

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting of the above referenced subcommittee held on Monday, November 16, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room #5, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Committee members present were: Mayor Gamble, Councilors Washington, Rivers, Hypolite, Neuwirth, DeLorenzo and Deputy Mayor Schulman

Also present were: India Rodgers, Clerk of Council, Sharron Howe, Assistant to Town Manager and Jose Giner, Director of Planning & Economic Development

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Report and Discussion on Filley Park progress

Mr. Jose Giner, Director of Planning & Economic Development gave a brief overview of the current status update for Filley Park. The natural stone retainer is about 80% complete. The town will provide a safe, temporary walking surface until project completion. The walls, pavers and brick masonry will be completed later in the fall. The Eversource restoration will occur late spring, by May 1, 2016.

Councilor Neuwirth stated that a webpage should be updated with the several phases of the project. The public has expressed interest about the visual aspects of Phase I and II. Mr. Giner stated that he will plan for December 1, 2015 for information to establish this website.

Councilor Merritt inquired about the status of Phase II:

- How deep will pond be?
- Will there be fish in the pond?
- How to keep the pond clean? - There will be some culverts under the peninsula.
- Has the Request for Proposal been submitted and out to bid? – Yes.
- East Coast Greenway – link this project with Filley Park with the installation of sidewalks

Councilor DeLorenzo requested a display of the final design of Filley Park at Prosser Library. The display plans should be placed in every town building for review.

Report and Discussion on Niagara Bottling Co. progress

There has been no final decision made by the company as of yet to locate their Northeast operations to Bloomfield. Niagara is considering an optional site for site location as well.

Mr. Giner stated that he is optimistic about continued negotiations with Niagara.

Councilor Neuwirth raised concerns regarding the issues with the MDC and Niagara Bottling regarding the charges for sewer usage fees.

Niagara has plans to make a decision by December 2015, which would be in their 45-60 day timeframe.

Councilor Hypolite inquired about leveraging the financial aspect of this entire project. Approximately \$4,100,000 in total tax abatement with fees and personal property, the town would collect \$1,800,000 in tax revenue over a 7 year period. The town is currently collecting \$35,000 per year on the property.

Report and Discussion on Bloomfield Avenue/Jerome Avenue Apartments progress

Mr. Giner stated that this developer has submitted new revised elevations for their proposed building. They also received wetlands approval from Inland & Wetlands Commission.

It was noted that the Affirmative Action monitor has been retained by Post Road Residential Development as a consultant. Deputy Mayor inquired about a signed contract for this monitor. Councilor Hypolite requested a status update regarding their compliance with retaining a monitor, which was significant for the approval and consideration of tax abatement agreement.

Mr. Giner stated that a resident expressed interest in having a second public hearing regarding the revised elevation changes. The regulation state that the town shall not be required to conduct a second public hearing during the site plan stage.

Councilor Merritt commended Mr. Giner on the wetlands portion of the project by locating the retention pond under the parking lot. He also expressed concerns about tree cutting, exposing electric wires and posts along Bloomfield Avenue.

Councilor Neuwirth expressed concerns regarding informing the public on the status of this project.

Discussion on Cemetery Maintenance and Possible town acceptance

The town has received a \$2000 grant from the State of Connecticut to maintain cemeteries.

Councilor Rivers mentioned discussions from the last Administration & Education Subcommittee meeting held regarding maintenance of cemeteries. The attorney that presented

recommended that the town do not take possession of these cemeteries. The town would be required to meet certain guidelines required by the State of Connecticut.

Mayor Schulman expressed concerns regarding Latimer Hill cemetery. If this organization has legal title, dissolves and title in limbo, who is the owner? The title is in the name of the developer.

Discussion regarding Town/CREC agreement regarding the Farmington River Park

There has been no agreement with the Town of Bloomfield and CREC regarding this project.

Councilor Neuwirth expressed concerns about CREC obtaining \$1,500,000 from the State of Connecticut to rehab the property.

New Business

Deputy Mayor mentioned issues regarding tree cutting, which he considers open space. A letter of correspondence was sent to the town outlining plans to prune and remove trees to improve the quality of services through Eversource. Asplundh was hired to perform this task.

There tentative location of tree cutting will be on routes 187 (Blue Hills Avenue) and Route 178. This project will begin on November 23, 2015.

The committee is very concerned about the information given to town officials about the pruning and removal of trees and that the Council ask the Mayor to communicate with this company in conjunction with the Town Manager in obtaining detailed information. Very concerned about rendering the town's landscape along Park Avenue, East Wintonbury Avenue and Blue Hills Avenue.

Councilor DeLorenzo read an e-mail from John Lawlor indicating that this tree work has been approved to improve the quality of utility services. Mr. Lawlor is the official Tree Warden for the town. Mayor Gamble will clarify the notice regarding Duncaster as a scenic road in reference to this tree work.

Old Business

There has been no contact with the current developer about zone change regarding the old Valco property.

There was brief discussion regarding blight properties – 7 Victor Street, Rescue Lane, 5 Brentwood Drive and 622 Bloomfield Avenue. The town sent letters on October 8, 2015 regarding blight issues with a 30 days notification to homeowners. If no action is taken, the town can pursue criminal actions against the homeowner.

Councilor Hypolite inquired about the status of old J.P. Vincent School. It was noted that there is ongoing construction.

Adjournment

It was moved by Councilor DeLorenzo, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

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