

Meeting Notes Sept. 19, 2023

In attendance: Mike Ammendolia, Alejna Brugos, Phil Cieply, Mike Goddard, Peg Nogueira, Lawney Tinio, Jack Hunter, Diane Howell (COA member visitor), Tom Fichtner, Mark Bucchino and Amy Wilson-Kent

Phil C. asked for an update from Lawney T about his meeting with Gary Smith. Gary is waiting to get a copy of the plans re: 131 North Ave (corner of Hopedale St) from (Fred) Shea Engineering. They will be electronically delivered to the architect and to the committee. Lawney spoke with Mike Salvatore who is familiar with the property and he states that there are some wetlands there. The previous plans had called for a 4800square ft. structure, (40x60 building with 2 levels) but we would be looking to build something 9-10 thousand square feet in size. Therefore we would need to increase the size of the already planned septic system. Anne Mazur is also following the potential use of this land with the Conservation Commission.

We want to disturb the historic stone walls as little as possible. There are 14 acres of usable land. We would want to keep as much of the farm area intact. There was a discussion concerning where the parking would be located to avoid the wetlands and also potentially the van being outside the main structure.

Lawney is planning on meeting with Gary in the near future and may include talks with John Gannett, the previous owner of the property who started some of the planning.

The Mendon Community garden land, owned by Gary Smith and managed by Annie Parnas would be one of our abutters. Peg N. spoke with Annie on Sunday and was told that should the Senior Center be relocated next to the gardens, she would see to it that the Seniors got one of the plots of land to grow vegetables. Lawney also mentioned a possibility of drilling an irrigation well.

Any barriers to the use of the land would require an adjustment right now. This space we are looking at is not conservation restricted but the size of the building is. We will need to adjust the size. The consensus is that there shouldn't be an issue. Lawney has a meeting with Sen. Fattman and one of the items Lawney will ask him is if there are any funds available for senior centers.

Phil C. asked if there has been any thought given to the type of Energy system for the senior center...any funds available?

Peg N asked about the rumor that the town was interested in the land now being owned and used by the Animal Sanctuary with the question being, if that land was acquired, could the restriction on 131 North Ave be transferred to that property? Lawney clarified that the conservation restriction would be put on the land at the corner of RT 16.

Alejna asked if Lawney had inquired from Gary the possibility of additional funding besides the gift of the land. Lawney states no monetary number was ever mentioned.

Mike A –re: the property on 131 North Ave, there are options to the type of building..Maybe more than one floor

Lawney T-Hopedale St could be an entrance.. There is also a break in the stone wall on North Ave,so we would not be disturbing the stone walls.

Water table is high, even on the hill..

Mike A- Made the observation that water can be controlled.

Mark Buccchino was introduced by Phil to be nominated to be on the Committee. He has been with the Emergency Management and was also part of the original committee. Mark states that there may be some grant monies available, for generators maybe, although money is tight right now. He will send a letter of intent to join the committee to the Town Clerk Ellen Agro. The committee unanimously approved Mike B's joining the committee.

Phil spoke of the meeting between Amy, Peg, himself and Mike Petrovick, the architect, about the physical layout of the proposed building. Phil sent out an electronic document regarding what we covered. Mike P.will re-work the specs and get back to us. Mike P was curious as to what the voters would consider reasonable building costs. Mike G said we want to look at what the architect comes up with.

Mike A asked how many kilowatt hours the senior center uses? See what our usage is and weigh the cost of solar panels, not necessarily placed on the roof. You can

be innovative. Try and work this in. Now is a good time for the senior center to be built. We focus on what we want to build for the future. We have to look outside the box. Possibility of wind power?

Mike G noted that green communities get money.

Phil- We will work with Anne on that .area

Peg followed up on Phil's discussion with the architect and she stated that Amy, the Senior Center Director, felt that on a regular business day, she would expect about 100 seniors to be in using the facility, She would like .the building to hold more . During special events, that number would rise considerably. We would love to be able to host the Senior of the Year banquet in our own facility.

Mike A-.A new building done right will generate a lot of usage

Tom F- asked about Debt reduction

In discussing the Senior Center's outreach efforts, the COA and the Friends had a presence at Rock the Block. It was a great event. . We are doing the Trunk or Treat event, the Brothers' Halloween Party and the Lion's club October event at Daniels farm. We are not missing any opportunity to get our message out to all Mendon residents.

The next discussion was on the spreadsheets we filled out about the 4 sites. We had a difference in how we understood how the questions, should be answered. Phil went over his personal assessment. He collected them and will tabulate them.

Mike A took a ride over to Morrison St and commented that he was disappointed in the condition of that building. No fingers being pointed, just an observation,

Diane asked if there was s a possibility of another access road to get to that building besides cutting through the Fire Station parking lot on Morrison. The Planning board was talking about an 81P .

Alejna B commented that the lot itself is pretty but isolated.

The architect thinks that the building on Morrison St would save us about a million dollars in building costs.

Mike A- Any monetary gains you would get from using that building would be offset by the site work involved. We have to bring all options to the townspeople.
- Our current senior center is a functional building that has been maintained. The day is going to come when Mendon will be a municipality,

Alejna B- this exercise was good to really think about all the properties

The question of any additional monies being donated was raised again and according to Lawney T- possible money will come from the Gannetts who wanted to help build the Shirley Smith facility but it is unknown at this time. It's between Gary and the Gannetts. We will wait until we have more details.

There has been perk testing and a septic design which will tell us more of the water table and topography.

Phil will reach out to Jack Hunter re: 52 Providence St. He can do an assessment of water, sewer, and of what we need to do for all 4 sites and be the keeper of that information.

Mike G- Jack has limited hours. What the considerations are from a "spec" point may be in his role.

Phil asked about the Contract process for Mike P, the architect ... Mike G has not received the info from David yet.

Phil- we will continue to speak with our reps about our project. Keep it on their radar

Mike G-Sources of funding. Before next May we want to have more details and planned costs .Show the completed plans to our reps.

Phil C-We are meeting with Mike P on Sept 27. All are invited to attend.

He asked the 2 Selectboard members. Are there any resources that we could tap into?

Amy in discussing the projected cost of the project said that in regards to the final costs, we want some finished space in the basement but it doesn't have to be all completed. We plan on installing an elevator.

Any comments for Phil please send them to him

For the next meeting, think about any resources we could use ... and keep track of town events. Ask the friends, our fundraising group, for help.

Tom F- asked are you connected to the schools? We should stay connected with them. We need to tap into the younger generations and although the seniors are the focus, the community will benefit from it as well.

Next meeting (tentatively scheduled for) Tuesday Oct 3 at 6:30 at the Police Station

Meeting adjourned.

Peg Nogueira, Acting Secretary