

Minutes of the Capital Building Committee Meeting of Wednesday, August 31, 2022. Present were Derek Heim, Chairman, Marc Lapointe, Vice Chairman, James Carvalho, Chris Hajder, James Devol, Tom Blakey, Robert Alford II, John Hansen, and William Anderson. The meeting convened at 6:35 p.m. at the School Administration Building, One Gardner Neck Road.

Mr. John Salzillo was absent.

Also present at this time were Mallory Aronstein, Town Administrator; Ms. Sarah Carlson and Ms. Joyce Moore.

Chairman Heim called the meeting to order.

The Committee reviewed the meeting minutes of August 24, 2022. Mr. Carvalho **MOVED** to approve the minutes of August 24, 2022. Seconded by Mr. Hansen.

Mr. Alford noted a typo on page three and a grammatical error on page four. The Committee unanimously voted in favor of approving the minutes with those amendments.

The Committee reviewed the proposed Warrant Article language for a request for funding an Owners Project Manager and Designer. Mr. Heim asked if the Advisory and Finance Committee or the Board of Selectmen had vetted this article. Mrs. Aronstein said that the Board of Selectmen was aware that this article was being requested and that the Advisory and Finance Committee has not yet met.

Mr. Alford said that the Advisory and Finance Committee understands that this project will likely be ready before the next Annual Town Meeting and that he believed they would be in favor of the article because the Town is being proactive.

There was discussion regarding the current status of the Capital Building Committee's votes and the reasons for requesting this at the Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Anderson said the Committee has agreed to explore a combined facility for the Town Halls and the Council on Aging and that the Committee has agreed to work on both the Highway facility and the combined facility at the same time.

Discussion continued regarding funding readily available for a Highway Garage design.

Mr. Carvalho **MOVED** to recommend the request for the article to be placed on the Warrant by the Board of Selectmen. Seconded by Mr. Devol and so voted unanimously.

The Committee reviewed proposed sites for municipal buildings. There was discussion regarding the Sousa property and whether the owners were interested in selling. Mr. Carvalho stated he reached out and is working to arrange a call between the owners and the Town Administrator. He said if the Town purchased the landlocked Sousa property, the entire complex of DPW and the Town Hall and Council on Aging could potentially locate at that Del Mac Orchard. He said the fields would locate on that additional parcel.

There was discussion regarding whether the Town should buying land when already-held parcels were still on the table for exploration.

There was discussion of a preference for a Highway Facility design and that the current site forces an inferior design. Mr. Anderson said there was a meeting scheduled to review the Del Mac Orchard site and see if all of the proposed uses could fit on the parcel.

Discussion continued regarding the school's plans for a new middle school.

The Committee agreed they could not make any decisions on the Del Mac Orchard property or the Sousa property at this time and needed more information. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Alford discussed siting the Town Hall at the Annex property and reserving the Del Mac Orchard for the Highway Facility. Mr. Alford said he prefers removing non-Town owned properties off the list.

Mr. Hajder **MOVED** to remove the vacant Stevens Road land and the Almeida Farm II properties from the list of proposed properties. Seconded by Mr. Alford and so voted unanimously.

Mr. Devol **MOVED** to eliminate the Sears Road property because of title issues and environmental concerns. Seconded by Mr. Carvalho for discussion.

Mr. Anderson said that the lot is not suitable for a Town Hall but placing a DPW there could work since the Town also has the property to the east of the Salvation Army. He said if the facility doesn't fit on the Del Mac Orchard it would make sense to put the Town Hall there.

Discussion continued regarding access to the Sears Road property and an existing easement with the Salvation Army, lack of utilities, and the poor condition of the roadway.

Mr. Hajder asked why the Committee was not examining the Swansea Mall property as a viable option. Mr. Heim stated that when he was a Selectman reviewing the proposal he did not feel the Town was getting the best deal. Mr. Alford stated that there was not much support from the Advisory and Finance Committee at the time either.

There was discussion regarding the negative public feedback about the proposal.

Mr. Devol said that his reasoning for eliminating the Sears Road property from the list of potential sites is that there are two town-owned sites on Route 6 a quarter of a mile apart from each other and both should not be on the list. He said the Committee should pick either the Sears Road property or the east of Salvation Army to explore.

Mr. Heim called for a vote on the motion on the floor. Heim, no; Lapointe, no; Alford, no; Anderson, no; Hansen, no; Carvalho, no; Blakey, no; Hajder, no; Devol, yes. Motion failed.

Mr. Devol said the current DPW site needs to be placed on the list of potential sites. The Committee agreed.

Discussion continued regarding 463 Swansea Mall Drive. Mr. Heim noted some structural issues and other issues that were not insurmountable.

Discussion continued regarding the Committee's objectives.

Mr. Lapointe requested that the Town reach out to the owner of 463 Swansea Mall Drive to determine a potential cost.

Mr. Alford said he was only in favor of buying something if the Town will appropriate funds that will renovate the space correctly from the beginning. He said he was not interested in nickel and diming the project like was done with converting St. Michael's Church to a Council on Aging building.

Mr. Hajder suggested the Committee view all of the sites as a group. Mrs. Aronstein discussed the limitations of site visits under the Open Meeting Law and suggested that the Committee visit properties in small groups that do not constitute a quorum.

Discussion continued regarding the previously issued Request for Proposals in April of 2021 and why the Mall was favored over 463 Swansea Mall Drive.

Mr. Devol suggested that the Committee develop scenarios and run through them with advantages and disadvantages. He said the Committee should not examine each parcel separately. He suggested ranking the scenarios.

There was discussion regarding the tax impact of the project and having to know how it will impact the Town's finances before a vote at Town Meeting.

Mrs. Aronstein offered to develop the scenarios and proposals for review by the Committee based upon the remaining parcels of land up for discussion.

The Committee agreed to review proposed scenarios at the next meeting.

Mr. Devol updated the Committee concerning the Library Building Project. He said the final cost of the project was estimated at \$20,200,000. He said the Library Building Committee reduced the cost by \$1.3 million for a final request of \$19 million, of which \$6.8 million would be reimbursed over five years by the State. He said the project cannot be changed from the submitted proposal from 2017 or the Town will lose the grant. He said there is now five years of escalation costs to contend with. Mr. Devol said the group is working with the Town Administrator to discuss finance options and they are looking to discuss the proposal with the Advisory and Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Devol said the Town would lose the grant if there was a reduction in square feet as well.

There was brief discussion regarding prevailing wage and how it inflates costs of public building projects that do not translate to residential building.

At 8:03 p.m., Mr. Alford **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Blakey and so voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Mallory E. Aronstein, Town Administrator

Documents reviewed by the Committee:

Minutes of August 24, 2022

Proposed Warrant Article for Town Hall OPM and Designer

Parcel Evaluation Sheet – Private and Town-owned parcels

Definitions of Criteria

Informational Sheets

Del Mac Orchard (includes conceptual plans for Town Hall located at Del Mac Orchard, Notes from Meeting regarding Del Mac Orchard)

Town Annex Property

Sears Road Property

East of Salvation Army

Stevens Road

Almeida II (Rear of Mr. Peepers)

Sousa Property

463Swansea Mall Drive