

**MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING WITH BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND
WESTFIELD STUDY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting: January 14, 2012
Date of Transcription: January 23, 2012

Selectmen Present: Walter B. Cruz, Sr. Chairman
Stephen Holmes, arrived at 8:35 am
Cara A. Winslow, arrived at 8:35 am
Ellen M. Begley, Clerk pro-tem
J. Michael Schneider

Also Present: Mark J. Andrews, Town Administrator
Westfield Committee members: Sandy Slavin, Joe Mulhern, and David Nilson
along with CEDA Director Peter Sanborn

MOTION: Selectman Schneider moved that Selectman Begley serve as Clerk pro-tem for the meeting. Selectman Cruz seconded.

VOTE: 3-0-0 (Unanimous)

Selectman Holmes and Winslow arrived at this time.

MOTION: Selectman Schneider moved to nullify the vote to have Selectman Begley serve as Clerk pro-tem. Selectman Begley seconded.

VOTE: 5-0-0 (Unanimous)

Mr. Sanborn spoke about the issues that have been brought to his attention by the developers. He stated that the developers commented that the maintenance of the athletic fields for the duration of the lease causes a financial burden. Another concern was having the project as exclusively affordable elderly housing along with the number of units in total.

Selectman Schneider asked if the comments made about exclusive senior affordable housing were made from any of the five developers that were received previously included that comment? Mr. Sanborn stated that he knew of at least one of the five expressed that concern. Selectman Schneider said that he could see the impact of trying to make a 250-280 development all affordable units and understands that it's difficult to make it a feasible project. He also spoke about reworking the RFP. Selectman Holmes stated that they should look at item F and what they could do to make it more palatable and write it up. Selectman Winslow stated that this is the 2nd

SELECTMEN/SEWER COMMISSIONERS MEETING – 1-14-12 (CONT'D)

time they have invited the potential developers in to discuss and twice they haven't showed up. She said one of the things brought up over and over again is how this project would solve our 40B problems. Selectman Begley asked why the RFP that went out subsequent to this article didn't just address the two issues contained in the article? She said she was concerned when she saw the RFP with the recreational fields because it's not what is contained in the article. She went on to say what is contained in the article is initially rehabilitating the recreational facilities and maintaining the recreational facilities during the term of the lease and it says nothing about the elaborate reconstruction.

Selectman Schneider stated that the Board does appreciate the work done by the Westfield Study Committee. Selectman Holmes stated that he has spent many hours on the phone and one reason he did support the project was because he was told many times in argument that this project would solve our 40B problem. He said one reason he did support this project was to clear that hurdle.

Selectman Begley stated that she would like to see the original RFP go out with the items contained in the article added without the massive increase of numbers, etc. Also adding the language of the senior affordable housing and adding the language of initially the rehabilitation of the fields and have it go out again. She also had correspondence from Bruce Sauvageau and asked that a letter be read into record (as attached). Selectman Winslow stated that Selectman Begley read one letter however, there were actually five responses and the other responses were not nearly as scathing as those and she would like to request that all five responses be made available to the public on the website so they can see what the other four developers had to say.

Chairman Cruz said that they haven't received any responses and they have already put the RFP out twice and asked how many times are they going to have to change it? Selectman Schneider suggested not putting a number on the RFP and see what they come back and leave it blank. Selectman Holmes would like to make the changes on the RFP and put it back out to bid. Some changes discussed were on page 6 to put the number of units at a minimum of 150.

Mr. Mulkern spoke at this point and stated that the town would never get at 10% and also said that the project should be done in phases especially in this economy. He also agrees that removing the ball fields would make sense since most of the developers don't know much about ball fields. He said that they did drop the \$300, 000 for sewer and water that was in the earlier RFP. Mr. Nilson said it would be in the best interest to label the proposal as Phase I of a project on the RFP. He said that the inclusion of the fields does seem to be a sore spot as well. Some discussion ensued on the phases of the project.

SELECTMEN/SEWER COMMISSIONERS MEETING – 1-14-12 (CONT'D)

Ms. Slavin stated that a change was made from the 2009 RFP because it contradicted itself in the document. She said in one section it states the town would give them \$500,000 for sewer and in another section they would get a range from \$200,000 - \$500,000. She said because of that contradiction it was changed in the recent RFP on page 9 sections 7, town financial contribution to the project in the range of \$200,000 to \$500,000. She said they kept it at the maximum of \$500,000 and didn't specify any particular use to it. Ms. Slavin said that she wanted to make sure that in this article there is a potential of \$500,000 available to the contractor if approved by town meeting.

Ms. Slavin stated that on page 5 under Town Water and Sewer subsection 4 has to be deleted. Mr. Sanborn said what they have before them is the full RFP and there were 2 or addendums sent out to all the developers that this was distributed to and it was communicated to them. Mr. Andrews said they did talk with the developers about phasing the development and number of units was too high and they also looked at the sewer issue. Selectman Begley said that she would like a clean RFP go out with all the addendums and changes come before the board.

MOTION: Selectman Begley moved that any and all addendums to the Westfield RFP senior affordable housing project be submitted to and approved by the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Holmes seconded.

VOTE: 4-0-0 (Unanimous)

Note: Selectmen Winslow wasn't in the room at the time of the vote.

Selectman Begley asked if they could delete the 40B number since it's a moving target. A change would need to be done on page 5 item 4 to remove status of achieving 40B goals. Selectman Holmes said that he would like to go back to discussing the money portion and wanted the developers to make sure that the town wasn't giving them the money they would just support it at town meeting.

Selectman Winslow said that if the board is looking to put the RFP back out why don't they just write it? Chairman Cruz said that it does state that it goes to the review committee and since it's not completed they the committee should compete the RFP. Selectman Winslow said it was completed put out to bid, they have done two time extensions and invited contractors to come before the board and there was no response.

Mr. Nilson said that they have put a lot of time and effort into this and would like to see this through and was in it for the long haul. Selectman Cruz stated that this should go back to the committee to make the changes. Ms. Slavin said that there were two substantial changes and they wanted a community garden and this time they added water system and shed to the community garden from the 2009 version.

SELECTMEN/SEWER COMMISSIONERS MEETING – 1-14-12 (CONT'D)

She also said the other modification was the size of community building and the equipment inside to include items such as a TV, Kitchen, etc.

Mr. Sanborn asked the board to take serious consideration and take this back to the Spring Town meeting with a proposal to strip this down to the bare essentials and to remove the requirement on the recreational facilities as well as the requirement that it be 100% affordable. He said if there were some ability for them to have a mixed income development then you would give a greater feasibility to have other units affordable to the lower income seniors. Selectman Cruz stated that they would send this back to the committee for them to continue to work on it with the recommendations made at the meeting.

Mr. Nilson asked when the board would like this back in their hands? Selectman Winslow stated that it wouldn't be unreasonable that the documents be given to both the Board of Selectmen and the Westfield RFP committee and have Mr. Heaney schedule a meeting between now and January 31st. Mr. Nilson stated that would be acceptable and they would hold a meeting and come back to the board with a response. Selectman Begley said that once the board approves the minutes they could be given to the committee to make the changes.

Selectman Holmes moved to adjourn. Selectman Schneider seconded.

VOTE: 5-0-0 (Unanimous)

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Wilson, Department Assistant

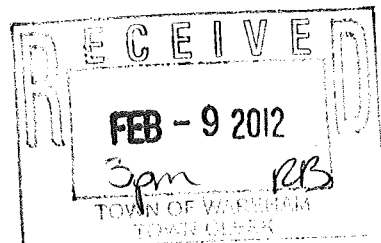
The foregoing minutes were submitted to the Board of Selectmen/Sewer Commissioners on: 2-7-12

Attest:


Stephen M. Holmes, Clerk

Date Signed: 2-7-12

Date sent to the Town Clerk: 2-8-12



100-833