

A workshop of the Board of Selectman was held on Tuesday, August 6, 2013 beginning at 7:00p.m. in room 112 at the Town Hall. Mr. Timson and Mr. Berry, were not able to attend. The following members were present:

Mark Gallivan, Chairman
Nancy Mackenzie
Clifton Snuffer

Michael Boynton, Town Administrator

Mr. Gallivan called the meeting to order 7:16, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Discussion Items

Discussion of Maguire Report recommendation for Washington Street Land Review of site alternatives and possible technical review.

Mr. Boynton informed the Board of activities that have occurred since the presentation of the final Maguire report. On July 8, 2013 Mr. Boynton and the Chair attended a meeting of the Sewer & Water Commission to discuss Washington Street for a Police Station & Senior Center. The study stated that the Town could locate both buildings on the site, as well as a temporary fire facility that would become a long term solution for vehicle maintenance. However, concerns were raised that the site might not work for those uses because it is close to Washington Well #2, and is just outside a DEP Zone 1, and sits in the Town Area 1. A Zone 1 is non-buildable per the State. At the meeting of July 8 it was suggested that the Board of Selectmen and Sewer & Water Commission meet in a workshop to discuss options.

Mr. Boynton presented a map of the area on Washington Street, and also said that a long-term solution to better control surface water runoff there is a must regardless of what new buildings are built there.

Mr. Boynton then presented the options that the Town has regarding property on South Street, the Superfund Site. The Maguire report listed this location as a possibility as well. He pointed out that the future of the Superfund site has had a great deal of scrutiny since early June, including a meeting held by Congressman Lynch with Clark Avenue and South Street neighbors, the EPA, the DEP, Responsible Parties, and the Town on July 3. Town officials have also had discussions with the EPA and DEP to present the concept to them. There is ongoing forward progress to possibly partner with the parties to solve a 30 year old problem there.

Mr. Boynton said that considerable staff time, resources and effort, as well as effort by the EDIC including funding is going towards a long term solution for South Street. He recommended to the Board to suspend any immediate study or funding further exploring Washington Street to instead focus resources on a South Street solution. He said that Town is encouraged with what the EPA and DPE are saying at this time.

Mrs. Mackenzie said that the site needs to be looked at and see if multiple buildings can be built on there. When the buildings come done then there are going to be some soil testing etc. that needs to be done and would have to be addressed before any constructions of buildings.

Mr. Gallivan stated that the EPA was very open to listening and discussing what we can do with this site and how flexible it could work and how it could help. Mr. Gallivan was surprised with the positive tone and discussion.

Mr. Snuffer commented that Congressman Lynch was in the room along with the EPA and both helped move this conversation forward. The key is that Congressman Lynch was here in Walpole on July 3 and saw the building and talked about it. It gave the opportunity of a decades-old problem and a vision going forward for a win situation.

Mrs. Mackenzie said that as far as a senior center, she always preferred a location closer to Downtown.

Commissioner Roger Turner said that South Street would be a beautiful place for a senior center. Union Pond could be cleaned up and it is a great thing and the tie in to the Town Forest would be a wonderful thing.

Mr. Boynton advised that the long term solution that the study presented for DPW included the temporary quarters for the fire department which would then be a new vehicle maintenance garage. The location proposed in the study will likely need to be moved elsewhere on the DPW or adjacent parcel. Last fall town meeting approved the paving of the garage parking lot, but he has directed the DPW to delay that project to see what the final plan here will be. He does not want to pave it and end up digging up new pavement later.

Mr. Gallivan commented that regardless of the outcome of South Street, we do need to do some clean up at the DPW.

Commissioner Fettig and Chairman Spillane said that South Street seems ideal for the town facilities and would be very much in favor for this site.

Ms. Mackenzie asked if the Water and Sewer board would help out by protecting the wells on Washington Street by using the enterprise fund to study a new drainage plan at the DPW yard to protect the well field. She asked if Water and Sewer would fund this. Chairman Spillane remarked that at this time he wants to discuss it with his entire Board.

Police Chief Stillman said that he has liked South Street for a long time, and it has a lot of potential and would be great for the town.

Mr. Boynton cautioned that we currently do not own South Street. It private property owners and we as a town would not take possession until all legal matters were taken care of so that we do not put the town in a risky position.

Resident Joe Moraski asked if this will be an article in the Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Boynton said that no.

Courtney Riley, Council on Aging Director thanked the boards for coming together and coming up with a positive solution.

MOTION moved by Mrs. Mackenzie to pursue as a Board the South Street site as possible municipal facilities and have EDIC continue to look into the site. Seconded by Mr. Snuffer. VOTED 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstain.

MOTION moved by Ms. Mackenzie to adjourn at 8:10p.m., seconded by Mr. Snuffer. VOTED 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstain.