

**Downtown TIF Advisory Committee
153 Farmington Falls Road
January 18, 2017 6:00 p.m.**

Minutes

TIF Committee members present were Richard Davis, Alison Hagerstrom, Ron Gelinias, Gary Edwards, Cindi Ferguson, John Moore, Joshua Bell, Paul Mills, and Cindy Gelinias. Byron Davis, Mike Mansir, and Kevin Madore were unable to attend.

Mrs. Hagerstrom called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

ITEM 1: To Approve the Minutes of the November 9, 2016 Meeting

Mr. Bell made a motion to approve the minutes of November 9, 2016.
Mr. Gelinias seconded the motion.

VOTE: 7 – Affirmative 4 – Absent
Motion carried.

ITEM 2: To Review Preliminary Plans for the Public Restroom

Mr. R. Davis distributed copies of the design drawn up by Randy Butler at Dirigo Engineering, which didn't include a cost estimate, and he estimated the cost to be approximately \$26,000-\$40,000. Mr. Davis said the bathroom exterior walls would be HardiePlank lap siding. The interior would be completely tiled and contain one toilet and sink.

Mr. Bell said at the last meeting the Committee discussed eliminating the utility room in favor of electric radiant heat under the floor tiles in case it was decided the rest room would be open during the winter.

Mr. R. Davis said we hadn't decided, and once we have the costs we can add or delete items. He said propane is inexpensive now and a tank could be installed next to the building.

Mr. Bell asked about adding a timed locking mechanism because he is concerned about the security of the building.

Mr. R. Davis said that may be possible or one of the police officers on duty could lock up. He said we had discussed the security camera project for the downtown and this is one of the suggested areas that could have a camera aimed in that direction.

Mr. Moore said a sign could be posted warning people the bathroom is under surveillance to discourage vandalism.

Mr. R. Davis said we have approximately \$40,000 in the TIF account, and this is a doable project.

Mr. Moore said it will be costly to heat with electricity in the winter. He said the bathroom

plumbing must be set up so the pipes can be drained for the winter. Mr. Moore suggested testing the site by installing a porta potty for one season to determine whether there would be enough usage to justify the location and expense. He said there must be a way to gauge usage such as consumption of toilet paper or paper towels.

Mr. Gelinas suggested the municipal parking lot would be a better location because it is used year-round. He said the Summerfest installed one porta potty in the municipal parking lot, which was vandalized, and two near the gazebo.

Discussion followed regarding possible locations, buildings with public bathrooms, signage, bus tour usage, and what part of the population the bathroom would be serving.

Mr. R. Davis said he agreed the municipal parking lot would be the more likely location. He said the Church Street parking lot was considered because the property is owned by the town, the utilities are there, and the tour buses can park there.

Mr. Mills said he would like to see the restroom either in the municipal parking lot or as close to the gazebo as possible because that is where many events take place.

Mr. Moore said we now have the design and there is time to ask the Selectmen to fund a porta potty for the summer to demonstrate the need. He suggested the Franklin County Courthouse (FCC) parking lot would be another good location.

Mrs. Hagerstrom said the business owners will need to direct people to the porta potty.

ITEM 3: To Review the Drawings and cost Estimate for the West Farmington Parking Project

Mr. R. Davis distributed copies of the design and cost estimate drawn up by Aaron Dyer at Dirigo Engineering. He said the drawing didn't show the flag pole that would be relocated inside the park along the Bridge Street side. Mr. Davis said a total of four decorative lights, two each on Bridge and Oakes Streets, would be installed and an outlet for a ground light for the flag pole. He said this plan provides eight parking spaces, four each on Bridge and Oakes Streets. Mr. Davis said there will be a new sidewalk in front of Mr. Edwards' business connecting the Whistlestop trail to Madore's Market. He said ADA tip downs would be installed at the intersection crosswalks. Mr. Davis said the cost for different options were broken out. He said the granite curbing and concrete slip-form would hold up better than bituminous.

Mr. Bell said there is granite curbing on Oakes Street.

Mr. R. Davis said we would need to notify CMP well in advance because there are three poles that must be relocated. He said this design doesn't require cutting trees and it was approved by MDOT and members of the Village Improvement Society.

Mr. Edwards said constructing additional parking for the downtown is great, and he appreciates adding the sidewalk in front of his business. He said the park is used very

infrequently, and he suggested the size of the park could be reduced to construct a parking lot. Mr. Edwards said more parking would encourage economic development in the downtown area and specifically the buildings on Bridge Street. He said these buildings only have two or three parking spaces in front and that is not enough to support a business or encourage an investor to fix up the buildings.

Mr. R. Davis said he was asked to create more parking in West Farmington, and this is a step forward. He said to turn the park into a parking lot would take a much broader conversation with the Selectmen and residents at Town Meeting, he believed there would be some resistance to the idea.

Mr. Bell said, at the site walk-over, we discussed asking the State for permission to use the right-of-way to install parking inside the park along the hedge/fence.

Mr. Moore said the parking lot would require 20 feet for each space with 20 feet for turning radius. He said the cost estimate for eight spaces is \$7,500 per space.

Mr. Mills said the Department of Conservation owns a very wide right-of-way that connects the Whistlestop to the Sandy River. He said the Town owns very little of the park.

Discussion followed regarding the Public Works department doing a portion of the work or bidding it out to a contractor, the trees and fence in the park, affordable apartments in the buildings, and installing crosswalk flashers.

Mr. Edwards suggested creating an event to attract people to the park.

Mr. Bell asked if we could start this project later in the fall after taxes are committed and if we would use granite or concrete curbing.

Mr. R. Davis said the six inch granite would hold up better and we could perhaps save money by picking it up ourselves by using the North Jay granite quarry. He said the Selectmen would need a recommendation from the Committee.

Mr. Moore asked if we would have enough to put in the porta potty and start on the camera project.

Mr. R. Davis said he would ask Deputy Chief Cote for the camera project cost estimates.

Mr. Bell made a motion to proceed with the West Farmington parking lot using granite curbing.

Mr. Gelinis seconded the motion.

VOTE: 8 – Affirmative 3 – Absent
Motion carried.

ITEM 4: To Discuss the County Parking lot at the Corner of Main and Church Streets as a Possible Project

Mr. Mills said he has conducted an informal census of parking spaces in the lot over the years. He said there are 19 spaces and it is rare that 10 are used on a daily basis. Mr. Mills said three parking spaces are reserved for the County Commissioners who meet once a week. He suggested the Town acquire six or seven of the spaces closest to Main Street for public parking and this would leave a remaining 12 for the County to reserve for their employees. Mr. Mills said the Commissioners can't require employees to park in the Anson Street lot, but they may be receptive to an economic proposal from the Town to acquire the spaces, which could qualify for the Downtown TIF funding. He said the Commissioners would have to present any offers to the County Budget Committee.

Discussion followed regarding ownership history of the County lot and the Anson Street lot, options to acquire parking spaces in the County lot, and constructing the public bathroom in these spaces.

Mr. Mills said this is already a parking lot, and he asked to keep it on the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. R. Davis suggested some of the members schedule an informal conversation with the Commissioners, and inform the Committee of the results at the next meeting.

ITEM 5: To Discuss Other Business

Mrs. Gelinias said she will send out a Doodle Poll for the next meeting in March.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cindy Gelinias, Planning Assistant.