

Minutes from Public Hearing and Municipal Civic Complex presentation on TMD, 3/5/13

The 9am performance by the Band was followed by a reading of the summary of the Notice of Public Hearing for the Town & Village of Waterbury by Jeff Kilgore, Moderator.

“The Town and Village of Waterbury are considering making an application to the State of Vermont for a Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Implementation Grant under the Vermont Community Development Program. This is considered the public hearing to furnish information concerning the amount of funds available and the range of community development activities that may be undertaken under this program, the impact to any historic and archaeological resources that may be affected by the proposed projects, and to give affected citizens the opportunity to examine the proposed statement of projected use of these funds

The Waterbury Municipal Civic Complex is planned to house new Municipal Offices for Town and Village government, a new station for the Village of Waterbury Police Department, a new Municipal Library, and the Waterbury Historical Society.

The town will apply for \$1,000,000 in Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Relief funds.

For additional information contact Steve Lotspeich at (802) 244-1012 or slotspeich@waterburyvt.com.

A summary of the proposed application is available at 43 S. Main St. and may be viewed during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Legislative Bodies for the Town and Village of Waterbury”

At 9:07am, Select Board member John Grenier began a PowerPoint and oral presentation on the Municipal Civic Complex, with contributions from Jim Drummond of Black River Design.

At 9:40 a question and answer period began, moderated by Jeff Kilgore.

Question: Can the Janes house be sold? Was it willed to the Town for library and educational purposes?

Answer (M. Luce): Two lawyers who are experts in the matters of wills and trusts have examined this. Janes leaves his property for use as a library and any assets may be sold for support of a library, as long as proceeds support library.

Question: Is there a HUD representative here?

J. Grenier: No.

Question (by same member of the public): Why did you choose properties at the bottom of the hydraulic head? Why didn't you use the piece of property near the school?

J. Grenier: The town owns the old armory building. Part of the land is in a Bureau of Outdoor Easement and this land is farther outside of the village. Also, the school has a 99-year lease on the attached parking lot. We have examined this lot, but the property doesn't have the space we need for current and future use.

Question: When you talk about future needs, what requires those needs? What projects those needs?

J. Grenier: At the time our current facilities were built, it was adequate. Now it's cramped. We need to provide space to expand if we need to do so. We feel it is shortsighted to buy a building that will only hold what we have currently.

Question: You want to have all four functions together, including the Village police department? What about divorcing the police department from the other functions?

J. Grenier: We have been told by the community that it does make sense to do this. The Police Department is contributing financially from the sale of their building. We also need to keep in mind that years from now we might have town-wide police department.

Question: Can we actually buy property from the state? If so, how much will it cost?

J. Grenier: We believe we can. We've been meeting with BGS for 3 month. They are authorized to sell parts of the Complex. We're working on a price to offer the state. They've sold two properties already. Given what we know, we will get the 2 acres for a reasonable price. We'll continue until price becomes unreasonable.

Comment (from same member of the public): We don't know we can buy this property. It will be five years before we have a complex.

Question: Only so much land is available. This is a good opportunity to gain a large piece of land in Waterbury. Once the town owns this property, could one of the buildings be redeveloped and provide tax revenues to lower tax on residents?

J. Grenier: Potentially yes. We may not need to use entire property. Wasson could be sold or redeveloped. If we don't look into it, we don't know if we want to buy the property or not.

Question (Jane Brown): One option is tearing down both buildings. Starting fresh, the floor will be five feet above flood elevation. What would be under that space? Fill? Parking?

J. Grenier: The plan is to lift the building one foot above the 500 year flood plain. If it is cheaper to add fill and if we already have enough parking, we'll do that. We'll put parking below the building if that makes sense.

Comment: The State of Vermont chooses not to do a river clean-up. Why does leadership want to invest in a mud flat? Waterbury is spending money hand over fist. It's more important to examine the cost of operation; a large part is taxes paid by the community. We need to set a course to fiscal integrity.

Question: I think many of us want to live within our means. The Village must make a decision about the police department. The historical society and library are not necessary. I think we should separate out the library and historical society.

Comment (Everett Coffey): I think you should think of tearing 51 S. Main Street down and building an expanded building for the municipal offices. Chris Palermo has no sentimental connections to this building. There is a two-year lease on the police department space. Insurance is paying \$1,800 to \$2,000 per month for this.

Comment: I am a village resident. I would like information on the cost. We're paying more because of things like the school budget and the phosphorous upgrade. I am keeping an open mind, but am concerned about the price. All of these taxes and water fees are coming at once and moving forward, I'd like to see what it would cost. I would like to keep the town affordable from a tax perspective at end of the day.

Comment: I see a lot of gray haired people (myself included). We need to think of the rest of the town, people who work and who have small kids. The town needs this. People need this. I want to represent for a younger generation and vote for this.

Jeff Kilgore introduced Community Planner Steve Lotspeich and Long-Term Community Recovery Director Barb Farr who are heading the committee that's investigating this. Feel free to ask them questions.

At 10:01, Moderator Kilgore brought the public hearing brought to a close.

A two-minute technical break followed.

Approved on: March 18, 2013