

**REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 3, 2011, 7:30 A.M.
LINCOLN CENTER HEARING ROOM**

Members Present: Tim Devanney, Chairman Sue O'Connor
 Robert Schneider Thomas Tomko
 Terry Bogli Phil MacVane
 Barbara Weinberg Gary Sweet
 Michael Farina

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Neighborhood Services
 and Economic Development
 Gary Anderson, Senior Planner
 Tim O'Neil, Assistant Town Attorney

Adoption of minutes of January 19 and 20, 2011

Mr. Farina moved to adopt the minutes as written. Mr. MacVane seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Presentation by Stephen Gates on a field house idea

Steven Gates, President of the Manchester High School PTA, and Thayer Redman, Head Coach of the Manchester track team, discussed their idea for an athletic field house that would include various indoor facilities.

Mr. Thayer said the Board of Education recently decided to prohibit the Manchester High track teams from practicing in the Manchester High School hallways after school. That decision has forced the coaches and athletes to find alternatives, which have included running outdoors and traveling to an indoor facility in Tolland twice a week. Mr. Thayer said these alternatives make training in the winter difficult and limit opportunities to attract students who may have never been exposed to the sport, and who would benefit from a positive extra-curricular experience. He said a new indoor facility would provide the High School adequate space for practice, while fulfilling other community needs and providing the opportunity to host revenue-generating track meets. In meeting with other stakeholders, suggestions for the facility included a 200 meter track, swimming pool, gym/fitness area and locker rooms.

Mr. Gates said he is currently looking for input from the Redevelopment Agency and other community leaders. Mr. Farina asked if and how a field house would fit into the Redevelopment Plan and what type of footprint it would have. Mr. Gates said it was too early in the process to answer that question. Mr. Tomko suggested Mr. Gates look into the vacant warehouse building on Hall Court in the Cheney Historic District.

Mr. Sweet said Manchester needs to market itself better and one way to do so would be market the Town's many athletic groups and events. He said a field house would add to and enhance what already exists. He suggested an indoor bicycle racing facility be considered in the field house plans as well. Mr. MacVane said he thought a field house would be good for the town and other Agency members agreed. Mr. Gates will keep the Agency updated on their progress.

Update and status report on Parkade due diligence activities

Mr. Pellegrini introduced Gary Cluen and James Hutton from GZA who were present to summarize the findings of their Phase I site investigation at the Parkade.

Mr. Cluen said GZA has been involved in environmental assessments on the Parkade property since 1983 when Stop & Shop built an addition to their store. GZA also produced a Phase I and II assessment for a client that was considering a big box development at the site. The current assessment includes a review of those and other previous reports and updated visual observations and personal interviews, he said. The findings did not identify any environmental contamination that rises above DEP's reporting standards. There are, however, minor environmental concerns to be managed during any site development. Mr. Cluen said those include:

- The release of oil from one of the site's former electrical transformers. He said CL & P cleaned up the site, but there is no final report on file.
- During the development of the Stop & Shop addition, petroleum contaminated soil from the former Hess gas station was found and remediated. This involved removing the contaminated soils from the site. Disturbance of the soil during any new construction may uncover some contaminated soil, but they should be relatively minor quantities.
- Previous analyses identified low concentrations of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in site groundwater. The compounds did not come from the site but migrated in the groundwater from industrial uses in the area. Again, these are below reporting levels but will need to be managed during construction.

Mr. Tomko asked if the site could be redeveloped to residential uses without remediation. Mr. Cluen said it was possible if soil was not disturbed below the water table. However, he said redevelopment of the site, especially in the area of the former Hess gas station, would likely mean disturbing the soil. He said the Town should provide this Phase I to a developer and be clear that soil disturbance in certain areas could potentially require remediation. Possible solutions would be an impervious vapor barrier similar to the clay layer that was placed under the Stop & Shop addition.

Mr. Tomko asked if Hess could still be liable for any remediation. Mr. Cluen said he did not know.

Ms. Weinberg asked if the Town could require the current owners to remediate any portion of the property. Attorney O'Neil said the Town's purchase agreement calls for purchasing the property "as-is". He said the agreement also provides a nine month window to seek recourse if the current owner intentionally misrepresented something about the site.

Mr. Schneider asked if Mr. Cluen thought this analysis would satisfy a potential lender. Mr. Cluen responded that he thought it would. Mr. Tomko asked if the Town would have any responsibility for the site conditions if it sold the property to a developer, or if the State transfer act would be triggered. Mr. Cluen responded that the site does not fall under the transfer act and so the Town would not incur any extra liability.

Attorney O'Neil reported the current property owners agreed to extend the period for title research to the full 60 day due diligence period. He said Attorney Lines of Robinson & Cole has been updating its title search. Ms. Lines also contacted Rick Meehen and Chicago Title, both of whom had information on the property. Attorney O'Neill said Attorney Lines will provide a written report and he expects it will indicate that the development restrictions are only held by the parcels south of Green Manor Blvd. as stated in the previously provided title report. Mr. Tomko reminded the Agency the land use restrictions that exist between the Broad Street Parkade, adjacent parking lot and the theatre are reciprocal.

Attorney O'Neil said the Town has hired an appraiser to establish a value for the Nichols properties. The judge will use the appraisal to help decide if the foreclosure will proceed as a strict foreclosure or a foreclosure by sale. It is expected the final law date will be sometime in April.

Executive Session to Discuss Possible Broad Street Real Estate Transactions

Ms. Weinberg moved to go into executive session to discuss possible Broad Street real estate transactions at 9:10 a.m. Mr. Sweet seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The Agency came out of executive session at: 9:40 a.m. No decisions were made.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 a.m.

The next meeting of the Manchester Redevelopment Agency will take place on ***Thursday, February 17th at 7:30 a.m. in the Lincoln Center Hearing Room.***