

**REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 19, 2016 – 7:30 A.M.
LINCOLN CENTER HEARING ROOM**

Members Present: Timothy Devanney, Chair; Terry Bogli, Secretary; Michael Darby, Gary Sweet, Louis Spadaccini, Steve Carter, Aaron Wlochowski, Stephanie Knybel, Michael Farina, Tricia McMann

Members Absent: Robert Schneider, Vice-Chair; Aaron Ansaldi, Jim Williams

Also Present: Jay Moran, Mayor; Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning & Economic Development; Kyle Shiel, Senior Planner

Adoption of Minutes of April 21, 2016

Mr. Sweet moved to adopt the minutes of April 21, 2016 as written. Ms. Knybel seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Discussion of 363 Broad Street demolition and park entrance status

Mr. Pellegrini said the bids for the hazardous materials assessment and demolition were due shortly and could likely be awarded by late June or early July. He said it is likely the building could be demolished by the fall.

Regarding the park entrance, Mr. Pellegrini said the Board of Directors has approved \$30,000 for design. He said the Agency has two potential options to pursue once the building is demolished. The first option would be a minimalist interim treatment to immediately introduce more greenery to the site and make it a more inviting park entrance. He said such an option would require landscaping specifications regarding plantings, lighting, required amount of top-soil and other details. He said this option would be relatively low-cost. Mr. Sweet asked if such an option would include signage. Mr. Pellegrini said it could, and he noted that the Parks Department is exploring developing a comprehensive parks signage program.

Mr. Darby asked when the Town-owned building on the corner of Center and Trotter Streets will be demolished. Mr. Pellegrini said the schedule for that project is concurrent with the 363 Broad Street demolition. He said it would be beneficial to move quickly on creating an inviting park entrance to maintain momentum on the project and create an attractive amenity on Broad Street. He said the most streamlined track would be to simultaneously engage a landscape architect to provide construction bid documents and work with Town engineering staff to provide site-engineering work while the demolition specifications and bidding are underway

Mr. Darby asked if Fuss & O'Neill was competitively priced for landscape architecture work. Mr. Pellegrini said their costs are generally in the same range as other firms. He said since they

are a large firm, they occasionally have higher overhead compared to smaller firms. Ms. McMann asked what kind of firms the Agency would consider. Ms. Bogli said her thought was to initially engage Fuss & O'Neill since they did the original concept plan and are familiar with the project. Mr. Pellegrini said he spoke with Chris Ferraro of Fuss & O'Neill. He said Mr. Ferraro provided a quote of \$14,500 for providing landscape and specifications and construction documents. Ms. McMann said it would be appropriate to allow local landscaping company the opportunity to bid on the project. Ms. Bogli said this initial project would only be design-related and there would be a separate bid for installation and construction.

Mr. Carter asked if the quoted Fuss & O'Neill price was reasonable and Mr. Pellegrini said he thought it was. Mr. Pellegrini said the Agency has the option to issue a Request for Proposals if they would like to receive more quotes but that it would add several weeks to the process. He said the only urgency was in attempting to award a contract in time for planting season this year; otherwise the site improvement treatment would have to wait until next year. Mr. Sweet said the fee proposal would be about 7.5% of the estimated construction cost, which he felt was reasonable within industry standards.

Ms. Bogli asked about the remaining balance in the redevelopment bond fund. Mr. Pellegrini said after the purchase of 363 Broad Street, the fund has approximately \$1.2 million remaining. He said the Agency still needs to pay for environmental assessment, demolition, a landscaping plan, and landscaping installation related to the park entrance, which could be upwards of \$200,000. That would have leave roughly \$800,000 in the redevelopment account.

Mr. Pellegrini said another option is to conduct a master park plan in the broader context of the Town's core district which would include Center Springs Park, Center Memorial Park and the Bigelow Brook and Cheney Greenways. He said Max Reim of LiveWorkLearnPlay (LWLP) is supportive of a master plan approach, and BOD and Agency leadership expressed initial interest. He said the larger scope of such a project would require more funding than is currently allocated.

Mr. Spadaccini asked if it was appropriate for the Agency to pay for a plan outside the purview of the redevelopment area. Mr. Darby said a plan including the proposed Bigelow Brook Greenway would fall in the Agency's jurisdiction. Mr. Sweet said greenway planning is a component of Manchester 2020, the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. Mr. Farina said a broader master plan effort should ideally be spearheaded by the Town Parks and Recreation department since it would be a town wide initiative.

Mr. Darby said his preference on the park entrance would be to start work as soon as possible. He said he was comfortable with Fuss & O'Neill's initial quote. Mr. Spadaccini asked if the Bigelow greenway would be under LWLP's purview as part of the master developer agreement and Mr. Pellegrini said it would be since its final form would be influenced by the final development.

Ms. Bogli said the decision on the park entrance would be on an immediate time-frame, while any larger master planning effort would require more deliberation and a larger scope. Mr. Sweet said a larger master parks plan linking various parts of Town could be a driver for economic development. Mr. Farina said he favors doing an immediate interim treatment for the park

entrance and making a recommendation to Town leadership to also evaluate and plan for the broader park system. He said such a planning effort would better position the Town to apply for available state and federal aid.

Ms. Bogli asked if the Agency was comfortable moving forward with engaging Fuss & O'Neill for professional landscape design services. Mr. Darby wanted to clarify that Fuss & O'Neill would be strictly engaged for the purposes of providing landscape design and providing construction documents. Mr. Carter said he would prefer landscape work to begin by the fall. Mr. Sweet agreed, saying he would like the site cleaned up as soon as possible.

Mr. Darby moved to engage a landscape architecture firm for professional design services relating to a park entrance at 363 Broad Street, to include landscape designs and construction specifications. Ms. Bogli seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

Status Update on the Broad Street Redevelopment Project

Mr. Pellegrini said excess soil from the Bennett school reconstruction project is currently being stockpiled on the western edge of the former Parkade site. He said this activity is likely to continue for about a year. He said the contractor is aware of the Motorcycle Jamboree event and will clear the site for that weekend. Regarding the pending quiet title case, he said he has not received any further updates from the Town's attorney and a likely decision date.

Mr. Devaney asked if the Agency would receive funds from land sales to go back into the redevelopment account. Mr. Pellegrini said that is possible depending on the details of a transaction. He said the Town would assign land value to the site and negotiate with a prospective buyer on a purchase price. Mr. Darby said he expects LWLP or another prospective developer to inquire about financial incentives. Mr. Pellegrini noted that the Agency has consistently said redevelopment of the site would likely require some package of financial incentives. He said it would be necessary to see a viable development deal from a prospective developer before evaluating in detail the exact mix of financial incentives. Mr. Farina said he asked LWLP if compiling a list of available financial incentives would help to attract developers and was told by Mr. Reim it would be beneficial. He suggested the Agency should assemble a list of financial incentives to begin learning more about the various options.

Mayor Moran said the Town should be very deliberate and when considering potential financial incentives for redeveloping the site. He said it would be critical for the Agency and BOD to work closely to ensure any financial incentives align with the Town's best interest.

Other Business

Ms. Bogli said Agency leadership discussed the possibility of a reduced Agency meeting schedule due to a projected decrease in activity over the next several months. She asked if Agency members would prefer to cancel the second of the scheduled monthly meetings and go to a once a month meeting schedule for the foreseeable future. Agency members agreed with this proposal and Mr. Pellegrini said he would make the necessary administrative changes.

Ms. Bogli said she also asked Kiran Marok of LWLP when they would provide their next update since they are scheduled to provide quarterly updates. Mr. Darby suggested a meeting wait until at least after a decision on the pending sale of Eastern Connecticut Health Networks and the pending hospital purchase is announced.

Adjournment

Ms. Knybel moved to adjourn. Mr. Darby seconded and all members voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:16 a.m.