

BEDFORD DEPOT PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting of December 15, 2004

MINUTES

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

Ex-officio committee members in attendance: Richard Jones (RJ), Facilities Director; Angelo Colao (AC), Selectman liaison to Depot Park; Richard Warrington (RW), DPW Director

Ex-officio members not in attendance: Rick Reed (RR), Town Administrator

Chairman JP called the meeting to order at 3:42 P.M. at Bedford Freight House, 120 South Road. He asked the committee to review the minutes of the September 22, 2004, meeting. JS made a motion to accept the minutes as written. JP seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

JP asked for updates from RJ and RW.

RJ reported:

- Babe Ruth Baseball is now occupying the Railroad Station's garage and is paying about \$200 a month in rent. The tenant understands that they have to leave the building when the Town is ready to rent it to other parties.
- Tenant Don Varney is now renting an additional office unit inside the Depot and is paying a little more rent;
- The Facilities Department has made headway on some Depot maintenance issues, but not all that they intended to do:
 - The train order signal masts still need repair;
 - The interior condition of the garage has been improved—it is now weather tight;
 - The hazardous materials stored inside the Depot still need to be addressed;
 - The basement's bulkhead is slated for repair;
 - RJ wants to see whether it's possible to modify the grade near the bulkhead to drain rainwater away from the building and towards the bikeway;
 - RJ will check whether a DPW employee (Johnny) will be able to repair the handrail.

RW reported:

- He believes the utility poles between the Railroad Station and Freight House will be removed as part of the Freight House restoration project;
- He has been in contact with David Cerundolo, the owner of the building at 54 Loomis Street, about finishing the landscaping on his property that abuts Depot Park;
- All of the overhead wires have been removed within the Railroad Avenue/South Road/Loomis Street intersection, but the poles remain;
- He hopes to advertise the intersection improvement project for bid in about one month;

- The estimated cost of the intersection improvement project is \$600,000 and is to be paid from state Chapter 90 funds;
- To improve aesthetics, the traffic signal masts will be green rather than the standard galvanized steel;
- There are a few items that D'Allessandro Construction needs to complete with the Depot Park site work;
- A manufacturer's representative will visit Depot Park on December 16 to check on incorrect models of light fixtures that were installed by the electrical subcontractor;
- The water fountain is turned off for the winter season;
- The DPW will replace the burned out bulbs in the outside lighting fixtures;
- The DPW has had an exchange of letters with the VFW about grounds maintenance responsibilities, and an agreement has been reached about the areas that the VFW is responsible for maintaining;
- RW feels that too many shrubs were planted at Depot Park—when they mature, the foliage may be too dense. JP asked whether some shrubs could be transplanted to other locations at Depot Park. RW said he believes this would be possible.

RW also reported that the Freight House restoration project remains on the state's FY 2005 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). He recounted past meetings and agreements with the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) about the overall Depot Park project and how the Freight House restoration became a separate project. MHD will not advertise the Freight House project for bid until final engineering plans are complete, RW explained—but Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB) will not finish the plans until they have been paid some \$54,000 for past services. RW said that MHD has not authorized the use of Bedford's Chapter 90 account to pay VHB's bill. RW said he has appealed to MHD officials and that he hopes to have a positive resolution within a few days.

RW told the committee that he had a kickoff meeting with JS and consultant Dan O'Brien for the rail car restoration project. Dan O'Brien will be furnishing an asbestos report that was prepared for the Central Artery Project for two "sister" Budd Cars that are in its possession. Once this report is received, RW will hire a company to remove any exposed asbestos insulation on the car. JS reported that Dan O'Brien is communicating with Fast Track in New Hampshire about getting new seats, windows and other needed parts for the car.

RJ distributed a Depot Park Revolving Account financial statement dated 12/13/04. Income exceeds expenses, he said. The committee discussed ways to improve the reporting system. In the future, RJ explained, he will have separate reports for year-to-date and forecasted income/expenses. RJ said he will talk with Rick Reed about getting a total balance figure for the Revolving Fund.

JS noted that the electricity cost for Depot Park's outside lighting is being charged to the

Freight House “cost center.” He asked whether the outside lighting should be metered separately. JP said the electricity to operate the exterior lighting should be considered a “common area” expense. The committee discussed ways to reduce the cost of operating the lights. RW will check whether the lighting is eligible for an “S2” rating from N-Star Electric. This would lower the electric bill. JS suggested that the lights be controlled by a photocell rather than by a timer.

RW proposed that parking fees be charged at Depot Park as a means to increase Revolving Fund revenue and to discourage the use of its parking spaces by abutters (e.g., the VFW and Taylor & Lloyd). RJ said this revenue could help pay for repaving the lots when such a need arises in the future. Different fee collection and enforcement systems were discussed by the committee. AC said he will introduce this subject for discussion at the next Selectmen’s meeting. JS asked whether similar results could be achieved by methods other than parking fees, such as by the Selectmen establishing parking regulations. JP suggested that in the meantime, a fence should be installed between the municipal parking lot and Taylor & Lloyd’s property to discourage their employees from using the Town’s lot.

JS reported that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has inquired about slating exterior restoration and maintenance of the Railroad Station in its FY 2007 budget. The committee wants to know the cost of such a project. JP and JS said they would meet with a CPC representative to discuss the subject in greater detail. RJ said that he will ask the architect who worked on the Old Town Hall restoration project for a cost estimate to restore/repair the Depot’s facade.

JS reported that as of November 30, the year’s gross profit from Freight House food sales has reached approximately \$4,300. The sales proceeds from 2004 are to be deposited into the Depot Park Revolving Fund in early ’05.

The committee members considered possible dates in early January for their next meeting. JS proposed that the committee adopt a standard meeting schedule, such as the first Wednesday of each month, to simplify the process. After further discussion, it was agreed that the date of the next meeting will be later determined by e-mail correspondence.

At 5:36 P.M., JS made a motion to adjourn the meeting. JP seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by

Jim Shea, Clerk

These minutes were approved by unanimous vote of the committee at its meeting of February 23, 2004.