

## **Meeting Notes Sept. 5, 2023**

In attendance: Mike Ammendolia, Alejna Brugos, Phil Ciple, Dave Kurczy, Peg Nogueira, Lawney Tinio, Jack Hunter, Diane Howell (COA member visitor) Anne Mazar, Tom Fichtner, and Amy Wilson-Kent

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm at the Police Station.

Committee entered into discussion with Anne Mazar regarding the 4 properties being considered and the existing conservation restrictions.

Property at 131 North Ave- currently not town owned. There are conservation restrictions in place re: "footprint size" as it was to be used for agriculture. Anne mentioned the work involved to get full legislator approval to change the restrictions. Not ideal for our timeline.

Morrison Drive - There is a lot of open space behind the building. It's good for septic and water. The town owns it and there are no conservation restrictions on it. It would require an access road and would need a lot of street signage and lighting.

Jack Hunter gave his opinion on Morrison St –not any other access to that property. There are wetlands toward the Providence St entrance. A septic system was designed and a well drilled there. There is a standing structure but it is not big enough for our needs. We would have to expand it. There is also the possibility of shared parking with the fire station. There is land in the back of the building. Jack doesn't think it seems viable to put the Senior Center in an Industrial Park. He wants to see it in a more vibrant part of town where it is easily accessible and there is enough space.

Anne commented on the property at the intersection of North Ave and Rte. 16. She thinks it is an ideal site- easy to access and located in the

center of town. She mentioned that the Selectboard had wanted to have some commercial use for some of the land. There is also room for the septic and well.

In her comments re: the current location, she stated that it is dangerous to access the building if you are crossing the street from the parking lot located there. There are also physical limitations on the property. There is wet property.

Phil commented that with the extra acre, no street crossing is necessary.

Jack H. - 52 Providence St. is a tough site with a lot of issues. It was bought to give an acre of land to the Senior Center.

Amy Wilson-Kent- the acre of land is already defined but it is unknown if it has been recorded.

CPA funds were used to buy the rest of the land. \$10,000 was spent on our acre.

Lawney T asked if there was any bidding on the property to build the homes.

Lawney asked about adjusting restrictions to the property at 131 North Ave. The understanding is that the land was owned by the Gannett family who offered it to the town for the library site. Because it was to be a joint library with Upton, the voters rejected it. It was returned to the Gannetts and later acquired by Gary Smith to build an agricultural site. In approving this, the town imposed conservation restrictions on the property. This was done through votes of the Conservation Commission, Selectboard, town meeting and legislative action.

Lawney is meeting with Gary Smith on Friday to go over the details, including possible funding.

The size of the structure would have to increase. Well placement and septic design has already taken place. Half of the land needs to be open space which could mean walking trails. It's possible to change the restrictions but it will take time.

Mike A stated that all the properties need to be looked at regardless of "problems".

An assessment sheet was passed out to all the committee members, asking us to write down the pros and cons of each site.

Anne M said she would assist someone working to change the restrictions, but would not handle it herself. She stated that if it is not done correctly, it could affect future grants. Anne feels that some money in her budget could be used for ADA accessible trails.

Jack feels we find the optimal acre space from 52 Providence St to give to the Senior Center and the proposed Housing would need a 25-30 foot access road. He's not sure where that would be located but thinks it could be done.

Lawney made the comment that every time the town buys land, we end up restricting it.

Mike A. asked that we reach out to our Senators and Reps to see if they can refer us to someone who assist us with this. Currently, we are only hearing opinions.

Phil included in our agenda a 2 page document that has the black and white rendition of the map of #52, and the "dot" indicates the location.

Still discussing #52, Lawney states the wetlands get wet very quickly as there is a stream in back , The stream meanders through the property but the acre designated for the Senior Center use isn't wet.

Jack H- Guerriere and Halnon have been chosen to do the access map. The septic system has been abandoned because of the expense. Environmental Tech is to handle the directional drilling . There is a meeting currently taking place and if CPA approves, then Environmental Tech will begin by December. The water and sewer study is focusing on 2 sites; Providence St. and the Highway Dept. Jack will connect with Jon Dudley. Our current well and septic system are not adequate for our expanded needs.

Moving on to the property at 131 North Ave, it has been mentioned that there is a possibility of funds available should we choose that site and name it after Shirley Smith. Phil C. asked if there were any legal issues with the SMITH TRUST.

In reviewing the spreadsheet, Alejna B asked if Phil was looking for actual graded numbers in both columns of the spreadsheet. Put numbers in both the Pros and Cons.

We are all in agreement that we, as a committee, have a responsibility to the town to find the best site. Building lots and wetlands are a concern as well as septic and well designs.

Lawney T- If the site is what we want, we should try and work through any obstacles.

Chief Kurczy- the talk about the “footprint size” ... does that refer to landwise or building size?

Lawney states we should work with our legal person and that if there is a process, he would be willing to do the leg work and walk through the legal process.

Alejna- If it took 2 years to get the conservation restriction would it take equal time to reverse it? It's worth investigating it if there are funds available. We could still go to the voters in May. She feels that the townspeople present at the meeting ask very good questions.

Mike A- What we do now is the most important part of the project. We need to get the facts and share what we are doing with the people.

Amy W.K- in our past attempt at expansion, we asked up to 10 architects to submit plans. We ended up with about 7 and narrowed it down to 1.

Phil wants the spreadsheets returned in 2 weeks at the next meeting.

Moving on to Rock the Block- Lawney reported that it is still on unless the weather becomes dangerous. Then, it will be canceled and not rescheduled. It is the goal of the Senior Center to have a tent set up and posters and handouts informing people of our project. We will get the key message out to the public.

Alejna wants the Senior Center to keep reporting our progress to the Selectboard.

There will be a meeting with the architect at the Senior center on Wednesday Sept 13 at 1:30 to go over the room size requirements and a possible walk through the Morrison St property for those who have not seen it,

Next Meeting: Tuesday Sept 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the Police Station.

Peg Nogueira, Acting Secretary