



## **BEDFORD DEPOT PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Town Hall • Bedford, Massachusetts 01730

**Meeting of October 19, 2011**

### **MINUTES**

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

**Ex-officio committee members in attendance:** Richard Jones (RJ), Facilities Director; Rick Reed (RR), Town Manager; Rich Warrington (RW), DPW Director; William Moonan (WM), selectman liaison

Chairman Joseph Piantedosi called the meeting to order at 3:12 P.M. at Bedford Town Hall.

RJ distributed a Depot Park Revolving Fund financial statement dated 6/15/11. He noted that the date shown on the hardcopy is wrong and ought to be corrected to read 10/19/11. The current account balance is \$36,867.29. JP inquired about groundskeeping fees that appear on the financial statement. RJ said his understanding is that this expense is an estimate and that money is not being deducted from the Revolving Fund.

RR joined the meeting at 3:15 P.M.

The committee discussed whether the Revolving Fund is on track to cover future capital expenses such as mechanical system replacements, significant building repairs and parking lot repaving. JS recalled that future major expenses were estimated on a spreadsheet that the committee prepared a few years ago.

RJ explained that Facilities Department labor and material expenses are being charged to the Revolving Fund to extend the Freight House fire alarm system to the railroad car. So far, the breakdown is \$685.07 for labor and \$324.29 for materials. Labor is billed by Facilities at an overtime rate even if it is performed on straight time, RJ said, because the employees need to perform duties elsewhere in town on a weekend. JS asked whether Bedford could save money by using a contractor to extend the fire alarm system. RJ said that in his experience, paying Facilities employees on an overtime basis is the less expensive option than hiring a contractor.

RJ commented that all the money in the Historical Properties Stabilization Fund which was earmarked for Freight House improvements has been expended. He is unsure about the amount remaining in the railroad car renovations account.

A discussion followed about inter-departmental cross-charging practices. JS inquired whether Bedford would be plowing the parking lot regardless of whether the Depot is occupied. RW replied yes. JS recommended that any charges made to the Revolving Account for services be based on actual costs rather than estimates.

JP noted that the complex is largely used for public purposes—including by Minuteman Bikeway users who enjoy the benefits of the two parking lots, the public restrooms and exterior lighting—and questioned whether the full financial burden of maintaining the complex ought to be borne by the Depot tenants, Freight House food sales and railroad car rentals. He suggested

that revenue from parking fees could significantly offset Bedford's expenses. RR objected to collecting parking fees because he thinks the public would choose to park on the street and in private lots. JS suggested that the potential annual revenue from parking fees be evaluated.

RJ said he plans to meet with the Community Preservation Committee in December to discuss whether any funds could be applied to Depot Park projects.

RJ said he will prepare an FY 2013 budget.

The committee discussed the status of current Depot leases. The Glass Collaborative lease is to expire in early 2012. JS inquired whether it is necessary for Bedford to advertise an RFP prior to renewing leases with existing tenants. Can lease renewals be awarded in perpetuity on a non-competitive basis, year after year? RR said an RFP process is unnecessary if the value of each award is below \$25,000.

The committee discussed whether Babe Ruth Baseball might move to another location—and if so, how Unit 2 might be modified to become more attractive to a future tenant, possibly as retail space.

JP and JS expressed disappointment that the Depot exterior was not painted this year as planned. They feel painting the Depot like the Freight House will improve the building's appearance and possibly attract new tenants. RJ said his busy schedule precluded writing the project's specifications this year. He said he asked a contractor for a price to paint the Depot, but has not yet received it. JP offered to help move the project forward.

RJ said he can more easily get a pushbutton door access control for the Freight House than a card reader.

RW reported the VFW has stopped maintaining a portion of Depot Park. He is working to get an agreement completed between Bedford and the VFW.

JS noted that paint on the Freight House deck is breaking down and flaking off. The custodian reported that nails are popping up in places, possibly causing a tripping hazard.

RJ said he would work with Menders, Torrey & Spencer to prepare a Depot renovation project and will plan to present it at the next meeting.

RW distributed copies of the completed paper version of the kiosk map. JP conveyed a request from Donald Corey of the Historical Society to purchase 450 bikeway maps at \$1.00 each. RW said the approximate cost per map is 32¢ each. The committee agreed that in case quantities of 450, the sales price is \$1.00 each. Otherwise, they are priced at \$2.00 each.

JP identified a need to fill a vacancy on the committee. RR recommended that the committee provide an update to the selectmen, and then see whether the selectmen wish to fill the vacancy.

RJ left the meeting at 4:31 P.M.

JP reported that he and JS met with health inspector Joseph Knott about temporary food stands that sometimes appear outside the Freight House. Mr. Knott said health permits are required by all food vendors and he feels coordination is necessary before vendors set up their tables outside the Freight House. Therefore, he does not plan to issue a permit to food vendors until they discuss their plans with the committee.

WM mentioned that the Billerica & Bedford Railroad historical sign at Loomis Street is bent. JS noted that the Special Places sign adjacent to the Depot is painted with graffiti.

JP made a motion to accept the 6/15/11 meeting minutes. JS seconded the motion; and it passed by a unanimous vote.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 16 at 3:00 P.M.

At 5:02 P.M., JS made a motion to adjourn. JP seconded the motion; and it passed by a unanimous vote.

Submitted by:

Jim Shea, Clerk

These minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of the Committee at its meeting of 12/06/11.

Documents and other exhibits used at this meeting:

- Meeting agenda, dated 10/19/11
- Depot Park Revolving Account financial statement, dated 10/19/11
- Depot Park proposed FY 2012 budget, dated 10/19/11
- List of Depot Park expenses, 8/18/11 through 10/19/11
- Paper version of the Depot Park kiosk map
- Ongoing DPAC Projects, dated 10/19/11