

Board of Selectmen – December 7, 2009

Present: Searle, Babson, Mills, Dugan, Tsagaris

Also present: Larsen, Ketchen, Robinson (left the meeting at 9:00 p.m.)

Call to order: Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm.

Warrant: Approved #2009-20 (\$2,065,388.79) and #2009-21 (\$5,505,220.63)

Citizen Speak: None.

Minutes: None

Business:

At 6:00 p.m., the Board was polled all “yes” to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy regarding the purchase of real property and possible litigation.

The Board reconvened in open session at 7:00 pm.

A. Chair’s Announcements

- Ms. Searle congratulated State Representative Alice H. Peisch for having recently been honored by the Wellesley chapter of the Boy Scouts of America.
- Ms. Searle encouraged residents to participate in the primary on Tuesday, December 8, 2009 for the open seat to replace the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy.
- Ms. Searle announced that Elana Zak was leaving the Wellesley Townsman to accept another career opportunity.

B. Executive Directors Update:

- Mr. Larsen described the MassHighway accelerated bridge plan for the Cedar Street bridge project. Currently, the projects target date for completion is the weekend of July 4, 2011.
- Mr. Larsen distributed a memo from Richard Joyce, Director of the Municipal Light Plant, regarding plans for retro-fitting street lights in the Town.

C. Second Hand Articles Dealers License:

- Mr. Jeff Field came before the Board to address his company’s (Leonard’s Antiques) application for a Second Hand Articles Dealers License at its new location (165 Linden Street). Mr. Field clarified that the new Linden Street store would be a retail store and that all distribution in the area would remain at Leonard’s Seekonk location.
- The Board voted to approve the application for a Second Hand Articles Dealer license to Leonards Antiques Inc., doing business as Leonards New England, at 165 Linden Street under the provisions of Section 49.21 of the Town Bylaws; and further that said license is to expire on April 30, 2010.

D. National Development – 27 Washington Street Update:

- Jack O’Neil, Mark Paris and Bob Davis representing National Development, came forward to make a presentation on the proposed housing development project 27 Washington Street.
- The plan calls for an elderly affordable housing development, consisting of 52 one-bedroom, assisted living units and 86 two-bedroom, independent units.
- Mr. Larsen indicated that he had communicated with the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation. He does not anticipate that WHDC will have any problems with the proposed 27 Washington Street project.

E. 2010 Annual Town Meeting:

- Mr. Larsen distributed a schedule from Deputy Director Terrance Connolly listing key dates leading up to the 2010 Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Larsen indicated that Town Meeting was scheduled to begin relatively late (April 5, 2010) given that traditional start date, which is the last Monday in March, conflicts with the Passover holiday.
- The Board voted to call the 2010 Annual Town Meeting and set the following dates:
  - Start of Annual Town Meeting - Monday, April 5, 2010, 7:30 PM at the Wellesley Middle School;
  - Open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant - Tuesday, December 8, 2009;
  - Close the ATM warrant - Friday, January 8, 2010, 5:00 PM.

F. Old Business/New Business:

*Wellesley High School* – No update.

*27 Washington Street* – Board had heard a presentation from National Development earlier in the evening.

*Senior Center* – Ms. Tsagaris reported that the TDRT had completed its work on the project.

*DCR Bridge* – The proposal has received a permit from the Wetlands Committee and the state is awaiting similar approval from the City of Newton.

*Advisory Committee Update* – No update.

Ms. Babson and Ms. Searle each made announcements encouraging public participation in the Municipal Light Plant’s Renewable Energy and Grounded Power Pilot programs.

G. Tax Classification Hearing:

- Ms. Babson, acting in her capacity as the Board's liaison with the Assessor's, opened the Tax Classification Hearing at 8:00 pm.
- Members of the Board of Assessors came forward (Deborah Carpenter, Stephen Mahoney and David Livingston) as did Chief Assessor, Donna McCabe.
- The Assessors made a presentation on the various statistics on current and historic valuations and tax rates. Comparisons with peer communities were also discussed.
- The Assessors briefed the Selectmen on the calculation of both a single tax rate and various split rate options in order to raise sufficient revenue to support Town Meeting appropriations. Ms. McCabe also discussed the various programs that the Town has to help seniors, the disabled and other individuals off-set the cost of their property taxes.
- The Selectmen will continue the public hearing at its meeting on December 14, 2009 at which time the Board will vote on whether to keep a single rate, or to shift a portion of the tax burden to other property classifications. The single tax rate for FY2010 would be \$10.48 per \$1,000 of assessed value unless the Selectmen choose a split rate.

At 8:33 p.m., the Board was polled all "yes" to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining strategy.

The Board reconvened in open session at 9:00 pm.

H. CVS PSI Traffic Study:

- Appearing before the Board were Messrs. Brian Levey, representing CVS Pharmacy; A.J. Barbato, representing Gershman Brown Crowley, Inc.; Patrick Dunford of VHB, Inc.; Kien Ho of BETA Group; and Police Chief Terrance Cunningham.
- Mr. Dunford gave a presentation in response to a number of comments registered by Mr. Ho in a previous letter. Mr. Ho responded to the points raised by Mr. Dunford, citing a number of concerns with site design, as it relates to off-site traffic impact.
- Mr. Ho pointed-out cut-through issues in surrounding streets. He identified a need for traffic calming measures and continued monitoring. He further commented on the proponents' sidewalk evaluation.
- Mr. Larsen noted that there would be a new speed-count conducted on Beechwood Road as well as an evaluation of the use of the gate near Saint James Roman Catholic Church.
- Mr. Larsen made a presentation on several draft conditions.
- Mr. Mills expressed concerns about traffic and encouraged discussion around various ways to restrict cut-through traffic in the neighborhood north of Route 9.

- Ms. Searle invited public comment on the presentation and the project, generally. The following residents came forward to address the Board:
  - Hamid Nakhaee of 20 Overbrook Drive stated that part of the anticipated cut-through traffic problems are due to the building being too big and sitting too close to Route 9.
  - Marjorie Fallon of 14 Beechwood Road questioned the traffic analysis' assumptions regarding, and expressed concern about, the number of customers coming to CVS from the Town of Weston given the limited access to a pharmacies in that community.
  - Shari Schneider of 20 Beechwood Road expressed concern about the lack of communication to/from the public about the Board's process concerning this project. She also questioned the validity of various elements of the traffic analysis. She also raised questions about the draft conditions proposed by Mr. Larsen.
  - Dean Behrend owner of 978 Worcester Street expressed concern about the rain garden feature near his property line and Worcester Street as well as sidewalk infrastructure along Worcester Street, generally.
  - Ms. Schneider came forward a second time to question the assumptions about the volume of traffic originating from Weston.
- The Board decided to deliberate on this issue at its meeting on December 14, 2009 and, perhaps, vote on a recommendation to the Planning Board.

The meeting adjourned at 10:49 pm.