

Town of Cape Elizabeth Town Center Plan Committee Minutes

January 6, 2014

4:00 p.m., Town Hall

Present: Stephanie Carver (Chairperson), Peter Curry (Planning Board), Stephen Parkhurst, Lee Ruddy, David Sherman (Town Council), Jamie Wagner (Town Council)

Staff: Maureen O'Meara

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4 p.m.

The minutes of the November meeting submitted by Mr. Wagner were reviewed and unanimously approved.

The Chair opened the meeting for public comment. There being no members of the public present, the public comment period was closed.

The Committee members discussed their approaches in each member providing 5 bullet points of takeaways from the public opinion survey compiled and circulated previously by Ms. O'Meara. Some members tried to reflect what they thought were prevailing opinions expressed, while others selected those opinions which they found to be most valuable. The submissions of the members were considered.

The Committee discussed the proposed development of the parcel abutting Town Hall on the south, as proposed at a Planning Board workshop, and the impact of a small wetland area on that proposal. The developer's representative had expressed a willingness to work with the town on the wetland issue, and some members thought that the frontage areas of the parcel might be suitable to public green space with the wetland moved to that area. The Committee requested Ms. O'Meara to invite the developer's representative to the February meeting of the Committee to discuss the matter. The Committee also noted for future consideration proposing amending the wetland regulations in the Town Center district to facilitate creating public facilities.

The Committee then discussed the potential for using so-called TIF financing arrangements, whereby a specified increment of real estate taxes would be dedicated to improvements, to fund Town Center improvements. The Committee determined that further information on that financing technique would be required. Ms. O'Meara agreed to provide further information, and will invite a town planner of a town presently using the technique to attend a future meeting to advise the Committee on how the technique has worked for that town.

The Committee discussed the economics of development in the Town Center, and the design elements required in the Town Center. Consideration was given to various items and their relative expense, including granite curbs, sidewalks and landscaping. It was considered unlikely that there would be a significant easing of requirements, but that TIF or similar financing incentives might be appropriate to incentivize developers of appropriate projects. This subject will receive further study.

The Committee then discussed pros and cons of having multi-family residential space above commercial space in the Town Center.

The Committee determined that it would be appropriate to start outlining the basic provisions of the Committee's report to the Town Council, and requested Ms. O'Meara to prepare a consolidated summary of the Committee's tentative conclusions on the status of the recommendations in the 1993 Town Center Plan.

The Chair opened the meeting for public comment. There being no members of the public present, the public comment period was closed.

Upon motion made and seconded, it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:00 p.m.