



BEDFORD DEPOT PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Town Hall • Bedford, Massachusetts 01730

Meeting of March 21, 2012

MINUTES

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

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

Chairman JP called the meeting to order at 3:06 P.M. at Bedford Town Hall.

Reports from RJ:

- The Freight House public restrooms are to be reopened this week.
- Facilities Department workers installed sub-flooring in Depot Unit 4. Vinyl tiles are to be installed by the end of next week. The cost estimate to install new flooring in Unit 4 is \$2,345.
- The new Unit 4 tenant, JM Custom Creations LLC, is to begin occupancy on April 1. The tenant will make a deposit in advance.
- RJ asked Marcia Pyles to make a list of when current Depot tenant leases will end.
- Data and CATV jacks were installed inside the railroad car. Connectors need to be put on wires in the Freight House electrical room before they become operational.
- The fire alarm system inside the car is now active.
- RJ will work on getting a card reader or punch-pad access unit for the Freight House door.
- Touchup painting of the Freight House exterior can be done by a Facilities painter.
- RJ will get a price quote on painting the Depot exterior so that it may be painted this summer. JP said he would like to see the project done this spring and offered to help prepare the specifications.
- RJ plans to have the Freight House deck painted this spring before activity increases at Depot Park.

Reports from RW:

- RW has been working on an agreement between Bedford and the Veterans of Foreign Wars that defines easements and maintenance responsibilities at Depot Park.
- The bent Billerica & Bedford Railroad sign on Loomis Street was replaced.
- The Depot Park directional sign requested by Barbara Purchia is under design.

RR joined the meeting at 3:16 P.M.

Depot building renovations/improvements:

- RJ distributed an updated Depot Preservation Plan from 7/20/07 that deletes interior demolition work and provides revised price estimates. It encompasses windows, doors, siding, painting, foundation repairs, replacement of brick piers with steel support columns, a handicap-accessible ramp, and utility upgrades.
- RJ asked whether the proposed project ought to be pared down.
- JP noted that if a large amount of money is spent on the building, it might become necessary to bring the entire building up to current code.
- JS asked whether any project components would be exempt from the 30% threshold that requires the building to be brought up to code. RJ answered that the ramp and certain other improvements would be excluded.
- RW asked how the proposed project would tie in with the Energy Code.
- JP suggested that Bedford apply for a seeder grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission and then apply for Community Preservation funds to implement the proposed building improvements.
- JP inquired whether it is possible to accomplish the proposed renovations while tenants occupy the building. It would be possible to empty building and then re-advertise for tenants after the renovations, RJ suggested.
- If a sprinkler system is necessary, RW said new water service would come from Loomis Street, about 300 feet away. The current water service comes from South Road.
- JP proposed designing a complete renovation project, but to phase its implementation. He suggested hiring an architect to prepare a phased plan for the exterior work.
- JP recommended that Unit 2 be upgraded by removing the garage door and installing new sheetrock, flooring and ceiling material so that it becomes more attractive rental space.
- RR asked what is behind the stairway in the foyer. RJ explained that restrooms exist behind the stairway. RR proposed that the restrooms could be moved and reconfigured to connect together the existing first floor units for use by a single tenant.
- RJ said he will confer with Menders, Torrey & Spencer to explore how facade work can be phased. He believes MTS would provide this consultation at little or no charge.
- RR said the Bedford Historical Society has amassed a large sum of money and wonders whether it has interest in renting space inside the Depot building.
- JS suggested moving ahead now with Depot improvements that can be accomplished in the near future. He believes the relatively high cost of a full building renovation is beyond what Bedford would pay for in the near or medium term.

WM joined the meeting at 3:44 P.M.

RJ reported that Depot Unit 3 was leased to the Glass Cooperative for one year with two one-year lease options. RJ noted that the renewals are at Bedford's discretion. The rent charged for years two and three would be the same as for the current year. WM observed that the lease does not have a requirement that the tenant inform the landlord if they choose not to renew.

RJ reported that Unit 4 was leased to JM Custom Creations LLC at \$400 per month. It is a one-year lease with two one-year options to renew at the same price.

JS requested copies of all Depot leases for the committee members. RJ offered to provide electronic versions.

RJ distributed a Depot Park Revolving Fund financial statement dated 3/21/12. The current account balance is \$32,617.52. RJ noted that an additional \$4,219.32 in the Revolving Fund is for groundskeeping expenses that have not yet been paid out.

JP expressed concern about transferring money from the Revolving Fund to other departments when upcoming Depot Park projects will need financial support.

RJ said the tenants with whom he was spoken prefer fixed rental rates, not variable CAM (common area maintenance) charges. JP requested from RJ a spreadsheet that shows all CAM charges and other expenses.

JS questioned why Freight House electrical charges increase substantially during the winter, a time when the building receives little usage and appliances are turned off. RJ said the parking lot lights might be a reason for the spike because they are operated for longer periods of time during the winter months. The parking lot lights and Freight House share an electric meter.

RJ reported that \$18,721.69 remains in the Depot Roof Fund. He said he will use the balance of the Railroad Car Renovation Fund to pay for materials needed for the car's fire alarm installation. No Facilities Department labor charges will be incurred.

RJ and JS discussed custodial duties at Depot Park. The employee hired in past years is at the premises about 10 to 20 minutes per day, JS observed, yet is paid for an hour. He expressed that several other useful tasks could be performed to round out the hour—such as emptying the outside trash receptacles into the dumpster, picking up stray trash on the grounds, and cleaning the railroad car. RJ explained it is difficult to find a person to work for only an hour on weekends. He plans to find a new part-time custodian.

JP discussed the advantages of replacing the Depot Park exterior lights with LED fixtures. In addition to lower electrical usage, the longer life of LEDs would decrease labor expenses to replace bulbs. RW plans to conduct a test by replacing one existing fixture with LEDs.

JS conveyed that part-time cashiers are to work at the Freight House on weekends beginning in early May. They are to be paid with money the Friends raised during the past few months.

JP made a motion to accept the draft minutes of the 2/15/12 meeting. JS seconded the motion; and it passed by a unanimous vote.

JP said the next meeting is scheduled for 4/18/12.

At 4:41 P.M., JP invited motions to adjourn the meeting. 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 5/02/12.

Documents and other exhibits used at this meeting:

- Meeting agenda, dated 3/21/12
- Depot Park Revolving Fund Financial Statement, dated 3/21/12
- Bedford Depot Preservation Plan, Phase II, Demolition and Exterior Preservation
- Estimated FY 2013 budget, revised 3/21/12
- Ongoing DPAC Projects, dated 3/20/12