



BEDFORD DEPOT PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Town Hall • Bedford, Massachusetts 01730

Meeting of February 28, 2013

MINUTES

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

Ex-officio committee members in attendance: Richard Jones (RJ), Facilities Director; Rich Warrington, DPW director; William Moonan (WM), selectman liaison

Ex-officio committee members not in attendance: Rick Reed, Town Manager

Others in attendance: Donald Corey, Historic Preservation Commission

At 3:09 P.M., JS noted the absence of chairman Joseph Piantedosi. He made a motion to elect John Peterson chairman pro-tem. Mr. Peterson seconded the motion, and it passed by a unanimous vote of 2-0-0.

Donald Corey reviewed the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) grant application process. The grant application to MHC is now in progress. He reported that the Community Preservation Committee voted in favor of allocating \$100,000 in Community Preservation funds towards proposed Depot building accessibility and facade improvements.

RJ distributed a Depot building code analysis from Mender, Torrey & Spencer. He explained that when a permit is requested from the Code Enforcement Department to perform the proposed work, the second floor should not pose a problem due to its current type of usage. RJ said that should the MHC provide a grant, a maximum of 30% of the project can consist of accessibility improvements. September is the soonest work might begin; and per stipulations of the MHC grant program, the project must be completed by June 30, 2014. RJ intends to carry out the proposed Depot project in a way that would have the least impact to tenants.

RJ called attention to the existing wall that divides Unit 2's storage and office space. The proposed design would remove Unit 2's office space to create a corridor that leads to a new accessible restroom. He plans to speak with the Unit 2 tenant to see how this design might impact Babe Ruth's usage of the space. To reduce cost, the Facilities Department plumber would perform work on the accessible restroom. RJ noted that the Unit 2 tenant might leave the Depot for other space before its current lease expires. JS inquired whether the tenant would continue to have rental payment obligations to Bedford under such a scenario.

The Depot's second floor would be impacted by the proposed new windows that would extend above the roof overhang. RW questioned how much light the second floor would receive with the new windows. RJ replied that at least the current amount of outside light would enter the second floor through the new windows.

WM inquired how much of the proposed project can be completed with the anticipated funding. Mr. Corey said that with a budget of \$150,000, it ought to be possible to implement at

least the ramp and facade improvements on the building's northern side. He said it might be necessary to request up to \$75,000 from the Historic Properties Stabilization Fund to carry out all of the architect's current design. WM asked which aspects of the proposed project would be considered accessibility improvements. Mr. Corey explained that the new restroom, the new front door, the ramp, and wider interior doorways on the first floor would comprise accessibility improvements, but not the platform. John Peterson asked whether the second floor would meet code requirements. RJ answered that the current uses of Units 3 and 4 meet code.

Mr. Corey reviewed a concept of renovating the Depot facade in phases. JS asked what future steps would remain after the current proposed project is completed. A completion of the facade and relocation of utilities to underground might be a later project, Mr. Corey said.

JP arrived at 3:35 P.M. and reassumed the job of chairman.

RW proposed that funding be sought to restore the entire Depot facade as a single project. In recognizing the maximum disbursement of \$75,000 per year from the Historic Properties Stabilization Fund, he asked whether it would be possible to request \$75,000 from the Fund this fiscal year, and then request an additional amount in July when FY 2014 begins. He suggested that the Town ask the 54 Loomis Street developer for a contribution towards the Depot renovations.

RW questioned whether additional sources of revenue are available to implement accessibility improvements at the Depot. John Peterson will ask a friend who is knowledgeable on this subject whether grant programs exist.

JP said when he met with RJ and the architect on Monday, they discussed the possibility of using mahogany instead of pressure-treated wood to build a ramp and platform.

Don Corey left the meeting at 4:06 P.M.

RJ said he has no financial data to report because Marcia Pyles is out sick. He will e-mail a financial report to JP.

WM inquired whether the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) snowplows the entire Loomis Street parking lot. RW said the DPW and VFW coordinate plowing operations.

The committee reviewed the status of ongoing tasks:

- RJ has a new Freight House front door and card reader at Facilities. Installation is to occur by the end of next week. JS and RJ discussed the use of key fobs and retaining the existing lock core so that existing building keys may continue to be used.
- The Facilities Department electrician has scoped out his work at the railroad car.
- RW said the railroad car roof leak has not been fully resolved. He suggested that the entire roof be sealed.
- RW said he is working on the VFW easement agreement. He is making better maps.

JP said he raised concerns with the 54 Loomis Street developer about possible impact of the proposed project on Depot Park.

The committee discussed reopening the Freight House public restrooms on a staggered basis. JP suggested that a weekend schedule be activated by mid-March and a seven-day schedule by May 1.

JP discussed the 30% building code threshold that would trigger a necessity to bring the entire Depot into modern code compliance. RJ observed that the Depot's current appraised value is \$477,100.

JS said the Freight House is to reopen on weekends when activity resumes on the bikeway, probably sometime in March.

JP recommended that the committee update the Selectmen about the Depot project after Annual Town Meeting ends. WM suggested that the presentation include descriptions of the committee's job and its accomplishments. He expressed concern that the project would lose focus without the committee, and that a working group that cares about Depot Park is needed.

John Peterson questioned whether senior citizens could work at the Freight House in exchange for tax breaks. WM said he will check into this possibility.

WM departed the meeting at 4:59 P.M.

JP invited motions regarding the draft minutes of the 1/19/13 meeting. John Peterson made a motion to accept the 1/19/13 minutes. JP seconded the motion, and it passed with a unanimous vote of 3-0-0.

JP invited motions to adjourn. At 5:09 P.M., John Peterson made a motion to adjourn. JS seconded the motion; and it passed by a unanimous vote of 3-0-0.

Submitted by:

Jim Shea, Clerk

These minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of the Committee at its meeting of 4/22/13.

Documents and other exhibits used at this meeting:

- Meeting agenda, dated 2/28/13
- Bedford Depot Code Analysis, prepared by Patrick Guthrie, R.A.
- Bedford Depot design schematics, dated 2/22/13