

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

There was a regular meeting of the Land Use & Economic Development subcommittee held on Tuesday, May 15, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room #5, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Committee member present: Deputy Mayor Hypolite, Councilors Gamble and Jacobs.

Non-Committee members present: Councilors Berman. Also present: India Rodgers, Clerk of Council.

Guest present:

- Mary Laiuppa
- Dorrie Hunt
- Glen Zenor (Seabury)
- Jim Lynch (Seabury)
- Raymond Marken (Seabury)
- David Laiuppa
- Kimball Hunt
- Richard Heath (Seabury)
- Marjorie Sullivan (Seabury)
- Mark Hopper (Fletcher Thompson)

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

Presentation by Seabury on a Land Swap, in consideration for building a Hospice

Mr. Richard Heath, Executive Vice President & CEO of Seabury Retirement presented the need for a Hospice facility.

Mr. Heath stated that the State Legislature recently passed a bill allowing freestanding hospice buildings. Seabury Retirement has proposed to swap 19 acres for 8 acres of town owned land adjacent to the Rectory House.

Mr. Mark Hopper, Associate Principal with Fletcher Thompson presented conceptual plans as an overview of proposed Hospice House (12 beds, 2 - 6 bed units) totally 18,000 sq. ft.

There was a lengthy discussion of the committee regarding concerns, issues and future plans for this proposal.

Councilor Jacobs inquired about this facility being a taxable entity. There is a great possibility that the building would be taxable as it is a “not for profit” entity. Councilor Jacobs also

expressed some concern regarding the distance in yardage from residential homes of the actual proposed site. There is a 50 foot buffer of grade slopes approximately 16 feet to wetlands. Mr. David Laiuppa, Bloomfield resident and current farmer on approximately 9 acres of the proposed land swap, expressed concerns regarding the town setting a precedent to utilize prime farmland.

Deputy Mayor Hypolite inquired about zoning issues, open space and conservation easements. The proximity and available land would be important for cost measures and services from main campus. He also inquired about the cost of the building and the legalities around the land swap.

Seabury Administration stated that there is a strong desire to build a Hospice facility for its residents and local community.

Councilor Berman inquired of Seabury Administration to consider other property currently owned by Seabury. He also informed them about the possible encroachment to Samuel Wheeler Reed Park.

Mr. Kimball Hunt, Bloomfield resident and abutting neighbor to the proposed site, expressed his viewpoints and concerns about the overall project and communications with Seabury. He also gave a brief history of land agreements and open space designation.

Mrs. Mary Laiuppa, Bloomfield resident expressed concerns about the development of the Hospice House. She inquired about expansion if needed, the additional space to build as well as the location of a generator.

Councilor Gamble stated that the property being offered of 19 acres is primarily wetlands that cannot be developed. In addition, she also stated concerns of the facility not being considered to build on Main Campus to minimize overall footprint. She mentioned that taking over open space can be difficult to support due to the inability to be user friendly.

Mr. Thom Hooper, Director of Planning explained current status of the proposed land swap:

Challenges to the Land Swap:

- **Terms of original agreements**
- **Zoning and Wetlands issues – need to be rezoned.**
- **Consulting an Attorney specializing in land use options**
- **Evaluation from Soil Conservationist to determine wetlands**

Councilor Jacobs stated that this project is an excellent concept to extend Seabury quality of care, however concerns regarding taxes, neighbor issues and future space need to be considered.

Councilor Berman has no issue supporting the use of open space for developmental purposes when appropriate.

The next step for Seabury is to meet with its Administration and Board of Directors to decide on the overall project, hire a Land Use attorney and begin financing and fundraising activities.

Deputy Mayor Hypolite, Councilor Jacobs and Gamble agreed on a non-binding vote to proceed with possible plans of development.

Discussion regarding suggestions for Recognition of Businesses

The following businesses were selected to be recognized at the next several Town Council meetings:

1. Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation
2. Alvin Company
3. Hooker Brewery

Other Business

Councilor Berman would like the committee to consider an Ad Hoc Committee as an over site board for the Plan of Conservation & Development for the town. The committee would determine the size, charges of each organization with a stake in the plan.

Adjournment

It was moved by Councilor Jacobs, seconded by Councilor Gamble to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.