



BEDFORD DEPOT PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Town Hall • Bedford, Massachusetts 01730

Meeting of January 16, 2008

MINUTES

Committee members in attendance: Donald Corey (DC); Joseph Piantedosi (JP); Jim Shea (JS)

Ex-officio committee members in attendance: Angelo Colao, Selectmen liaison; Richard Jones (RJ), Facilities Director; Rick Reed (RR), Town Manager; Richard Warrington (RW), DPW Director

Others in attendance: Gordon Feltman; Susan Grieb; Barbara Purchia; Moria Sarson

Chairman JP called the meeting to order at 3:13 P.M. at Bedford Town Hall.

JP invited representatives of Bedford Farmers Market to make a presentation. Organization founder Susan Grieb explained that Farmers Market is to be a weekly event where local food vendors may sell their products to the public. It is to be a community, family-based operation that educates people about healthy eating, she said. So far, three vendors have enrolled to participate.

Farmers Market is to occur on Mondays between 2:00 P.M. and 6:30 P.M., June 16 through October 20, at Bedford Depot Park. Certain parking spaces on the eastern end of the Railroad Avenue parking lot are to be blocked off on days when Farmers Market is scheduled. The Selectmen have given preliminary approval for the proposed activity. Ms. Grieb has met with abutter Kenneth Larson, the Code Enforcement Department, the Health Department and the Police Chief to discuss operational specifics. All vendor booths are to be standalone with no electrical power. Each vendor would be responsible for meeting health regulations and for their own trash disposal. Bedford Farmers Market intends to request permission from the Selectmen for temporary signs at the site.

RW inquired whether someone from Farmers Market would check that the grounds are in proper condition and free of debris at the end of daily operations. Ms. Grieb said that Farmers Market managers would walk the grounds at the end of the day. RW suggested that we check the Depot Park property easement agreements to verify that the proposed activity is allowable.

RJ joined the meeting at 3:35 P.M.

Ms. Grieb stated that Bedford Farmers Market would obtain liability insurance and that vendors would be required to have their own insurance. On days when Farmers Market is in operation, about 62 spaces would be available for public parking in the Railroad Avenue lot. RW expressed concern that on occasions when the Minuteman Bikeway is busy, the lot would quickly fill up and people would be inclined to park their vehicles along nearby streets.

AC and RR joined the meeting at 4:07 P.M.

JS expressed that the Farmers Market concept is compatible with the overarching purpose of Depot Park. JP asked the organizers that we keep the lines of communication open as Bedford Farmers Market develops.

Selectman Gordon Feltman discussed possible sources of grants that might be used for future renovation projects at Depot Park. This information is contained in a handout that Mr. Feltman prepared and previously distributed to the Committee.

The Committee discussed with Mr. Feltman possible methods to maximize rental revenue from the Depot while also pursuing a high caliber tenant who might underwrite the cost of building renovations. JP said that the Committee welcomes Mr. Feltman's long-term views for the Depot, but that we need to address Depot Park's ongoing financial requirements. These are not mutually exclusive objectives, he noted.

Mr. Feltman left the meeting at 4:29 P.M.

The Committee discussed the draft Depot rental RFP. AC proposed that leases be for a minimum of two years with a provision for a one-year notice to tenants to vacate the premises. RJ suggested that leases be for a term of up to five years with a one-year termination clause. RJ said he would finalize the draft RFP to make it ready for advertisement. DC conveyed that the Bedford Historical Society intends to respond to the rental RFP.

RJ distributed a financial statement of rent received from tenant Varney Creative. He said that Town Counsel has sent a demand letter to the tenant for collection of back rent.

JP invited motions relative to the Depot rental RFP. DC made a motion that the Committee recommend to the Selectmen that the RFP be advertised after the Selectmen receive a final version of the document. JS seconded the motion, and it passed by a unanimous vote.

JP invited motions relative to the Committee's draft letter of recommendations to the Selectmen dated 1/16/08. DC made a motion that the chairman transmit this letter to the Selectmen. JS seconded the motion, and it passed by a unanimous vote.

RW said that new flooring has been installed in the rail car and that replacement windowsills are being fabricated by a carpenter. The next step will be installation of the reupholstered seats.

RW provided an update on the state's Freight House renovation project. He distributed copies of the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) bid summaries. He said that MHD is proceeding with the project.

DC made a motion to accept the minutes of the 12/19/07 meeting. JP seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

JP proposed that the next meeting be held inside the rail car at Depot Park.

At 5:33 P.M., JS made a motion to adjourn the meeting. DC seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Submitted by

Jim Shea, Clerk

These minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of the Committee at its meeting of 2/20/08.