

Minutes of the Capital Building Committee meeting of Tuesday, August 2, 2022. Present were Mr. Derek Heim, Mr. Marc Lapointe, Mr. James Carvalho, Mr. John Salzillo, Mr. Chris Hajder, Mr. Tom Blakey, Mr. James Devol, Mr. John Hansen, Mr. William Anderson, and Ms. Mallory Aronstein, Town Administrator.

Mr. Robert Alford II was absent.

The meeting convened at 6:05 p.m. by Chairman Heim.

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of July 19, 2022.

Mr. Devol **MOVED** to approve the minutes of July 19, 2022. Seconded by Mr. Hansen and so voted by majority. Mr. Carvalho abstained.

Mr. Anderson gave a presentation of the current the Highway Garage property and reviewed previously discussed plans for a highway facility to be built that was never enacted by the Town. Mr. Anderson said that the plan showed existing conditions denoting the wetlands flags around the property and that the buildable acreage is about 3.5 acres. Mr. Heim stated that this proposed layout came from a discussion at a Board of Selectmen's meeting in 2019. Mr. Anderson stated the only deviation is that the building shown on the plan is a little longer due to adding equipment and that the new building is intended to store all equipment inside.

Review of the plan continued. Mr. Anderson said the plan shows the existing salt shed, old police station, and the fuel tank. He said the proposed new building was to be relocated so that continuity of services during construction could occur. Mr. Anderson said if this plan was utilized, there is potential room for another facility to be built on the right side of the property.

At 6:11 p.m., Mr. Paul Burke entered the room.

Mr. Anderson said he was unaware of the needs of the Fire Chief and unsure if a facility for the Fire Department could be placed adjacent to the Highway Facility if constructed to this plan.

There was discussion regarding the current site plan and future plans of the of the Highway Department's functional and operational needs, including storage of vehicles and equipment and moving the fuel depot.

Mr. Carvalho stated an environmental study is needed on the site. Mr. Devol asked about a septic system. Mr. Anderson said the new system would be placed in the area between the old police station and the parking area.

Discussion continued regarding the wetlands and that the plan shows an encroachment. Mr. Devol said any future building may not be available due to wetlands on the reserved part of the lot.

Discussion continued regarding Highway Department operational needs such as break rooms, bunk rooms, bathrooms for both genders, locker rooms, and offices for various personnel. He said the building proposed to fit on this site would require tandem parking of equipment and it is not ideal for highway department functions.

Mr. Hajder asked about a transfer station and if the Town had plans for such a facility in the future. Mr. Anderson said at this time there is no interest in establishing a transfer station and that he did not believe there was enough room to operate a full transfer station on the site. Mr. Lapointe stated there is no budget for that either.

Discussion continued regarding the Fire Department Feasibility Study and that it will assist in guiding the Town regarding what is necessary for current and future needs.

Mr. Blakey asked if this proposal was for any site. Mr. Anderson said this proposal was designed specifically for the current Highway location and that if the department were to move sites, he would request a garage-style building for better mobility and increased functionality of Highway Department operations.

There was discussion regarding the property at the end of Sears Farm Road and its historical use as dumping debris from hurricanes and other storms there.

Discussion continued regarding the neighboring landfill and the lack of easements and public right of way in that area.

Mr. Anderson said the land has a significant amount of peat and that many buildings are built on micropiles.

The Committee reviewed a list of privately owned parcels utilizing the AxisGIS system on the town's website. These parcels were highlighted by Town Planner John Hansen using a metric of three or more buildable acres. Mr. Hansen said he did not reach out to any owners to see if anyone was interested in selling. He said he only looked at the map to see which parcels fit the size requirements.

The following sites were reviewed:

Stevens Home Parcel – Old Stevens Road at Stevens Road. Mr. Anderson said the lot could be subdivided. Mr. Hansen said the parcel is in Chapter 61A classification and is about 6 acres.

Almeida's Farm – Route 6. Mr. Hansen said this was also classified under Chapter 61A, is about 9.5 acres and is business zoned.

Almeida's Farm II – Rear of Mr. Peepers. Mr. Hansen said there is 5.6 acres and it is business zoned. There was a notation that the parking lot of the Venus de Milo sits on this parcel.

Hallock Property – Richards Road; Mr. Hansen said this was 21 buildable acres. He said the Conservation Agent has been approached many times about developing this parcel and there is a significant amount of wetlands on the parcel.

Coles River Landing - Mr. Hansen said there are about 3 buildable acres but it is in a flood zone. Mr. Carvalho said this was supposed to be developed into condominiums.

Touisset Country Club – Mr. Hansen said that there is 50 acres here with an assessed value of \$3.5 million.

Doe Property – Mr. Hansen said there was about 19.2 acres of vacant land on Old Warren Road with frontage in two spots. He said this parcel was adjacent to Bettencourt Lane. Mr. Heim said it is in a residential part of town.

Dattoli Property – Mr. Hansen said there are 3.6 acres on Old Warren Road.

Doe Property II – South Wilbur Avenue. Mr. Hansen said this was directly across from Regent Court.

Berard Property – Route 6 near Bushee Road. Mr. Hansen said there were 5.1 acres on this parcel which was in Chapter 61A. He said there are three access points along Route 6 and a small access on Bushee Road.

Toys R. Us – Swansea Mall Drive. Mr. Hansen said that this building is vacant but shares a parcel with the Dollar Tree and other continuing properties. He said it would have to be subdivided. He said the entire site is 10.58 acres and it would be about 5 if the building alone was a separate parcel.

Capaldi site – Route 6. Mr. Hansen said that this has 25.5 acres, is business zoned and the parking lot is a separate parcel.

Harkins Property – Wood Street. Mr. Hansen said there are 20 acres that were previously approved for a subdivision but it has never been constructed. He said it was access on Hortonville and Wood Street.

Avila Property – Wood Street. Mr. Hansen said this vacant lot is across from the Del Mac Orchard.

Souza Property – adjacent to Del Mac Orchard. Mr. Hansen said this parcel was previously offered to the Town. It is about 27 acres.

Swansea Grange – Milford Road. Mr. Hansen said this site has 6.25 acres and that there seems to be no title as there is no record of it in the Assessor's office and their Certificate of Inspection is expired.

Venus de Milo – Route 6. Mr. Hansen said this was in a flood zone and consists of 7 acres.

Reynolds Farm. Mr. Hansen said this consists of 18.74 acres.

Mr. Hansen said the Sousa Property, Toys R Us, Rear of Mr. Peepers and Venus de Milo are all for sale currently.

Mr. Devol said that the Stevens Home property on Ledge Road has some property that they may not need. He suggested reaching out to them to subdivide and purchase that part of their land.

Mr. Lapointe asked about the Swan Finishing site on Ledge Road.

Mr. Hajder requested that 463 Swansea Mall Drive be added to the list of explored properties. Mr. Heim said that this property is a complete gut and there were concerns over an aging HVAC system.

Mr. Carvalho asked why the Town would purchase land before building if currently held properties existed.

Discussion continued regarding resident acceptance on the cost of new construction and purchasing new property.

The Committee reviewed the list of proposed properties and identified those properties they were not interested in exploring further. The Committee agreed to retain the following properties for exploration:

Stevens Road vacant land, Almeida Farm (Route 6), Almeida Farm II (rear Mr. Peepers), Berard Property, Souza Property, Swansea Grant, Swan Finishing, 463 Swansea Mall Drive, and Stevens Home (Ledge Road, fields only). Mr. Heim said Ms. Aronstein would prepare informational sheets before the next meeting on each property.

The Committee reviewed the interim report for the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Heim said he will be attending a Selectmen's meeting to give an update on the progress of the Board. He said that this is an interim report. Mr. Devol stated he believed the report to be accurate and sufficiently informative without getting into too much detail. Mr. Salzillo asked why the Committee isn't going to talk about utilizing the Junior High School and hear the Master Plan from the School Department. Mr. Carvalho said the school department only plans to build a middle school and after that to consolidate elementary schools. He said the schools would keep the Hoyle School, but close Luther, Gardener, and Brown Schools. Mr. Carvalho stated that school department property can only be given to the Town by vote of the School Committee.

Mr. Carvalho said that the Middle School wouldn't be vacant for at least five years. Mr. Lapointe said it would take longer than that.

The Committee agreed to arrange a meeting with the School Superintendent and add this discussion to an upcoming agenda.

Mrs. Aronstein said she would edit the preliminary report to reflect that there would be upcoming conversations with the School Department, that the Committee will begin exploring the Middle School as a potential site and that there would be some edits to the Library update section due to their upcoming Library Building Committee meeting.

Mr. Blakey **MOVED** to approve the report. Seconded by Mr. Anderson and so voted unanimously.

There were no committee member reports.

The Committee set the next meeting date for Wednesday, August 24, 2022.

At 7:36 p.m., Mr. Hajder **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Anderson and so voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Mallory E. Aronstein, Town Administrator

Documents in meeting packet:

Minutes of July 19, 2022

Existing site plan for Highway Garage property

Proposed plan for new Highway Garage property as previously proposed by the Town

Draft Status Report and Preliminary Recommendations