

**Downtown TIF Advisory Committee
153 Farmington Falls Road
September 21, 2016 6:00 p.m.**

Minutes

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

Mrs. Hagerstrom called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

ITEM 1: To Approve the Minutes of the July 13, 2016 Meeting

Mr. R. Davis made a motion to approve the minutes of July 13, 2016.
Mr. Mills seconded the motion.

VOTE: 6 – Affirmative 6 – Absent
Motion carried.

ITEM 2: To Recap the Current Downtown TIF Project

Mr. R. Davis said the Church Street parking lot project has been essentially completed, and the two street lights will be installed in the next two to three weeks.

Mr. Mills said it is very attractive popular place to park and most of the spaces are filled during the day. He said the lot isn't regulated with time restrictions, and he has noticed there are two to three cars parking overnight but he isn't sure if they are still there during the day. Mr. Mills said there are ten two-hour parking spaces along Church Street that are not always being used, and he added, people need more time than the two hour parking limit allows.

Mr. R. Davis said the Selectmen will vote on the proposal to regulate the parking lot at their next meeting. He said the proposal would keep it open for overnight parking with no limitations in the summer months. In the winter months (November 15th to April 15th) the spaces along the Cony Street side would not allow overnight parking, but the other half of the lot would allow overnight parking. The entire lot would be vacated on Sunday afternoons from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. during the winter months to allow for snow removal. Mr. Davis said this should ease the congestion of overnight parking at the Front Street lot.

ITEM 3: To Review the Current Funding level and 2016 TIF Capture Amount

Mr. R. Davis said we are still incurring expenses for the Church Street parking lot for the lights and one engineering bill. He said the Selectmen compromised to keep the fund capitalized for future projects by increasing the appropriation to \$125,000, and it should end up with an approximate balance of \$53,000 for projects this coming year.

ITEM 4: To Determine which Project to Undertake next from the Priority list and how to Proceed

Mr. R. Davis said members showed interest in working with UMF to install security cameras in the downtown, but he wasn't clear on the total cost to the Town, and he thought Ms. Maiuri and Deputy Police Chief Cote would be coming back with some figures. He said it is a doable project that could be phased in over time as more funds become available.

Mr. R. Davis said the members discussed putting additional parking spaces in West Farmington around the VIS Park. He said he met with Mark Hume from MDOT to inspect the site, and Mr. Hume agreed that at least eight parking spaces on two sides of the VIS Park – four on Bridge Street and four on Oakes Street – could be installed by moving sections of the sidewalks in. Mr. Hume said this would be the least complicated and most cost effective design and wouldn't require cutting down trees or reducing "green space". He would need drawings of the proposed plan in order to approve it. Mr. R. Davis suggested we could also improve the intersection and construct another sidewalk on Oakes Street in front of Salon West to connect Madore's Market and the Rail Trail. He recommended hiring an engineer to draw the plans for submission to MDOT.

Mr. Mansir asked if the Public Works crew could do the work.

Mr. R. Davis said Public Works Director, Phil Hutchins, could remove the old sidewalks, do the excavation and add gravel, and then we would hire a paving company to do curbing and paving.

Mr. Gelinas said he thought this would be a good project to get something going for West Farmington so they feel included.

Mrs. Hagerstrom said this would make the VIS Park more accessible.

Mr. Mansir asked if the area businesses would be happy with the project or if they had any other suggestions.

Mr. R. Davis said Mr. Madore had supported making parking improvements in West Farmington when it was discussed at prior meetings.

Mr. Moore asked about adding lighting.

Mr. R. Davis said that would add to the cost of the project, but it would be the right time to at least stub out the lights during the excavation. He suggested adding four lights – two on each street adjacent to the park for the best illumination.

Mr. Moore made a motion to go with a certain amount of money for engineering to get the study going to see what it will entail in West Farmington and designed as

described.

Mr. Mansir seconded the motion.

Mr. Mills asked what would be reasonable expenses for engineering.

Mr. R. Davis said from \$3,000 - \$5,000.

Mr. Moore amended his motion to not exceed \$5,000 for engineering.

Mr. Mansir seconded the amended motion.

[The members didn't vote on the amended motion, but it was the sentiment of the members present to move forward with the engineering study.]

Mr. Moore said we discussed installing security cameras with UMF at the previous meeting, and he thought the members present were in favor of participating in the project.

Mr. R. Davis said the camera project is scheduled for next year, and additional cameras could be phased over time. He said if the West Farmington project costs about \$50,000, then the TIF balance could be back at approximately \$100,000 next year.

Mr. Moore asked about installing public bathrooms at the Church Street parking lot.

Mr. R. Davis said Mr. Butler from Dirigo Engineering is working on a proposal.

Mr. Mansir asked if installation and maintenance of the bathrooms would be funded through the Downtown TIF.

Mr. R. Davis said he understood the TIF was set up for "bricks and mortar" projects. He said the Selectmen would have to discuss responsibility for maintenance and utility costs, and he will review the wording in the TIF to see if this would qualify. Mr. R. Davis said he estimated the maintenance and utility costs to be approximately \$2,000 per year, and the bathrooms may only be open part of the year because of cold weather freezing the pipes and fixtures.

Mrs. Hagerstrom said she would like to do the Front Street project, but it would cost a lot of money.

Mr. R. Davis said the Town will re-apply for the DEP grant to replace the box culvert on Front Street.

Mrs. Hagerstrom suggested the Front Street and culvert projects may be eligible for the Northern Border Regional Commission grant.

ITEM 5: To Discuss Other Business

Mrs. Hagerstrom said she spoke with Mr. B. Davis about his project for the Tri-County building, and he told her there was no new news.

Mr. Moore asked about Renys Way.

Mr. R. Davis said he was trying to think of a way to completely enclose the alley if it became a public way. He said Reny's contractor plows the alley out to Broadway and the Town picks up the snow.

Discussion followed regarding Reny's Way and the members decided to discuss it in the spring of 2017.

Mr. Moore suggested securing the Franklin County Courthouse parking lot for public parking and deed it to the Town.

Mr. Mills said there are 19 parking spaces reserved for County officials and employees, and only 10-12 spaces are being used during the day.

Discussion followed regarding different options to acquire the parking lot.

Mr. Moore suggested contacting Bill Marceau about selling some or all of the 16 parking spaces that he owns directly adjacent to the Municipal parking lot.

Mr. R. Davis said the municipal lot is three-hour parking and it could be changed to four-hour. He said he had spoken with the prior owners, Jim and Rob Witt, several times about selling their portion of the parking lot to the Town, but they didn't want to negotiate.

Discussion followed regarding building a parking garage in the municipal lot, costs for parking spaces, paying for parking, parking hours, and fines.

Mr. R. Davis said he would talk with Mr. Marceau about the parking spaces.

Mr. Mills said the Church Street parking lot cost an average of approximately \$10,000 per space.

Mrs. Gelinis said she will send out a Doodle Poll for the next meeting in November.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cindy Gelinis, Planning Assistant.