

Zechariah Boodey House Committee Meeting Minutes



Approved
2/5/17
as submitted
CEO

January 19, 2017

Present: Cathy Orłowicz, Crissa Evans, Fran Frye, and Tatiana Cicuto. Excused absence Sherry Cullimore.

Meeting minutes from discussion with Board of Selectman re: Marketing Plan for the Zechariah Boodey House and Barn

Also present: Board of Selectman members- David Bickford, Gregory Anthes, David Swenson (Swens), Town Administrator- Scott Kinmond.

Meeting convened at 3:03 pm at the New Durham Fire Station Community Room.

Meeting is being recorded by Town Administrator.

Cathy opened meeting by thanking the BOS for the opportunity to make the presentation on the Marketing Plan, and began by reading the Executive Summary and proceeded with a brief overview of the Marketing Plan, and the work involved. She stated that BOS feedback on the Marketing Plan is an important next step, as well as approval for the concept and plan to move forward with the project.

During the discussion it was noted that the Boodey House Committee felt that the barn portion of the structure could be used as a revenue source for the historical house sustainability. It would also be used as connectivity to other New Durham businesses (catering, events, etc.), and used for parties, educational, cemetery receptions, etc. Current plan would have the barn accommodate 200 people with handicap access through the house. (Handicap access will be available through the barn, also.)

Cathy indicated that the Committee was given instructions several BOS terms ago that there was to be no Town funds for this project. She also indicated that the Fire Chief has stated that this might be an evacuation center designation which opens up grant funding for a generator, etc. Another potential use might be as the Town's voting site.

Selectman Anthes main concern is parking and it is not currently shown as paved. He questioned parking access to facility and whether parking is adequate. It was felt that it should at least be graveled if not paved. Selectman Swenson and Selectman Anthes stated that this needs more detail on site design. He stated the need for a detailed plan for fund raising would need to be completed. He shared with those present his involvement with capital fund raising experience.

Selectman Swenson commended the Committee for the quality of work completed, resulting in a plan exceeding expectations. The other Selectmen concurred with his sentiments. Selectman Swenson stated that funding for construction is indicated in the plan with 60% to be from crowd sourcing. He felt that this seems to be very optimistic. He also asked why the Freewill Baptist Church organizations are not contributing more. Cathy noted that the church is more focused on their own operating needs

Selectman Swenson also noted that he felt the ongoing operating expenses once the structure is completed are underestimated. He was concerned that the breakeven level is not recognized as part of the financial presentation and this operating portion of the plan needs more thought and detail. The key question is on sustainability of operations even if one can get it built.

Selectman Swenson also asked who has ownership of the structure and who has ownership of the ongoing operations. Cathy stated the Town owns the land and buildings and the business operations would also be owned by the Town. He also asked if Boodey House Committee could be responsible for operations or whether the Town would need to outsource to an event management company. He also stated they need to define the "fixed costs" after building built, i.e. what is the Town's liability to keep the structure safe even if no activities work out.

Selectman Swenson suggested the Boodey House Committee work with professional videographer during the various stages of the project to be able to tell the story when completed.

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Those present agreed that today the ZBHC was looking for conceptual approval from the Board to move forward with the project. Cathy clarified they are only looking for the approval from the Board of Selectmen to move forward with this project and thanked the Board of Selectmen for the opportunity to present the Marketing Plan.

Selectman Bickford stated that his interest was drawn by the addition of the barn. He asked what the Committee expected from the town. Cathy responded if the town could help with the some of the barn costs, it would show support for this project. The Committee would be fund raising for the complete project.

TA Kinmond agreed the barn addition would provide space for Town and Civic activities, as discussed, as well as having a venue that will provide revenue supporting its own operation costs.

Selectman Swenson suggested that there may be 3 - 4 levels of approval in this initiative:

Level 1 Approval of Concept – that is really what you are looking for today. This would include concept of location, building usage, planned business opportunities, etc.

Level 2 Full Construction Details – funding plan along with execution of that plan; more complete business plan; complete construction details and plans

Level 3 Approval For Construction – break ground, construction started, then completed

Level 4 Business Plan Implementation –implement business plan upon ribbon cutting after complete construction, full structural utilization for ongoing events, etc.

During the discussion there was a question on which goes up first if one has to phase the construction, i.e. the barn or house. Selectman Swenson felt that is a very important strategic question and should be chosen wisely. Which is the real draw for donations, etc.? He also indicated that he did not think the Committee has a complete sense of the work and detail needed to make it to approval level 2 and other approval levels.

Selectman Swenson stated that he is willing to make the Level 1 approval at this time. Selectman Anthes stated he is in agreement with Swens but that it must not have any taxpayer cost. Selectman Bickford stated that as he understands it is the Boodey House donations that will buy a barn for the Town.

Following this discussion there was a consensus that approval Level 1 has been achieved. Cathy is looking for a support letter from Board and it was agreed that the TA would draft a letter for subsequent Board approval.

All three Selectman stated that they approved the conceptual business plan for the Boodey House and Barn. In closing it was stated that focusing on funding resources and operation expenses was critical. Business resources will be utilized. It was stated that there is merit in terms of the opportunities that the Boodey House and Barn project offers.

The next meeting of the Boodey House Committee will be Sunday, February 5th, 2017, at the Town Hall beginning at 10:00am.

Meeting adjourned at 4:54 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Crissa Evans
Amendments- CE Orlowicz