

Downtown TIF Advisory Committee
153 Farmington Falls Road
January 7, 2015 4:30 p.m.
Minutes

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

ITEM 1: To Approve the Minutes of the November 10, 2014 Meeting

Mr. Gelinas made a motion to accept the minutes as written.
Mrs. Hagerstrom seconded the motion.

VOTE: 6 – Affirmative 8 – Absent
Motion carried.

ITEM 2: To Review the RFP for Engineering Services for the Proposed Downtown TIF Projects

Mr. Davis said he shared the RFP with the Selectmen and they saw no issues with the proposal. He asked for a recommendation from the Committee to give it to the Selectmen to put it out to bid. Mr. Davis said we could publish a notice in the paper and/or we could send it to a short list of engineering firms.

Mr. Mansir asked about additional grant funds.

Mr. Davis said, currently the Town is no longer eligible for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, and their budget has been dramatically reduced over the years. He said the only way to become eligible would be to conduct an income survey which is expensive and time consuming, and it would only be good for five years. Mr. Davis said Wilton is applying for CDBG funds under Slum and Blight to get around the new regulations, but he didn't think that Farmington would qualify for this designation.

Mr. Hufnagel asked what area the survey would pull from and how many people would we have to survey.

Mrs. Gelinas said she would get that information.

Discussion followed regarding location of additional parking, installing a traffic light, and traffic issues in the West Farmington village area.

Mr. Davis said he spoke with DOT and they won't put a traffic light at the intersection of West Farmington, but they may put in a solar powered flashing light like the one at High Street and Maple Avenue. He said an engineer may make further recommendations. Mr. Davis said he would check the ownership of the VIS Park because installing additional parking would require

taking some area from the park and reducing its size.

Discussion followed regarding parking areas such as the Whistle Stop Rail Trail/C. N. Brown. Also discussed were the Granary, bonding and debt service, and direction as to where the TIF money should be spent.

Mr. Moore made the motion to approve the RFP with some slight modifications and recommend to the Selectmen to go out to bid for engineering design costs.

Mr. Gelinas seconded the motion.

VOTE: 7 – Affirmative 7 – Absent

Motion carried.

ITEM 3: To Review the Proposal to Update the Cost Estimates for the Sandy River Recreational Bridge

Mr. Hufnagel suggested the word “recreational” be changed to “multiuse”.

Mr. Davis said the easement across the “Creamery” property doesn’t allow ATV’s. He said DOT hired an engineer to do a preliminary design for the bridge, and the engineer would charge to update the cost estimates for construction, which at that time (2007) were approximately \$1.6 – \$2.1 million.

Discussion of the location of the bridge included attaching an alternative structure to the Center Bridge, construction, and costs.

Mr. Davis said he would contact DOT regarding attaching a multiuse passageway to the Center Bridge.

Mr. Gelinas made the motion not to proceed with updating the cost estimates for the bridge.

Mr. Moore seconded the motion

VOTE: 7 – Affirmative 7 – Absent

Motion carried.

ITEM 4: To Discuss the Possible use of TIF funds to Install Banners on the Ornamental Streetlight Posts in the Downtown

Mr. Davis said UMF installed brackets and banners on the downtown light poles celebrating its 150th year anniversary, and after the banners were removed, they left the brackets up for the town to use. He said there has been discussion about installing “Welcome to Farmington” banners. Mr. Davis said Mrs. Hagerstrom spoke with Jennifer Eriksen at UMF, who would charge \$400 to design the banners, and this could be paid for with the TIF funds. He said the cost of the banners and additional brackets would be approximately \$4,000. Mr. Davis said the Town would be responsible for putting up and taking down the banners. He said the town has about 20 light poles, and there has been discussion regarding purchasing poles and lights on Front Street.

Mr. Moore said he put brackets upon CMP poles for the Pumpkin Festival.

Discussion of the banners followed regarding purpose, promoting events and soft funding, location, design, and fabric material.

Mr. Davis said the Town would have to have an agreement to attach brackets to CMP and Fairpoint poles. He said the Town had an agreement in place allowing the Emblem Club to put up flags, and at that time, the Town had immunity under the insurance coverage, but now they are requiring a higher insurance coverage and the premium would cost an additional \$4,000.

Mr. Hufnagel said he would like to see the banners installed in all sections of the town that are included in the Downtown TIF.

Mr. Davis said the existing attachments are allowed under the town's current agreement, but by adding new attachments to the poles, they may require an increase to the town's insurance. He said, in the future, we could attach the banners to any additional ornamental lighting that is installed on Front Street and West Farmington.

Mr. Moore said UMF got permission to attach banners to some of the downtown buildings.

Discussion followed regarding decorating center bridge, installing electric outlets and lights in West Farmington.

Mr. Mansir made a motion to requisition \$400 to pay Jennifer Eriksen to design the banners.

Mr. Gelinas seconded the motion.

Mrs. Hagerstrom said she will confirm the cost with Ms. Eriksen.

Mr. Moore said his assistant designed the banners for him.

Mrs. Hagerstrom asked for volunteers to help with the design and Mr. Moore agreed.

Mr. Davis suggested the initial design could be emailed to the members.

Discussion followed regarding the initial design.

VOTE: 7 – Affirmative 7 – Absent
Motion carried.

ITEM 5: To Discuss Possible Other uses for TIF funds

Mr. Mansir suggested the Town purchase the Granary.

Mr. Davis said he would bring it before the Selectmen for discussion if that is the recommendation of the Committee. He said there may be a potential buyer for the Granary and he would not want to interfere with the sale at this point.

Mrs. Hagerstrom said it isn't located in the historic district so a tax credit couldn't be used.

Discussion followed regarding parking, installing WiFi, security cameras, and restrooms in the downtown.

ITEM 6: To Discuss Other Business

Mr. Hufnagel asked for a member of the committee to volunteer for Vice Chairman.

Mrs. Hagerstrom volunteered for Vice Chairman.

Mrs. Gelinas will be Secretary

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, 2015 at 4:30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cindy Gelinas.