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Linda Paradise
TOWN CLERK / ASST.

REGULAR MEETING

Mill Sites Redevelopment Advisory Committee (MSRAC)
Friday, February 9, 2018 – 9:00AM
2nd FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
Thompson Town Hall

MINUTES

PRESENT: J. Blanchette, Chairman
S. Lewis
J. Hall
N. O'Leary

ALSO PRESENT: M. A. Chinatti, Director of Planning & Development
K. Beausoleil, First Selectman (arrived at 9:05AM)
W. Bugden, CME Engineers (arrived at 9:05AM)
J. Rice

ABSENT: B. H. Davis
S. Donohoe, Property Owner Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. January 12, 2018

(M/S/C O'Leary/Hall) to approve the minutes as presented. Carried unanimously.

3. CORRESPONDENCE - NONE

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS

(M/S/C Hall/O'Leary) to move this agenda item to new Item 6 a. Carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

a. Committee Vice-Chair Position – Discussion and Possible Action

J. Blanchette stated that, though she tries to come to as many meetings as she can, she stated sometimes that is not possible. She asked the Committee if they thought it appropriate the Committee appoint a Vice-Chair.

(M/S/C Hall/O’Leary) to nominate Steve Lewis as Vice-Chair. There were no other nominations. The nomination carried unanimously.

b. Committee – Total Members – Discussion and Possible Action

J. Blanchette stated that, as the Committee now consists of five (5) members, three (3) constitutes a quorum; she then asked members their thoughts re keeping membership at five (5), or increasing to seven (7).

In response to a question by N. O’Leary re whether anyone has expressed interest in being appointed to the Committee, K. Beausoleil said he’d have to think about it and that someone may have mentioned it to him.

c. 630 Riverside Dr. – Redevelopment Status Update

M. A. Chinatti stated that, last she heard from S. Donohoe, a contract had not yet been signed with a Real Estate broker though it was expected to be done “soon”. She stated she has not been notified that contract has been signed to date.

d. 929 Riverside Dr.

i. W. Bugden, CME Engineers, Brownfield Grant – Additional Work/Remaining Funds Discussion

W. Bugden stated that, based on the meeting held at DEEP headquarters with representatives from DEEP, DECD, SHPO, J. Gumpert, himself, and the Town, CME has been given different marching orders, as DECD offered to have the remaining grant funds be used to “stitch together” the work done by GZA and the grant work, as melding the two together is critical for the redevelopment. He stated this would have to happen at some point, as when the State is looking at a site it looks at the site as a whole. He reminded members that when CME began its work it explained that the focus would be on areas outside of where the Sanitary Dash facilities were located and GZA is working so as to eliminate

duplication of efforts. He stated GZA has provided reports, which CME has now delved more deeply into re any outstanding items in that area; he also stated Rexnord wants to get this pushed through and closed out as soon as possible and there is no reason to drag this out. He stated what could happen is the whole site could be closed out under the Voluntary Corrective Action Program, which J. Gumpert will need to enter into, and then he'd also be entering into a Liability Relief Program, where he wouldn't be responsible for anything off-site. He stated the issues in the French River would still be the responsibility of Rexnord, but by entering Voluntary Program, Gumpert's responsibility extends only to the property lines, and the Property Transfer Act issues would also go away. This would also benefit Rexnord, and J. Gumpert wants to use that to get Rexnord to work quickly to resolve their last few issues.

M. A. Chinatti stated her belief that those specified items would fit into categories already in the grant and the only thing that may need to be done is to shift dollar amounts from one line item to another.

Re grant funds spent to date, W. Bugden stated CME's expenditures to date are probably very close to the total grant amount. He also stated that, as J. Gumpert is not as concerned with completing the structural analysis as he is with the environmental issues, the \$8,000 originally designated for structural analysis could be left as remaining funds.

J. Blanchette asked if it would be possible to re-allocate the money in the Reuse Planning line item (\$20,000) to other work, as there is a redeveloper who has his own reuse plan.

W. Bugden stated his belief this could be done, noting he did speak to J. Gumpert about what he (Gumpert) would like to see done, and his number one concern is resolving the environmental issues. DECD suggested using whatever funds remain by having CME work as liaison between J. Gumpert/Rexnord/GZA/DEEP to forge a solution that can actually get implemented.

In response to J. Blanchette's question re whether the funds could be put toward ELURS since that will be one of the Remediation Plan items, W. Bugden noted that DEEP assessment grants and clean-up grants are not supposed to

“cross-over”. DEEP considers an ELUR as a remedial solution so DECD has not traditionally allowed use of assessment funds to do that. He continued, stating J. Blanchette hit on a key factor in that a lot of an ELUR is nothing more than collecting information, and expressed his opinion that the work would bring things “almost to the goal” of a complete ELUR, less its implementation. Some background things that need to be done include a survey plan showing the ELUR limits, but DECD should be approached to ensure no limitations would be over-stepped. He continued, stating his thought that the request could be “pushed far” and that it would be a “great use of the money and a great thing to find out.”

J. Blanchette asked if the State would be willing to accommodate this, or would stumbling blocks be raised?

W. Bugden noted he asked W. Warzecha if there is a way, if J. Gumpert enters into one of the regulatory programs, to expedite the required reviews. He then explained remediation programs available, specifically the Brownfield Remediation and Revitalization Program (BRRP) which, in addition to a number of other benefits, comes with expedited review; he then noted that 929 Riverside Drive is not eligible for that program because it’s in the Federal RCRA Corrective Action Program. He said the property is eligible for the Abandon Brownfield Cleanup Program, but that doesn’t include expedited review. He noted an L.E.P. must verify the site and submit that verification to DEEP, which would review the information and then determine whether or not to audit the site.

W. Bugden continued, stating that W. Warzecha said expedited review can’t be done; he further stated that doesn’t mean W. Warzecha’s superiors, and the other pertinent State Agencies, shouldn’t be contacted in an effort to push this matter, considering all the State Agencies that are behind this program. The Town, J. Gumpert, DECD, SHPO, CTHP, etc., elected officials and the community together has some cards to play and all must push to ensure an expedited review gets done. He noted there will be applications and documents for DEEP to review along the way – depending on which program(s) the property is entered into – but getting an across the board agreement that DEEP will expedite its review needs to be done.

He then stated J. Gumpert is very perceptive in his approach and the environmental issues don't concern him as much; he stated he (Gumpert) understands it's a hurdle, and noted that his (Gumpert's) eyes were opened just a little bit to how slow and cumbersome things tend to work here in CT.

He then talked about the "No Further Action" letter that J. Gumpert was looking for, stating that CT does not offer such a letter; he stated CT is so afraid to commit to ending anything that they don't even have it and it's an eye opener when a firm comes in from out of state looking to get such a letter. He stated that CT pushed it off to the L.E.P.s and again discussed the LEP verification process. He noted that, for this development, the Town has "a lot of arrows in its quiver" to push it forward, and it's critical to move quickly because the environmental issues will hold up J. Gumpert's financing.

He stated there is nothing on site that can't be addressed, by ELURs for example. He then discussed, again, CME would need to re-review the area investigated by GZA by going over it and making sure there aren't any gaps. He stated some of the grant funds can go toward that work.

He stated that W. Warzecha offered, at last month's joint meeting, to contact GZA/Rexnord; as that hadn't happened in a couple of weeks W. Bugden stated he reached out to M. Lewis, DEEP, and offered to contact them. He stated M. Lewis responded in agreement and appreciation. W. Bugden stated he immediately sent an email to initiate introductions, noting his thought that J. Gumpert has talked with T. Frost, Rexnord, and expressed his hope they will come to some kind of agreement.

W. Bugden continued, stating he did not believe there was anything on the site that couldn't be dealt with using an ELUR, but he can't confirm that at this point because he hasn't yet reviewed all of the data. He stated the big picture is what's important, that if the desire/intent is to have the mill survive, J. Gumpert is the guy who will make that happen. He stated he is not asking for anything much and it's in the Town's best interest to back him up and support his efforts. He stated there are still some questions, and then talked about presumptions for the tax credits programs. He noted community support will be critical to getting approval from the State for the tax credits, including support from this

community, and elected officials need to support it to be sure he gets everything he needs. He stated there are other tax credits that will be “layered”, which is done for pretty much all developments, which makes expensive projects feasible. He stated getting that support is critical, and it needs to be “the loudest” to ensure the project is selected as opposed to the larger municipalities like the Meridens and the Waterburys, etc. He stated J. Gumpert is looking to work with Lyn Smith, formerly with CME and now established in her own company, to do the initial applications, and there are a whole series of other funding mechanisms that he may need specialists for as well.

W. Bugden brought up his concerns re the towers to J. Gumpert, and Gumpert said he’d take another look when he comes up on Monday – he said his higher priority is the environmental, which W. Bugden understands, but is concerned re how much more damage would occur if, for some reason, the project gets put on hold for the time being. He stated someone who knows needs to go up and look at them and he’d (Bugden) would like Gumpert to re-visit that, adding there might be some funding available to stop the damage from getting worse.

J. Blanchette stated that, maybe if the structural analysis was only for the towers, it wouldn’t use the entire allocation for that item (\$8,000).

W. Bugden stated he’s been waiting to hear from S. Donohoe when to get back in and to have Eagle repair the damage they caused during the HBMI work, noting that part of what S. Donohoe’s concern is is that he doesn’t want something repaired if, due to redevelopment, it would only be torn down, and it is his hope that the Monday morning meeting will resolve that.

J. Hall suggested that photos taken by S. Lewis over the past few months be compared to see if additional damage is visible.

ii. Redevelopment Status Update

M. A. Chinatti stated that J. Gumpert would be meeting with her and the First Selectman at 1:00PM Monday, following his meeting with CME at the site; J. Blanchette stated she is willing to attend that meeting. M. A. Chinatti indicated she

would ask the First Selectman if that would be acceptable and get back to her.

6. MEMBER COMMENTS – NONE

- a. Citizen Comments – W. Bugden discussed the Brownfield Area-Wide Revitalization (BAR) Planning Grant Program, noting that closing is March 27. The Committee discussed possible projects to submit an application for. M. A. Chinatti stated she would investigate the requirements and then contact members.

7. ADJOURNMENT – With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:19AM.

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