



BEDFORD DEPOT PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Town Hall • Bedford, Massachusetts 01730

Meeting of February 17, 2010

MINUTES

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

Committee members not in attendance: Donald Corey

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

Ex-officio committee members not in attendance: Richard Jones, Facilities Director

Others in attendance: William Moonan

Chairman Joseph Piantedosi called the meeting to order at 3:31 P.M. at Bedford Town Hall.

JP noted that the Planning Board is to consider the Selectmen's application for a mixed-use special permit for the Depot and Freight House buildings on February 23. AC said he anticipates Mark Siegenthaler will be in attendance at the meeting. JS observed that the final application proposes a set of uses that is somewhat more restrictive than those contained in the Committee's recommendation; and that the Selectmen added the Freight House to the application.

JP distributed a Depot Park Revolving Fund financial statement dated 2/16/10 that he received from the Facilities Department. The account balance is \$32,483. JS stated that the actual balance amount ought to be \$5,000 higher than shown. An accounting correction that involves the transfer of \$5,000 from the Historic Properties Stabilization Fund has not yet occurred.

The Committee discussed utility expenses. JP questioned the Depot's January oil bill of \$792. JS noted that the parking lot lighting, Freight House building and railroad car electrical feeds are metered together. By his calculation, assuming an electricity price of 15¢ per kilowatt hour, the daily expense to operate the railroad car's lighting for an average of 11 hours each night is approximately 58¢. Using the same rate basis, the cost is about \$4.79 per day to operate the parking lot and exterior building lights.

William Moonan, a member of the board of directors of Town Center of Bedford, Inc., suggested that the railroad car be promoted for business meetings. He asked whether a projector and screen could be installed in the car. JS proposed doing a test with a portable projector and screen to see whether the car's environment and lighting conditions are conducive to projection.

AC reported that Fay Russo told him a previous renter complained about having to pay custodial charges. JS said that Town Center has since embedded custodial expenses into the basic hourly rental rate.

RR joined the meeting at 3:57 P.M.

The Committee discussed future rental opportunities at Depot Park. JS said a copy of the railroad car rental flyer was inserted inside a recent *Bedford Depot News* newsletter issue that had a distribution of over 250 copies.

JP asked RR for a list of building uses that are proposed in the Selectmen's special permit application and a copy of the application itself.

JP suggested that the Town advertise an RFP for rental of the unoccupied Depot office units. Another approach, he added, is to first identify potential tenants and then advertise an RFP. The Committee discussed ways to generate awareness of the rental opportunities such as placing a sign inside the Depot foyer, putting a real estate sign adjacent to the bikeway, Internet advertising such as Craig's List and an article in the local newspaper.

The Committee discussed the feasibility of renting the remaining Depot office units on a tenant-at-will basis. RR explained that the Town could rent real estate to a tenant on a month to month basis provided that the total value of the rental does not reach \$25,000. Otherwise, the Town must follow the competitive RFP process as prescribed by the state's Chapter 30-B procurement law. JS suggested that we refer to assessor records to get a sense of comparative commercial rental rates in Bedford.

JP inquired about the status of the Depot's rooftop train order signals. RW said the DPW plans to work on the signals during milder weather. He added that a section of the Freight House platform railing is being modified to allow egress and ingress at the Lexington end of the railroad car. Baudanza Electric is to prepare a quote to complete electrical work inside the car.

JS conveyed that Facilities Department staff have been painting the second floor of the Freight House. He said that remaining tasks include flooring, connection of data/voice cabling and installation of a card reader on the front door. JP said he plans to e-mail Richard Jones to ask about the status of these items.

The Freight House is to officially reopen to the public by Patriot's Day weekend, JS said, but it may open sooner on an unscheduled basis should the weather become nice and people return to the bikeway.

JP recapped action items from today's meeting: ascertain comparative rental rates for commercial property in Bedford, install rental signs at the Depot, prepare a rental advertisement for Craig's List, and advertise the rental opportunity in the *Bedford Depot News* newsletter and on the Town's web site.

JP invited motions regarding the 12/02/09 meeting minutes. JS made a motion to accept the minutes. JP seconded the motion; and it passed by a unanimous vote. JP proposed that the minutes of the 12/29/09 meeting be deferred until the next scheduled meeting on March 17.

AC said this is the last Committee meeting that he will be attending as a Selectman liaison. Committee members thanked Mr. Colao for his service.

At 5:01 P.M., JP made a motion to adjourn the meeting. JS seconded the motion; and it passed by a unanimous vote.

Submitted by

Jim Shea, Clerk

These minutes were approved by a vote of 2-0-1 at the meeting of 3/17/10.