

**REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 6, 2016 – 7:30 A.M.
LINCOLN CENTER HEARING ROOM**

Members Present: Timothy Devanney, Chair; Terry Bogli, Secretary; Michael Darby, Gary Sweet, Michael Farina, Steve Carter, Stephanie Knybel, Jim Williams

Members Absent: Robert Schneider, Vice-Chair; Aaron Ansaldi, Louis Spadaccini, Tricia McMann, Aaron Wlochowski

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning & Economic Development; Kyle Shiel, Senior Planner; Katie Williford, Administrative Secretary

Adoption of Minutes of March 24, 2016

Mr. Sweet moved to adopt the minutes of March 24, 2016 as written. Ms. Knybel seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Executive Session to Discuss Real Estate Negotiations

Mr. Farina moved to enter executive session at 7:40 a.m. to discuss real estate negotiations. Ms. Knybel seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The Agency came out of executive session at 8:35 a.m. No decisions were made.

Discussion of Center Springs Park Expansion

Max Reim of LiveWorkLearnPlay (LWLP) said there should be a master plan or vision for Center Springs Park with specific projects that can be funded and phased in over time. This would make a good impression on the community and investors, he said. Scott Shanley, General Manager, said there are preliminary conceptual plans to link Center Springs Park to Center Street and Center Memorial park through parcels of land the Town has acquired. The Board of Directors included \$40,000 to develop a park entrance on Main Street across from Summit Studios, he said. There are things the Town can work on in the interim while other pieces are coming together, Mr. Shanley said.

Mr. Pellegrini said in addition to a master park plan that would connect individual pieces, the other missing pieces are an exciting, dramatic design theme and identification of which activities should happen where, and what types of facilities might be needed for them. He said a master plan would look at Middle Turnpike along Bigelow Brook through Center Springs Park to Main Street and Center Memorial Park, including the greenway south to the Cheney Mills. Mr. Pellegrini added that an interim plan is needed for 363 Broad Street (the former restaurant). If the plan is to demolish the building, something should be done in the near term to make it an attractive gateway to Center Springs Park but allow future changes on the site with minimal loss of the initial investment, he said. There is opportunity to involve the Redevelopment Agency,

the Board of Directors, Friends of Center Springs Park, the Park and Recreation Commission, and Park and Recreation Staff in the master planning, Mr. Pellegrini said.

Mr. Reim said the old way of turning parks around was with a landscaping plan, but that's not as important as programming and a business model of what to do with the park. Programming brings a park to life and brings people to use it, he said. Ms. Knybel, who is a member of Friends of Center Springs Park, said they were planning to hold an Art in the Park festival and held an event with music last year. Mr. Reim replied that the Town needs to aggressively seek out programs and have a full year's worth of activities to promote to generate continuing activity and interest.

Mr. Rob Spanier, a partner and investor with LWLP, said the greatest opportunity for Manchester is that a lot of people are a short drive away so if there was more to do here they would probably come. The more people who come to spend time in Manchester, the better chance LWLP will have to secure tenants and development partners. He suggested coming up with a list of 100 simple things to do in the park that would be low-cost for people to attend. He added that people in the community should be enlisted to implement programs in the park. All of the responsibility for programming should not rest on one volunteer committee, he said. Mr. Shanley noted that Friends of Center Springs Park has several events planned for the summer, but they do need more support. Mr. Williams said Friends of Center Springs Park reminded him of another group, Friends of Keney Park, when it first started. Friends of Keney Park was successful in revitalizing that park after years of work, and they started with locals, he said. Mr. Reim said marketing and communications inside and outside Manchester would be essential to success, and that there need to be people focused on this 6 or 7 days a week. Mr. Devaney said the more activity that happens in the park, the safer it will become.

Ms. Marok said LWLP and the Agency should follow up in terms of how planning for the parks will happen and how to integrate that with the Broad Street parcel. Mr. Carter asked for LWLP's suggestions on what might be done with the property at 363 Broad Street, and Mr. Reim said they would get back to the Agency about that after looking at the site.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 a.m.