**TOWN PROPERTIES COMMITTEE**

Minutes for June 10, 2020, 5:30 PM

The meeting was opened at 5:33 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nancy Butler, Colleen Thompson, John Traynor, Jon Wilhelmsen MEMBERS ABSENT: Ross MacPherson

GUESTS PRESENT: Selectman Mark Russo

BETA Group, Inc. representatives Stephanie Danielson (Principal Planner) and Scott Ridder (Landscape Architect)

NOTES: This meeting was conducted on a Zoom meeting platform with members participating from their homes.

ACTION ITEMS: **In bold print**

DISCUSSION:

1. Opening – JW read the Governor’s orders of 3/12/20 and 3/15/20 which allow this Zoom meeting as a temporary change to Open Meeting Law during the COVID-19 shut-down. The meeting will be recorded to provide public access to the discussion. The meeting was turned over to BETA Group. Stephanie Danielson introduced Scott Ridder.
2. SD reiterated the grant goal: to look at the Town center campus area with an eye toward providing housing options on site. SD posted a map of the area, with Town owned properties outlined, on the screen. She noted that the recently acquired five- acre parcel includes a wetland system and a stream. Someone from BETA Group will be on the property next week to get a more specific picture of the scope and location of the wetland. The map will then be upgraded to show those areas.

BETA needs additional information to create a full picture of the center campus area. When they have this information, they will be able to talk about the potential for the site, discuss ideas with the Committee and decide which ideas are viable enough to present to the public. **SD will contact the Board of Health** to get the septic system records, including location of the tank. Pipes and leaching field. **She will also contact the Building Department** to get the As Built plan for the new police station. SD/SR also asked about the wells. Is there more than one well servicing the four buildings in the Town center? Where are they located? Committee members provided some information, but more will be needed. The septic system was not upgraded for the police station. It is likely that any new building would require either a system upgrade or a new septic system. The Library may have its own well, but that will need to be confirmed.

SD asked about the acquisition of the five acres and whether there is a map of that lot. JW said that this was a Town purchase of land. **CT will look for a map, but also suggested that Webby Engineering may have one**. The Building Department can scan large documents and the map, when found, will be sent to BETA electronically.

SR asked about the ball fields. The Committee responded. In the past, these were considered untouchable, but sentiment may be changing. It depends on the value of what we get versus the cost of moving the fields. JW stated that we need to be creative and look at all possible options – with the ball fields in place and with them removed. There was some discussion about the access through the church parking area (does the Town have a right of way?) and the ownership of the cemetery (property card says church owns it, but traditionally the Town maintains it). **JT will check into these things.**

SD asked about the idea of using other Town-owned properties for housing. JW said that there are two viable options – 3 ½ acres on Center Street and 18 acres on the corner of Maple and Palmer Road (of which only about 5 acres are dry/usable).

JT again stated that we need to stay open to every option. Current building uses could be changed or moved. Other properties could be used or possibly acquired. JW said that previous committee concluded that centralization of the public safety departments was the best plan. The idea was that the additional five acres could be used for a future fire station, but we had not considered housing at that time. We agree that we need to look at all ideas and options for Town properties. The end goal is to have a well thought out plan that will allow us to go after/receive state monies and both public and private grants.

SD said that part of this project will include how traffic access and circulation to the site can be made more user friendly. The current situation does not work. The entrances/exits are awkward, dark, and dangerous. The parking is often insufficient for current needs. Even the new police station entrance needs adjustment to enhance safety, so Police Chief Clancy will need to be included in the discussion.

BETA Group exited the meeting at 6:17.

1. Other Business
2. Building Lift – This project will not happen within this fiscal year. Hopefully, we will not lose these earmarked funds. Liz Dennehy has been in contact with Senator Brady and Representative LaNatra. They will try to get us these funds in the next fiscal year.
3. Priorities/Inventory List – **JW will continue to work on this.**
4. After Town Meeting this Committee will schedule a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee. **JT will acquire Town’s current debt structure.**
5. MINUTES: The minutes from the 5/20/20 meeting were approved as written. JW moved, JT seconded, passed unanimously. Approved minutes will be sent to the Town Clerk.
6. NEXT MEETING: To be determined.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:30 PM