

MINUTES
OPERATIONS PLANNING COMMITTEE
July 16, 2009

First Selectwoman Evonne called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. in Room 206 at Town Hall.

Present were Board of Finance Chairman Murry Stegelmann; Liz Bacon, representing the RTM; Joseph Spain, representing the Planning & Zoning Commission; Kim Westcott, representing the Board of Education; and Administrative Officer Karl Kilduff.

RTM

Ms. Bacon stated that there was nothing new to report. She said the RTM will be meeting in the fall.

Planning & Zoning Commission

Mr. Spain reported that the Commission has had a busy month. He said that the important things on the docket for August were: to work out the 333 West Avenue project. He stated that the project would improve drainage in the area because of the application location.

Mr. Spain spoke about another Planning and Zoning project coming up concerning a pipe under the railroad track. Mrs. Klein stated that years ago the DOT tried to fix it, but it did not work.

Mr. Spain spoke about Tom Golden's plan on Heights Road. He said they will try to have any organized development.

Mr. Spain spoke about accessory apartments and that this would require a change of zone. He said he did not think they should change a commercial zone into a residential zone, since we do not want to lose any commercial property.

Mr. Spain reported that Allen O'Neill project is not going to be out of litigation for a while.

Mr. Spain reported that Whole Foods received a one-year extension and hopes to be finished by 2010. Mr. Stegelmann asked about the status of Ledge Road and the State DOT. Mrs. Klein said she and Mr. Kilduff met with the DOT in April regarding the funding of the Ledge Road intersection project and 7 weeks later received an answer which was "no". She added that early estimates for the Ledge Road project were \$600,000 and the final figure, \$1 million. Mr. Spain stated that if they do not do the Ledge Road intersection, they will not be able to start the Whole Foods project. Mr. Spain stated that Ursula Forman, P&Z Commission member, asked Whole Foods if they were committed to the Ledge Road intersection project costs, if they go higher than \$600,000 and Whole Foods said "yes". Mr. Stegelmann was concerned that the taxpayers would have to pay for the Ledge Road intersection costs. Further discussion took place.

Board of Finance

Mr. Stegelmann reported the Board has not met since the last OPC meeting, He said the Board will meet next week, but he does not think they will have news on property tax. He stated that he appreciated the Board of Selectmen's input regarding the bond for the

7/16/09

sewer project.

Mr. Stegelmann reported that there were two major issues of contention: reworking on the pension, and peoples' Healthcare Savings Accounts. Mr. Kilduff commented that HSA is not a long-term benefit and that the Town will be facing higher pension costs in the upcoming years.

Mrs. Klein asked Mr. Stegelmann if there was anything to report from the Board of Finance regarding capital projects, since she had heard from a Police Department Building Committee member that the building project was "a go". Mr. Stegelmann replied that he was not aware of it.

Board of Education

Mrs. Westcott reported that the Board of Education will be coming to the Planning & Zoning Commission regarding a portable light application. She spoke about the Royle School boiler project and the renovation of the Ox Ridge School portables.

Mrs. Wescott reported that the Board of Education has made application to the State for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Account (ARRA) funds. She said that the Board is hoping to get the \$100,000 for Special Education. Mr. Spain commented that people are saying that if Planning & Zoning grants an application on the 333 West Avenue project, other than for senior housing, it could increase school enrollment. Mrs. Wescott said that the Board of Education looked at Avalon and Allen O'Neill and did not see any problems. She said that the Board looks at the numbers all of the time and consistently pays attention to the enrollment.

First Selectwoman's Report

Mrs. Klein reported that a new Senior Center director has been hired. She said her name is Elizabeth Paris, from Stratford. She added that the Senior Center has been reorganized and will be under Parks & Recreation Supervisor Sue Swiatek.

Mrs. Klein reported that the Selectmen have hired an environmental attorney to help with the Baker flood application matter. She will be going on July 21st to a scheduling meeting where dates will be put together for future meetings and hearings. Mrs. Klein noted that at least 3 to 4 tours have been conducted on the Baker site.

With regard to Goodwives River and Stony Brook, Mr. Spain suggested that there should be a game plan regarding waterways on private property and what the rights are for the Town to enter and fix the obstructions. Mrs. Klein said that the Board of Selectmen policy is not to enter property and spend taxpayers' money to fix obstructions. Mr. Spain said that problems on private property ought to be reconsidered. Mrs. Klein said to Mr. Spain that she appreciated his comments.

There being no further business on motion made and seconded, it was voted to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Grace Hanafee
Recording Secretary