929 Riverside Dr. CME will be advisor to the students for the 630 Riverside Dr. project. He noted that it does not appear timing will work for 929 Riverside.

W. Bugden, in response to a question by Chairman Blanchette re whether the owner would get a copy of the design upon completion of the UCONN project, though it is not an "official design", stated the owner would, indeed get a copy, and that the document would then be public information when completed.

In response to a question by M. A. Chinatti re whether the design would be included in the final deliverables to the State re the grant project, W. Bugden stated it wouldn't be; however, he also stated that hadn't been considered and pondered "how could it not be a good idea."

W. Bugden continued, stating that he would ask the UCONN students if they can do their presentation here in Town, as part of a public informational meeting. He stated that the deliverable from the UCONN Senior Design students would be provided in April. He stated the project is a full year in length and they are working on background now.

S. Donohoe asked that the timeline cited in W. Bugden's email (distributed to members digitally, as correspondence) could be stated at this meeting, to which W. Bugden stated the structural report will be done next week, as well as the sediment report. He stated the RAP/REDEV plan probably is a couple of weeks out, and estimated early November for a delivery date. Re the FEMA mapping, he stated the LOMA request has not yet been submitted as he is waiting on a response from FEMA re approval to fill the low spots, the foundations below the floodplain elevations, in since they don't serve a purpose for floodplain.

J. Blanchette stated it's better for the owner if the LOMA isn't filed showing those foundations to be within the 100-year floodplain because you lose your negotiation position, noting that at least the maps have the elevations shown on them.

In response to R. Faucher's question re whether one could make an argument that they are a safety issue, W. Bugden responded he did not believe so. He continued, stating he doesn't think FEMA will be a problem with filling in the foundation(s), but the slab for the weave shed is at grade and they might have a problem with that. He stated definitive answers are needed from FEMA, and he hasn't got them yet.

- ii. 929 Riverside Dr. Grant Work:
 - 1. Division of Responsibility

W. Bugden stated CME has been working on the Phase I Site Assessment and is in the process of wrapping it up; he noted it is 98% completed. He stated a draft will be sent for review before the Assessment is finalized. He also stated CME and its consultant, Eagle Environmental, were to be going to the mill for the HAZMAT inspection; however, that was cancelled because CME was made aware there were other surveys being done, and he wants to make sure "we're on the same page" before providing a revised scope/budget. He stated what really remains is to determine what this Committee expects CME to accomplish – are there portions of the building that have had recent testing? Also, W. Bugden stated he thinks the owner may be considering demolition of part of the building. He stated there would be a difference in the scope if some were to be demolished. He stated that, if necessary, Eagle could come and talk to this Committee in more detail about the hazardous building materials.

J. Blanchette stated she and S. Lewis were on the consultant selection committee for the project, and asked W. Bugden to give an overview so the rest of the members can be brought up to speed.

W. Bugden provided background information on the grant program/this grant and what the grant work entails.

J. Guskowski described the condition assessment and how that assessment is in service to the re-use planning. He stated, in addition, it would help the documentation and analysis to note, if the property was going to be developed for Historic Tax Credit purposes, what would have to be left in place for historic purposes, what materials would need to be brought in and what costs would be eligible for tax credits. He stated the fact that it's on the National Register/eligible for individual structure listing on the National Register is a big deal when it comes to trying to figure out redevelopment costs and opportunities.

J. Guskowski stated W. Bugden was instrumental in getting this program started by the State and deserves a lot of credit.

W. Bugden stated the River Mill deserves credit because he pitched that when he pitched the program. He stated there are so many examples of "but/for" buildings – "but/for a little TLC the buildings could have been saved. He stated the River Mill was front and center for the program, he talked to DECD and the legislature, and stated that the legislature wasn't very receptive but DECD took it on and championed the program.

He stated the 929 work is just getting under way, that the Ph. 1 is just about finished and then the Town will be provided a revised scope for Ph. II/III work. He stated the big difference is drawing a line where CME/this project picks up and GZA left off in their investigation/testing. He noted GZA has been very open in sharing the information/reports they prepared and said they would be more than willing to meet with the Town.

He continued, stating that structural analysis is part of this project, which would look at any key things in the buildings that would be high priority for protection and in danger of rapidly collapsing.

J. Guskowski stated the costs at this point are vague regarding Ph. II/III assessments because we're not sure yet what that work will entail. He stated anticipation is there will be a flexible amount of money and with this Committee's guidance CME can determine the best way to go to better promote the property since things seem to be changing for the property.

W. Bugden stated future use/potential partial demolition has a usage bearing on how CME does the environmental investigation. He discussed ELUR potential and noted that one couldn't get a better ELUR area than an existing building. He stated not as much testing is necessary through the building floor if you know you will leave the building in place. He then asked what testing should be done and asked if a portion of the building was to remain. He stated the project is at a point right now where if there's going to be any changes to the footprint of the building they will be affecting CME's work.

S. Donohoe stated it is not yet determined as to what portions of the buildings will/won't be demolished.

W. Bugden reminded the Committee that the whole site needs to be resolved so the regulatory "check boxes can be checked." He stated CME can go ahead and do what GZA hasn't done. He stated they are planning on putting ELURs in place but that will change if the building's going to be taken down. He stated CME can proceed as planned and investigate the other areas, he's trying to "keep the eye on the prize" – no more regulatory hurdles with a property that's been cleaned up/has ELURs. He stated the possible demolition throws a monkey wrench into things not knowing what will happen to the buildings. He stated the area in/around Building 4, as well as some

other adjacent buildings, haven't been investigated. He noted there are a lot of data gaps that need to be filled.

S. Donohoe stated that, even though Sanitary Dash never occupied over where Building 4 is, they put in wells throughout the whole property and they are now required to be tested annually. He stated he has been working with the three previous financial companies to see that they will release their Phase I and Phase II's, and noted that would be helpful to CME.

J. Blanchette asked whether the decision on building demolition was holding up CME's work and Wayne said no.

W. Bugden stated he would like to go forward with the Phase II/III, and, in response to J. Blanchette's question re whether there are any decisions that need to be made, W. Bugden stated he would like to ask if the Committee could give CME permission to move forward with Phase I and give a proposal for Ph. II/III. He noted that, if information comes in that would revise the scope in the future, CME would wait to move forward.

(M/S/C Lewis/O'Leary) that CME continue with the project and keep the Committee informed if there are any changes.

W. Bugden stated if anything happens that will change the budget work will be stopped and the Committee's permission will be obtained prior to proceeding.

Vote on the Motion: Carried unanimously.

2. Structural Assessment Scope – Discussed w/item 4.ii.1, above.
- iii. Other Committee Business.- members discussed another public informational meeting in November, noting they need to wait for the reports to be completed. A January date was then discussed, as a conclusion public information meeting. The Committee asked M. A. Chinatti to include as an agenda item for the November meeting when to hold the last public informational meeting.

J. Blanchette asked about the possibility of having a walking tour of the 929 site. Discussion ensued and, to avoid insurance issues for the property owner the Committee should meet in front of Tower 1 for the site walk meeting at 9AM, and then recess/reconvene at Town Hall. It was determined that the Committee would have the regular meeting at Town Hall first, then

adjourn to the 929 site walk. The Committee then discussed the November meeting date.

(M/S/C Lewis/O'Leary) to hold the November meeting on Friday, November 18, starting at 9AM at the Town Hall, then re-convene at 929 Riverside Drive. Carried unanimously.

J. Guskowski voiced a short editorial, stating the Belding mill came down in his 2nd week as planner for the Town, and when he heard the potential for 929 coming down to extract value, it's not great for the community. He asked if it would be possible to put in some sort of regulation in place that if you are going to remove materials from the site then you would need to restore the site. He suggested possibly revising the excavation regulations to include building resources so if you're going to take down a historic building and mine its resources, might there be a potential that the Town could require some sort of bond or something re excavation to require the site be left in usable condition. He continued, stating he thinks the Town ought to consider getting more aggressive in protecting its resources in the aftermath of something like this.

W. Bugden stated some places do have requirements for a bond for demolition. He stated he worked on enough mill projects to see them go the way of the Belding site. He stated, on a personal note, that he thinks communities, mills that succeed in redevelopment are in places where the economics make sense "right out of the gate"; if this mill were in Glastonbury, Farmington, Windsor, you'd know what it would look like right now, noting that for some place like Thompson that doesn't have the kind of traffic flow/economics that would make something so huge successful. He noted that, in areas such as this, the only places mills survive are when there's a commitment between the community and the owner to partner, get grants and marketing the property. He stated the asset for the property is the mill itself.

J. Blanchette stated she assumed demolition would occur because the buildings are structurally unsound, not to extract the value.

5. CORRESPONDENCE – None.
6. CITIZEN COMMENTS – None.
7. ADJOURNMENT – With no further business, the Committee adjourned at 10:12AM.

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