



BEDFORD DEPOT PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Town Hall • Bedford, Massachusetts 01730

Meeting of April 22, 2013

MINUTES

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

Committee members not in attendance: Joseph Piantedosi

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

Ex-officio committee members not in attendance: William Moonan, selectman liaison

Others in attendance: Donald Corey, Historic Preservation Commission; Barbara Purchia, Polly Hertz, Elaine Grace and Susan Grieb - Unit 3 tenants; Jana Manzelli - Unit 4 tenant

At 3:05 P.M., JS conveyed that chairman Joseph Piantedosi informed him that he would not be able to attend today's meeting. JS made a motion to elect John Peterson chair pro-tem. John Peterson seconded the motion, and it passed by a unanimous vote of 2-0-0.

John Peterson acknowledged the Depot tenants in attendance and invited them to comment on the proposed Depot accessibility and facade improvement project. Ms. Purchia, a tenant of Unit 3, said she is concerned that the new windows will provide less light into the unit and that they would make it difficult to look outside. She said the new windows would begin at floor level and end at the wall's midpoint, and that existing electrical wiring would be impacted. She feels the changes would make Unit 3 less desirable as rental space. Ms. Purchia said she sent RJ a proposed redesign of the window units. Susan Grieb added that the Unit 3 tenant has a photo mockup of the room that shows how the proposed windows would impact the space. Polly Hertz commented that as a glass studio, the tenant needs every possible amount of light.

Donald Corey believes the architect could make changes to the original plans to appease the tenants' concerns. John Peterson said he supports the Unit 3 tenant's general proposal to modify the current design. RJ noted that the final design must comply with Massachusetts Historical Commission's guidelines, and that adaptive reuse of an historic building is usually taken into consideration by the Commission. JS suggested that the architect be invited to provide input about any subsequent changes to the Depot's window design.

Elaine Grace inquired about the balance between usability and historic restoration of the building. Mr. Corey compared the proposed Depot improvements with restoration of Old Town Hall. The building's exterior was restored to resemble its original appearance, but the interior is not an historic recreation of the original.

John Peterson made a motion that the committee support extending the windows vertically, subject to grants being approved, architectural review, and adhering to historical guidelines. JS seconded the motion; and it passed by a unanimous vote of 2-0-0.

Mr. Corey said he has been inside all the Depot units, and that he supports the committee's recommendation.

Jana Manzelli said she feels ambivalent about the proposed new windows from a tenant perspective—but as a resident, she has concerns about the design.

The tenants inquired about future plans to rent the Depot. RJ replied that the Town might issue an RFP in the future to rent individual units or even the entire building. He explained that maximizing revenue from the property is important if the Depot Park complex is to continue to be cost-neutral to Bedford taxpayers.

Mr. Corey recalled how the Depot area used to look shabby, and how upgrades implemented by the Depot Park project have sparked others to make improvements in this area.

Ms. Manzelli said she supports Ms. Purchia's concept for taller windows and requested that windows be capable of opening. RJ said the ability to open windows has already been considered.

RJ noted that Annual Town Meeting approved an appropriation \$100,000 towards the Depot project and that MHC was notified. He has estimated the total project cost to be \$233,000. If the state provides a \$100,000 matching grant, there would be a shortfall of \$33,000 that could be covered by a disbursement from the Historic Properties Stabilization Fund. MHC is to make a decision on Bedford's grant application on June 12. The Town would have until July 11 to accept a grant, and then meet with the MHC by July 31. JS inquired about the construction schedule. RJ said he met with tenants about a schedule; and he thinks the work would begin during Spring 2014. If a grant from the MHC is accepted, the project must be completed by June 30, 2014.

RJ said the current tenant leases allow the Town to do work on the premises. It will be necessary to negotiate with the Unit 2 tenant about a reduction in its space should part of Unit 2 be converted to a corridor and an accessible restroom.

Donald Corey left the meeting at 3:57 P.M.

The committee discussed lease extensions of Units 3 and 4 that were requested by the respective tenants.

- JS made a motion to recommend that a 12-month lease extension be granted to the Unit 3 tenant, commencing on June 1, 2013, and ending on May 31, 2014. John Peterson seconded motion, and it passed unanimously by a vote of 2-0-0.
- JS made a motion to recommend that a 5-month lease extension be granted to the Unit 4 tenant, commencing retroactively on April 1, 2014, and ending on August 31, 2014. John Peterson seconded motion, and it passed unanimously by a vote of 2-0-0.

Ms. Purchia requested that an additional one-year lease extension be granted to begin on April 1, 2014. Given the evolving nature of Depot Park, John Peterson feels it is not a good idea for the Town to grant an additional one-year extension to the Unit 3 tenant at this time.

RJ distributed a Depot Park Revolving Fund financial statement dated 4/19/13. The current balance is \$35,740.96. RJ noted that FY 2013 operating expenses are below expectation. DPW charges for plowing and landscaping that span two years amount to \$14,828.32. An encumbrance of \$968.83 for the new Freight House front door is shown on the financial statement. Approximately \$3,000 remains in the Depot roof project account.

Pending tasks:

- The Facilities electrician completed three of four “punch list” tasks in the railroad car.
- RW initiated a work order to seal the railroad car’s roof.
- RJ said a replacement Freight House front door is expected soon.
- RW displayed an updated easement plan for the area between the Depot and Freight House. The committee discussed areas of responsibility between the Town and VFW.

The committee discussed the possible impact of the 54 Loomis Street project on the Depot Park complex. It appears that part of the project would be on the Town’s easement on the eastern side of the Depot. John Peterson phoned developer David Cerundolo to bring to his attention the committee’s questions. RW observed that a portion of the developer’s proposed connection with the Minuteman Bikeway would be on MBTA property.

RJ left the meeting at 4:54 P.M.

RR joined the meeting at 4:58 P.M.

The committee continued to discuss the site plan for the proposed 54 Loomis Street project.

John Peterson invited motions regarding the draft minutes of the 2/28/13 meeting. John Peterson made a motion to accept the 2/28/13 minutes. JS seconded the motion, and it passed with a unanimous vote of 2-0-0.

The committee discussed a proposal by Kenneth Larson, owner of the building at 111 South Road, to use a section of the Railroad Avenue parking lot for an outdoor seating area and bicycle corral.

John Peterson 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 (2-0-0) of the Committee at its meeting of 6/28/13.

Documents and other exhibits used at this meeting:

- Meeting agenda, dated 4/22/13
- Depot Park Revolving Fund financial statement, dated 4/19/13
- Letter from The Glass Cooperative, dated 4/05/13
- Draft Unit 4 lease extension, dated April 2013