



## **BEDFORD DEPOT PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Town Hall • Bedford, Massachusetts 01730

**Meeting of June 23, 2015**

### **MINUTES**

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

**Committee members not in attendance:** Stuart Trout

**Ex-officio committee members in attendance:** Ronald Scaltreto, Facilities Department Operations Manager; Roy Sorenson, DPW Director (RS); Rick Reed, Town Manager (RR); William Moonan, Selectman liaison (WM)

**Ex-officio committee members not in attendance:** Taissir Alani, Facilities Director

**Others in attendance:** Marcia Pyles, Facilities Department; Alyssa Sandoval, Economic Development Coordinator; Kenneth Larson, Larson Properties, LLC; Terry Gleason, 10 Lido Lane

Chairman JP called the meeting to order at 3:01 P.M. at Bedford Town Hall. He began with agenda Item 2 on the agenda.

#### **Item 2, Proposal by Larson Properties, LLC to convert Railroad Avenue parking spaces to an outdoor eating area:**

- JP introduced Kenneth Larson, owner of Larson Properties, LLC. Mr. Larson described how he wishes to convert three spaces in the Town's Railroad Avenue parking lot to "parklets" that would offer outside seating, tables and bicycle racks. The spaces in question are on the eastern (left) side of the entrance to the lot and are adjacent to the main building at 111 South Road. Two handicap parking spaces would be relocated under this proposal.
- Mr. Larson explained that while an addition of outdoor seating would benefit a potential cafe/restaurant tenant that he hopes to attract, personal gain is not the underlying reason of his request. He feels that Depot Park would benefit by having outdoor tables and seating regardless of whether he is successful in renting building space to an eatery. Mr. Larson said that traffic calming is an added benefit to installing tables, chairs and bicycle racks in the parking spaces.
- Mr. Larson displayed a site plan that shows a proposed conversion of parking spaces to "parklets," but he cautioned that this plan is not accurate and a new plan will be coming. JP requested a copy of the new plan.
- JP expressed that while it is nice to add public amenities to Depot Park, he is concerned about a loss of the Town's automobile parking spaces at a time when parking demands at the Depot Park complex are growing. He cited the parking needs of Depot Building tenants and the uncertain impact of the adjacent 54 Loomis Street

condominium development on the Town's two Depot Park lots. Customers and employees of Patriot Pediatrics, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Pizza Express also use the Town's parking spaces, he added.

- Photos of the Railroad Avenue parking lot were displayed.
- JP and JS recounted how the Town developed the former B&M Railroad Yard at South Road and Railroad Avenue into a municipal parking lot to serve Depot Park, the Minuteman Bikeway and the customers of Mr. Larson's building at 111 South Road. They outlined the property boundaries and Town-held easements at this site.
- JP recalled how the Town made drainage improvements to Mr. Larson's property on the northern side of Railroad Avenue, currently a dirt parking lot, so that it could be become buildable land.
- JS observed that parking at the 111 South Road building was very limited prior to construction of the Railroad Avenue lot.
- Terry Gleason described how a "parklet" was established in Lexington Center using a few parking spaces. JS displayed photos of the location. Chairs and tables are placed upon wooden platforms on a seasonal basis. This amenity benefits multiple nearby Massachusetts Avenue merchants.
- JS inquired whether Larson Properties or its tenant would be responsible for trash collection and disposal should outdoor seating be created. Mr. Larson said he is unsure about the specifics of trash responsibilities at this time.

WM arrived at 3:14 P.M.

- As compensation for any loss of spaces in the Town's Railroad Avenue lot, WM asked whether Larson Properties would make spaces available in its dirt parking lot for the public to use. Mr. Larson said he is open to renting space there to the Town.
- JS questioned what would happen if the Town granted permission to convert a number of its parking spaces to an outdoor eating area, and then the proposed cafe/restaurant is later replaced by a tenant that does not require these amenities. JP suggested that any permission granted by the Town to convert its parking spaces be done through a non-exclusive license that must be renewed on a recurring basis.
- JS commented that Depot Park has adequate open space to install a few tables, chairs and bicycle racks without removing existing automobile parking spaces.
- RR said he will have Town Counsel review the easement agreement between the Town and Larson Properties, LLC.
- JP concluded the discussion by saying our initial goal is to gather facts. The committee will discuss the subject further at its next meeting and possibly formulate a recommendation to the Selectmen.

### **Item 3, Depot Building Status:**

- Marcia Pyles reported that all Depot tenants are up to date with their rent payments.
- JP said that the Town ought to receive a credit from Campbell Construction for the repainting of the platform's skirt that was necessary after the boards contracted. Ron Scaltreto said that the Facilities Director wishes to drop the matter.

- A credit of \$3,237 is due the Town from Campbell Construction if the Town procures and installs two signal masts. Alternatively, the Town would pay the company \$637 if Campbell Construction was to provide both masts.
- JP said that Littleton Lumber gave a quote of \$2,650 for two cedar masts that meet the Town's specifications. He suggested that we obtain a firm quote from this vendor that includes delivery of the material to Bedford.
- JP proposed that Campbell Construction be offered two options: either supply/install the two signal masts or credit the Town for not supplying/installing one mast.
- Ms. Pyles showed JP an accounting statement dated 9/10/14 that outlines the amounts and types of credits between the Town and Campbell Construction.
- Ms. Pyles said the Town is currently retaining the final 5% payment (about \$19,000) due Campbell Construction until the contractor's portion of the Depot restoration project is fully closed out.
- Ms. Pyles said that the Massachusetts Historical Commission's grant payment of \$113,650 to the Town is held up until the project is completed. She said that the Finance Department informed her that the project is in a deficit position until the grant money is received.
- WM inquired whether it is possible to paint the HVAC units on the eastern side of the Depot to match the building's historic colors. Mr. Scaltreto and JP feel it would not be feasible to paint this equipment.

#### **Item 4, Depot Park-related projects**

- JS noted that parts of the Depot Park grounds are becoming shabby. Tree saplings are rising above shrubs in the landscaped areas, dead leaves cover the granite pavers between the bikeway and railroad car, weeds are growing in the island in front of the Depot, trees are in need of pruning, and organic debris lines the parking lot and clogs the drains.
- JP said the committee will focus on the status of this and other Depot Park-related projects at a future meeting.

#### **Item 5, Depot parking signage and landscaping around the Depot tenant sign**

- RS reported that a small sign with the number "80" on it will be attached to the existing Bedford Depot directional sign that is on Loomis Street.
- RS distributed a draft of a "Depot Visitors Only" parking sign that is to be displayed on the platform skirt in front of the building..

#### **Item 6, 54 Loomis Street development and easements**

- RR said he still needs to obtain an updated easement agreement from Town Counsel.

#### **Item 7, Depot Park custodial coverage**

- JP bypassed this item since the Facilities Director was not present.

### **Item 8, Financial Reports**

- Ms. Pyles provided through JP copies of a Depot Park Revolving Fund statement dated 6/23/15. The current account balance is \$59,690.28. She said that all three Depot tenants that wanted to be included on the exterior sign have paid for their individual signs. June custodial labor charges have not yet been added to the report.

### **Item 9, Miscellaneous business and baggage cart restoration**

- RS reported that restoration of the second baggage cart has been completed.
- JP wishes to hold a small ceremony in front of the Depot to unveil the restored cart and acknowledge the people who are responsible for it.
- Mr. Scaltreto said that the Facilities Department has a paper version of the kiosk map that Alyssa Sandoval recently updated. JS noted that the existing kiosk map is made of plastic—and he questioned whether a paper version, even mounted behind a sheet of Lexan, would hold up well. It was agreed that the new map should be of the same or similar material as the existing map.

### **Item 10, New business and action items for the next meeting**

- JP proposed that the next meeting be held on July 22 at 3:00 P.M., but he will first confer with Stuart Trout about his availability before formally setting the date.

### **Item 11, Minutes of the 5/11/15 Meeting**

- JP deferred review of the May 11 draft minutes until a future meeting.

The committee viewed and discussed property and easement maps of the Depot Park area.

At 5:10 P.M., JS made a motion to adjourn the meeting. JP 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 8/03/15.

Documents and other exhibits used at this meeting:

- Meeting agenda, dated 6/23/15
- Depot Park pending projects list, dated 6/23/15
- Bedford Planning Board, Special Permit Decision with Findings, Larson Properties LLC, 111 South Road, dated 5/19/15
- Depot Park Revolving Fund financial statement, dated 6/23/15
- Photos and maps of the Railroad Avenue parking lot
- Photos of the Depot Park grounds
- Photos of a “parklet” in Lexington Center