



Town of Medway
FINANCE COMMITTEE
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May 1, 2013 – 7:00 PM
Medway High School Library
88 Summer Street

Present: Chairman Jeff O'Neill; Kevin Dickie, Vice-Chair; Members: Meghan Bernardo (left at 8:45 PM), Christine Devine, Neil Kennedy, and Frank Rossi.

Absent: Chris Lagan, Clerk; Barry Schroeder, and Jim Sheehan.

Also Present: Claire O'Neill, Economic Development Specialist; Suzanne Kennedy, Town Administrator; Board of Selectmen: Richard D'Innocenzo, Andrew Espinosa (8:10 PM) John Foresto (left at 8:05 PM), Glenn Trindade.

There being a quorum present, Chairman O'Neill called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

Presentation/Discussion – Proposed Redevelopment Authority:

The Committee reviewed a document entitled "Town of Medway, Medway Finance Committee, Oak Grove", dated May 1, 2013 (distributed at the meeting).

Present: Claire O'Neill, Economic Development Specialist; Ken Bancewicz, Economic Development Committee; Robert Hubbard, former Executive Director of Gardner Redevelopment Authority.

The Finance Committee members introduced themselves to Ms. O'Neill, who briefly described her position and tonight's presentation. Mr. Ken Bancewicz, member of the Economic Development Committee, and Mr. Robert Hubbard, former Executive Director of Gardner Redevelopment Authority were also present.

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. O'Neill briefly reviewed the Oak Grove area, noting the existing conditions, wetlands, and other areas that are not developable. She presented some development options. Approximately one-third of the area is owned by one individual; the Town owns approximately one-third, and the remaining third by a variety of owners. Title research is being conducted and should be finished in a few weeks.

Two concept plans were presented. Option 1 might be accomplished with two thirds of the lots, the lots owned by a single individual and the Town. Option 2 would require more of the parcels to be included. Both options include commercial and industrial uses combined with an isolated residential area; this is known as a mixed-use project.

Ms. O'Neill presented a fiscal impact analysis prepared by BSC Group in June of 2012, which indicated that Option 1 would generate approximately \$475,000 in revenue while Option B would generate approximately \$667,000 in revenue. The difference in estimated costs for each option is approximately \$65,000 (higher for Option B). She briefly explained the nuances of each cost segment, noting in particular that the General Government costs include expenses of police, fire and other municipally-provided services. Responding to a question from Ms. Christine Devine, she stated that a traffic study would not be done until it has determined the kind of development that has been chosen. With close to 2,000 parking spaces in the proposed designs, traffic will be a significant consideration.

Why a Redevelopment Authority? Ms. O'Neill emphasized that a single body with specialized expertise would be better equipped to develop and supervise this kind of project. This kind of authority would be given special powers for dealing with complex real estate projects and land assembly, and could be comprised of four local appointed (elected in future years) members, and one member appointed by the Governor. Mr. Ron Hubbard provided more specific explanation of how the authority would function, noting that, though the authority would have special powers, further oversight by another agency would be necessary. Chapter 30B projects, for example, have specific requirements. It was noted that an Urban Renewal Plan would be site-specific. Discussion followed on the title research process, tax-taking, eminent domain, redevelopment other than Oak Grove, traffic impact, Gardner's Redevelopment Authority experience, and basics of an Urban Renewal Plan. With regard to Redevelopment Authority finances, those monies are kept separately from Town funds and the only costs featured in the FY14 budget is for Ms. O'Neill's salary.

Chairman O'Neill reminded the group that discussion of costs and specific issues is premature, and the matter before the Finance Committee tonight is to understand the general concept of a Redevelopment Authority, plus the article that will be presented and voted at Annual Town Meeting. It was noted that there are no costs associated with the article at this time, as it is written to only authorize the formation of the Authority.

The Authority would be comprised of four members first appointed for one term and then elected for future terms, and terms will be staggered. All members will be residents of Medway. Mr. Hubbard cautioned that the Governor's appointment of the fifth member could take a long time. He noted that no developers were allowed on the authority, and members were mostly members with good business experience. Level of autonomy – how can friction between members or town officials be managed? Could it be authorized for a specific period of time and then renewed as needed? Mr. Hubbard responded that it may not be allowed or that special legislation would be required. Discussion followed.

Chairman O'Neill asked Selectman Trindade about the potential for available funding in the next couple of years. Selectman Trindade that, while it is difficult to estimate that now, a number of potential sources exist.

Discussion followed on the potential of "taking" of homes and small businesses along Route 109.

Ms. Meghan Bernardo moved that the Finance Committee approve Article 22; Ms. Christine Devine seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 6-0-0.

Special Town Meeting – New Article:

The proposed article is to transfer \$40,000 from Fiscal Year 2013 unexpended Legal balance for the purpose of funding the cost items associated with the research, evaluation and investigation of potential casino impacts on the Town.

The Board of Selectmen has approved the article, though they are fundamentally opposed to an area casino. Brief discussion followed on casinos in general. Selectman Espinosa explained that a lot of research and studies must be done within the surrounding communities to assess the impact of a casino in the region. The \$40,000 is essentially seed money to hire consultants on how to protect the community from the establishment of an area casino. Mr. Kevin Dickie provided some information on a grass roots group known as Casino-Free Milford.

Ms. Kennedy explained that the funds in the Legal line item were unexpended and unused, and the transfer makes the money available.

Ms. Meghan Bernardo moved that the Finance Committee approve Article 8 (Special Town Meeting); Mr. Kevin Dickie seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 6-0-0.

Annual Town Meeting – Resolving TBD Designations:

The Committee discussed the following articles that still carry a TBD designation.

Article 19 – Appropriation: Community Preservation Committee – This article will remain TBD as the final dollar amount will not be known until the night of Town Meeting.

Article 22 – Create Redevelopment Authority – This article was approved this evening.

Article 25 – Street Acceptance, Land Donation and Infrastructure Acceptance – The Meadows Subdivision – It was noted that the piece of land being donated is contained within the three-acre parcel and is not something the Town will have to maintain.

Ms. Christine Devine moved that the Finance Committee approve Article 25; Mr. Frank Rossi seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0 [Note: Ms. Meghan Bernardo had left the meeting before this vote]

Article 28 – Zoning Map Revision: Commercial IV – The Committee is waiting until the Planning and Economic Development Board holds the public hearing on this matter before removing the TBD designation.

Miscellaneous Town Meeting Discussion:

Town Administrator Suzanne Kennedy reported that the motions for Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting have been written and will be updated to reflect tonight's action.

Postcards announcing the availability of hard copies of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant are being delivered to the Medway Post Office tomorrow. They will be delivered to approximately 1200-1400 homes. It was noted that 125 newspaper editions have been ordered for those residents who request a hard copy of the Warrant.

Reports:

The Chairman's report, Clerk's report and Liaison reports will be considered at another meeting.

Upcoming Meetings:

The next regular meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, 2013. It is unclear whether this meeting will be necessary. Chairman O'Neill will advise the Committee as needed.

The Finance Committee will be meeting prior to Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting on Monday, May 13, 2013 at Medway High School at 6:30 PM.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Galliardt
Night Board Secretary