

GRANITE AVENUE STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, October 15, 2013 at 7pm
Milton Town Hall

Attendees:

Bryan Furze
Cindy Christiansen
Andrea Doherty, Chair
April Lamoureux
Ellen Anselone
Bill Clark, Milton Planner

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Andrea Doherty at 7:05pm.

Andrea Doherty said that the minutes of the last meeting was the first item on the agenda. There were two amendments offered by members of the committee, and the committee voted unanimously to accept the minutes, as amended.

Bill Clark introduced Richard Henderson, Sr. Vice President of Real Estate for MassDevelopment. Bill Clark discussed that Richard had attended a recent meeting called by Senator Brian Joyce at the Park and Ride site to determine if MassDevelopment could be of assistance to the Town and the committee.

Richard Henderson explained MassDevelopment's role as a quasi-public agency in assisting cities and towns with planning, site financing, economic development, and infrastructure. Mr. Henderson said that Senator Joyce asked the agency to assist the committee to understand the potential for redesign of Granite Avenue or site design.

Bryan Furze asked if the agency could also investigate the potential for project impacts under different uses. Mr. Henderson said that is a service that MassDevelopment could provide. Bryan Furze asked who would pay for these services. Mr. Henderson said that at the pre-development stage, the agency funds the work. However, if the Town were to make a profit on a new development at this site, the agency would likely recoup some of the funding it used to pay for the services rendered to the Town.

The committee briefly discussed the concerns with traffic issues at the site. Mr. Henderson said that MassDevelopment could investigate what warrants a signal based on uses.

Cindy Christiansen asked whether MassDevelopment could assist on-site or off-site and Mr. Henderson said that MassDevelopment could help with both. Cindy asked about the potential for contamination on the site and if MassDevelopment could assist with addressing brownfields concerns. Mr. Henderson explained that MassDevelopment has a program that assists with brownfields assessments on municipally-owned sites, however that program is currently unfunded and looking for recapitalization from the legislature.

The committee briefly discussed water and wetlands issues on the site and the potential for underground parking.

Bill Clark explained that the Selectmen are in the process of executing an MOU (memorandum of understanding) with MassDevelopment to initiate MassDevelopment's consultation. Richard Henderson excused himself from the meeting at 7:45pm.

There was a brief discussion of next steps. Bryan Furze recommended that the committee members review the draft report and return to the next meeting with comments and suggested edits. The committee members agreed with this plan.

There was a brief discussion of the meeting with MassDevelopment at the Park and Ride. April Lamoureux, who was present at the meeting, discussed concerns about some resident's having misinformation about the committee deliberations. April recommended that the committee improve transparency by introducing Citizens Speak at each meeting moving forward to allow residents and abutters an opportunity to be heard and to participate in the process. The committee agreed to schedule Citizens Speak during the first 15 to 20 minutes of each subsequent meeting beginning in November.

A member of the committee asked Bill Clark if he had any information on the potential timing of a disposition. He did not but agreed to investigate.

April Lamoureux encouraged Bill Clark to expedite the MOU with MassDevelopment because the use impacts and potential for Granite Ave redesign are so critical to the committee's deliberations moving forward.

Bryan Furze made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Cindy Christiansen seconded. The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved at 8:10pm.