



TOWN IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE
Windsor Town Hall
Ludlow Room
August 20, 2019
Special Meeting

APPROVED MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Joseph McAuliffe called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Present were Councilors McAuliffe and Wilkos.

Staff: Peter Souza, Town Manager; Jim Burke, Director of Economic Development, Bob Jarvis, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer, Adam Kessler, Assistant Town Engineer

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. DISCUSSION OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION

Town Manager gave an overview of the item and stated the Engineering division is in the process of researching various technical requirements through several vendors as well as other communities that have installed charging stations. The preliminary project cost estimate of \$28,100 (including contingency) is based on projects undertaken and completed several years ago by Southington and Bloomfield.

There currently is a state bid in place for EV Charge Station equipment and a remote payment module. Installation of an electric service, meter and panel will be required. Site improvements such as ADA accommodations will also likely need to be completed. Staff continues to explore possibilities for grant funding. There may be grant funds available in 2020 through either CT DEEP or Eversource.

Within the next 30 days, staff plans to seek proposals for the design/build of the new electric service. This will help to refine the project scope and cost estimates. At this time, the potential location for the charging station is the town-owned parking lot at the corner of Maple and Broad Street.

Councilor Wilkos asked about the potential grant program from Eversource as well as the charging station equipment. Adam Kessler stated we were looking to install a 'level 2' charger with a 'universal' type charging plug. He also noted that Eversource's program may have requirements to size the electrical service for more than a dual station.

Councilor Wilkos expressed his interest in having the charging stations located at the private retail center at the Broad Street / Poquonock Ave intersection. He felt this could be an

attractive amenity or service for patrons of the center. Staff stated they would reach out to the property owners.

Chairman McAuliffe recognized a resident who wanted to comment. The resident inquired about partnering with a third party supplier / vendor so to reduce the capital expenditure and shift annual maintenance and repair responsibilities.

Town Manager stated that staff would continue with project design, monitor grant availability and look into the resident's suggestion.

4. DISCUSSION OF WILSON REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Town Manager Souza provided an overview of this item that was referred to the committee by the Town Council during their August 5, 2019 meeting. Town Manager Souza stated the public input process was designed to help staff provide the Town Council with one or more suggested uses as part of the Council's consideration of future uses and potential disposition of the neighborhood and community assets. He also noted that the findings of the public input process are most helpful in understanding residents' preferences, and that it is one component in determining re-use. Other factors to consider include physical feasibility, market support and financial feasibility, as well as the town's fiscal goals and constraints.

Town Manager Souza recapped the public input process and highlighted the following findings:

Redevelopment Parcel (458 Windsor Avenue)

The preferred use for the Redevelopment Parcel is "mixed-use," a design that would allow for ground-level retail or office space while providing for housing in the space above. Other supported uses included residential townhouse development and preserving the land as open space/park for various community events and uses.

Wolcott School Site (451 Windsor Avenue)

The recommended or preferred use for the Wolcott School Site was single-family housing or mixed-use of low density residential with neighborhood retail/services along Windsor Ave. Renovating the existing building was also supported by survey respondents, but the Ad Hoc Committee did not favor this option due to projected costs to repair the building.

There are a few threshold questions for each parcel. In regards to the Redevelopment Parcel, a decision needs to be made if the site should be offered for redevelopment or retained and improved as public open space as suggested during the public outreach process. If the decision is for open space, then the town should establish a process for pursuing this option. If redevelopment is preferred, then staff should be directed to prepare a draft request for development proposals. Staff would also pursue discussions with utilities and the DOT regarding existing easements which impact potential development.

With regard to the Wolcott School site, staff recommends that the following pre-development steps be taken: 1) completion of an A-2 survey of the site and 2) completion of hazardous materials testing of the building. These actions will be useful for any development scenario for this site.

Councilor Wilkos asked about the cost of demolishing the school building. Staff responded that the estimated cost is between \$10 and \$15 per square foot (building is roughly 38,000 sf.) This does not include any cost for hazardous material removal.

Councilor Wilkos expressed his interest in the redevelopment parcel being utilized as improved open space or a neighborhood-type park. In terms of the Wolcott School site, he felt that a low density residential reuse would be appropriate with the existing character of the neighborhood. He mentioned single family homes, perhaps a few duplexes.

Councilor McAuliffe raised the topic of the current housing market. The Town Manager remarked that overall the regional housing market has been seeing new construction of primarily market rate rental developments. It was noted there could be a growing need for affordable housing for our senior population as it is becoming increasingly difficult for some elderly households to maintain their existing single family homes.

Councilor McAuliffe asked for additional information about the federal tax incentives under the Opportunity Zone designation. Jim Burke, Economic Development Director explained the Opportunity Zone program and that the area designated in Windsor is bounded by I-291 to the north, the CT River to the east, I-91 to the west and the Town line to the south. He noted that the residential homeownership projects would not be viable projects under the tax incentive program.

The committee discussed possible next steps. Councilor McAuliffe thought it would be worthwhile to have additional community outreach efforts with a focus on gaining input from neighborhood residents.

It was the consensus of the committee members to recommend to the Town Council that funds be appropriated for completion of an A-2 survey of the school site as well as for hazardous materials testing of the building. Committee members felt both of these actions would be useful for any development scenario for this site.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Eric Wiener, Palisado Avenue encouraged gathering additional public input on the redevelopment alternatives, with particular attention to the residents in the neighborhood. He suggested that multiple communication methods be used including mailing information to each household in the neighborhood.

Charles Jackson, 21 Wilson Avenue stated he had attended all 3 of the public meetings in the redevelopment topic. Generally he preferred keeping the school building but understood the cost to rehabilitate was probably too high. If the school building is not reused, he would prefer low density

housing on the site. He expressed that his preference for the redevelopment parcel was for it to be improved for neighborhood open space / parkland.

6. STAFF REPORTS

Town Manager Souza stated that planning for FY 20 capital projects is underway. Design funding requests will likely start to be made in September and October so that project designs and cost estimates can be completed by mid to late winter. Also, construction bids for the police station project at 100 Addison Road have been received. The Public Building Commission will be interviewing the apparent low bidder this coming week. The plan is to award a contract in September which would allow project construction to start in mid to late October. The low bid was essentially in line with the architect's cost estimate.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) May 22, 2019

MOVED by Councilor McAuliffe and Councilor Wilkos seconded to approve the minutes of the May 22, 2019 meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 2-0-0 (Councilor O'Reilly absent)

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor McAuliffe and seconded by Councilor Wilkos to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Motion Passed 2-0-0 (Councilor O'Reilly absent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Souza, Town Manager