

Minutes
STOW FINANCE COMMITTEE
Public Hearing
March 18, 2010
7:00 PM
Town Building
Approved

Call to Order

Charles Kern called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. Present were, David Walrath, James Salvie, Christopher Sarno and Elizabeth Tobey, Secretary.
Gary Bernklow arrived at 7:07pm

Charlie explained that the purpose of the Public Hearing is to listen to the people on concerns with the Town Warrant. The Warrant had not been approved as of this date.

Discussion of Town Warrant articles for May 3, 2010 Town Meeting
Wage and Salary Schedule

Charlie asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding the Wage and Salary Schedule. There were none.

Article 6 – 36 - Consent Calendar

Charlie asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding the Consent Calendar
There were none.

Article 37 – Capital requests

School District – Hale baseball field upgrade

Gary explained that the Center School Project will be taking over the ball field on their property. There is a strong need to create a new 90' field at Hale School to compensate for the loss of the field at Center.

Health – Dog Kennels

Steve Dungan asked what the excessive amount for the kennels would cover. Charlie explained the expansion, the heated floors, new walls and roofing. Explaining also that the Board of Health is working with the building inspector to bring the costs down.

Randall Library – Slate Roof Repairs/Mold Mildew repair

Ellen Sturgis asked if the old part of the building would be eligible for CPC funds. Bob Wilbur explained that it would have to be framed as a historical preservation.

There were no other questions regarding Capital Requests.

Article 38 – Alternate Design of Center School Add/Reno to Retain Larson Apple Barn

Bruce Fletcher stated that some folks in town are dismayed about the building being taken down. They want to save the building without jeopardizing funding or delaying the build. If Town Meeting voters express interest in saving the building, there could be a request to MSBA to change the plans. If it was voted no, that they are not interested in saving it, it would be finished and taken down.

Steve Dungan suggested that it goes beyond parking spaces. There are other impacts of keeping the stone building.

Ellen Sturgis stated that they went through a series of early designs. There were some with the stone building and some without it. The building is large with limited space. We tried to work around the stone building. With the requirements of the school and the site, it is not easy. The cost involved in saving it is very high, a million or more.

Chris Sarno asked if the town votes yes will it come out of the funds we are already getting?

Jim Salvie stated that the intent of the language is if it passes the ESBC would have to revise the plans unless MSBA says no.

Ellen advised that the ESBC has not met since this took place. They will be meeting with them next week.

Jim suggested that it would take some money to bring it to building code to preserve it. Bob Wilbur stated that it doesn't necessarily have to be used for the school. They could use it for storage. If they use it for the school, some cost for memorializing it could be used to upgrade it.

Bruce stated that it did not state in the Town Warrant that "2" town buildings would be restored.

Ellen suggested that the Historic Commission wants to move the Black Smith's shop. It was all duly noted.

Steven Quinn asked if there should be some sort of value of on the warrant for the update and repairs for the building. We should know what the costs are up front.

If this article is defeated at Town Meeting on May 3rd they can go to bid with no delays. We are unaware what the delays will be if the article passes.

Susan McLaughlin stated that there are possible uses and they would like to ask Rick Detweller who specializes in integrating buildings to be usable and still maintain the look. If people could see possibilities they would have a better idea of which way to go.

Gary Bernklow suggested that the MSBA requires site plans to be finalized before they approve them. The plans will be put on hold if it doesn't pass. It will take 4 to 6 weeks to pull together the plans for bidding.

Article 37– Capital Requests

Board of Health – Dog Kennel

Marcia Rising stated that they have decided to do less to the existing building. They will be getting a firm number in a few days and will go back to Capital with it. They would like to waterproof the exterior, roofing done over, more insulation and heated floors. These changes will make it much more efficient. They are also looking into an as-built survey (building and land) and a tight tank. When they have firmer numbers they will turn it into Capital.

Article 39– Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical High School Renovation Feasibility Study

The building is older and things are wearing out. The total is \$725k , Our cost is approx. \$5k over 5years.

Article 40– Town Land Gift to First Parish Church

The Parcel locations were explained and how the flow of traffic will be controlled. Karen Kelleher explained that there is a sidewalk on the property. Planning and Highway want an easement for the sidewalk.

Article 41 – Rescind Funds to Purchase Land on Red Acre Road

Bob Wilber explained that they want to remove the 40B proposal off of the property, The builder has defaulted on the contract. The land own has sued the town and lost on that end of the appeal. This will create more available funds.

Article 42 – Restoration of Stone Walls at Lower Village Cemetery

This article is for the repair of stonewalls with significant damage.
No comments

Article 43 –Restoration of Headstones at Town Cemeteries

This article is for the repair of Headstones with significant damage
No comments

Article 44 –Town Wide Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey

This article is to hire an experienced archeologist to identify where archeological hot spots are. Karen Kelleher explained that the study would be valuable whether or not a demolition bylaw is accepted.

Article 45 –Open Space Conservation Restrictions

Dave stated that the Conservation Trust put in a request to CPC to sell the town the Corzine property, between Maple Street and Walcott Street because its land locked. This would allow the town to have access to the trails. The sale would replenish their funds. CPC thought that the value of undeveloped land is 5-10k per acre. If town owned it would block the potential for 200-acre major development on the north end of town. The property has town-sharing values. It allows local conservation to have free funds to do other useful tasks with in town.

The Selectmen worked with Planning and other groups to review the land that became available.

Bill Byron suggested pointing out that the property is land locked. How are we going to get there? Conservation has acquired a limited easement.

Dave stated that that corner of town has a high development potential and very little land held under conservation protection.

Susan commented that because the land is owned by conservation trust it will remain conservation land.

Marcia rising stated that that area of town was a major concern for Master Plan also.

Article 46 –Senior Tax Relief

Charlie stated the financial impact is less to the town then you would think.

Gary commented that the state increased the amount for exemption and allows towns to double the exemption

Article 47 –General Bylaw Amendment: Authorize Affordable Housing Trust to Make Loans/Grants

Mike Kopczynski stated that the bylaw was accepted at the last annual town meeting. Town Council had said it is not in the bylaws. They cannot loan money with interest. They can give to use but not lend it. Susan asked how much was in the trust. Mike stated there is \$200k. Jim asked if money was taken out last year and Mike responded, no.

Article 48 –Zoning Bylaw Amendments: Flood Plain/Wetlands Overlay District

Steve Quinn explained that they are updating flood plains overlay districts as required by FEMA to ensure continued participation in the national flood insurance program. FEMA dictated the language to be in the bylaw.

Article 49 –Transfer to the Stabilization Fund

No discussion

Article 50 –Transfer to FY 2010 Snow and Ice Account – Clean Up of Carryover Articles

Discussed that it is being removed

Article 51 – Balance the fiscal year 2011 Budget

Being Removed

Article 50 – Town Election

New Article 50 after original 50 and 51 are removed

Adjournment from the Public Hearing

Public hearing closed at 8:50pm.

A motion to adjourn was made by James Salvie at 8:52 pm. David Walrath seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously – Kern, Walrath Sarno, Bernklow and Salvie

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth A. Tobey,
Secretary