

~AD HOC REPORT~
13 Acres - Old Ridgebury Road
Wednesday, August 13, 2014

Chairman Philip D. Curran called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m in the Caucus Room. Present were Committee Members John Priola and Benjamin Chianese. Ex Officio Members: Joe Cavo, and Joseph Scozzafava. Also present were Mayor Mark D. Boughton, Robert Yamin, Corporation Counsel, David St. Hilaire, Director of Finance, Ben Benoit representing PCW and Maura Juan; Principle Architect.

Chairman Curran introduced everyone present and briefly explained the purpose of the meeting. The Ad Hoc Committee was formed to discuss the letter presented at the last City Council meeting requesting a potential buyer for the 13 acres of land that the City owns on Ridgebury Road.

Mayor Boughton reviewed the history of the property noting it was a donation from the WCI Group, who subsequently went into bankruptcy and sold their assets to the Toll Brothers. The property was originally slated for a baseball stadium, which went forward to the public as a referendum, but was opposed 45/55. There was subsequently a prospective buyer, but that sale was not executed. Then Matrix Corporate Development Center provided earnest monies of approximately \$35,000 but later gave notice that they were no longer interested in the transaction; the earnest money was retained however, as the property had been tied up for years. An RFP was put out but responses were heavy on contingencies and heavy on development - strip malls, grocery stores, etc. The Buck family, who has been generous to the City and the hospital including funding a position at the Senior Center, expressed interest in purchasing land in the City for a very low intensive use - a warehouse of approximately 18,000-20,000 square feet to store family items. They are willing to make it a cash transaction. A price of \$3.2 million has been discussed. What the City would do with those funds has also been discussed, with the possibility of creating a revolving Capital Improvement Fund for infrastructure such as bridges, etc.

The client's representative displayed diagrams of the site noting minimal traffic, and similar style storage buildings which would not be open to the public and very low-key. Ms. Juan responded to Committee Member Chianese's inquiry by stating the goal is to have the building not be visible from the road with incidental parking. Mr. Chianese asked whether there were plans for the open space around the building, and if none, would that be considered a donation to the City. The client's representative responded that the plan is to leave the open space open; however, privacy is desired and they would not want hikers, etc. walking through the property.

Chairman Curran stated his only concern is that there are no parks or ball fields in that area, and that area is being built up. Corporate Counsel Robert Yamin stated several blocks away is a 200 acre open space area where that could be addressed. Mayor Boughton noted another artificial field could be placed behind Mill Ridge Primary or a portion of these monies could be used to make the 200 acres Attorney Yamin mentioned more accessible.

Councilman Cavo expressed support for the sale and to use the proceeds to enhance other recreational areas.

Corporate Counsel Robert Yamin reminded the Committee that the Council has already approved the sale of this property in the past.

Councilman John Priola inquired whether the Farrington property is connected to the trails at Richter; the Mayor's response was that it is not as of now but hopes to purchase the connecting parcel someday. Mr. Priola also inquired how the purchase price was arrived at; Corporation Counsel Robert Yamin noted that was the applicant's offer and others noted that was based on previous offers and the RFP.

The client's representative noted they would request Land Use approvals before closing.

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Councilman Chianese noted this went from a cultural village, to housing, to this current proposal and should be presented to the public as follows: for this 13 acres we will get other recreational benefits. The client's representative responded to Mr. Chianese's inquiry, stating that they have no other plans for the property, but would have to ask a lawyer the question of use restrictions. Use was discussed with the note that it will be used for vehicle storage.

When the question of expiration date was brought up, Councilman Chianese noted the next step is to go before Council, Mayor Boughton commented that it would be a non-contingency sale and it was noted a Public Hearing would not be needed. There were comments from the clients representative and Corporate Counsel regarding the sale.

A motion was made by Councilman Priola and seconded by Councilman Chianese, to recommend to the Council as a whole to accept the letter of intent to purchase one reserve road by PCW Management Center LLC.

There was discussion among the committee about the motion.

Councilman Chianese made a friendly amendment to recommend to the Council as a whole that we set up a recreational fund for the \$3.2 million.

The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Curran and seconded by Councilman Priola that the Committee be adjourned. The motion passed unanimously at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip D. Curran, Chairman

John Priola

Benjamin Chianese