

Brookline Building Use Workgroup Public Meeting
Saturday September 12 2006
Location: 624 Grassy Brook Rd, School House

PRESENT IN PERSON (BBUW committee)

Stan Noga
Andrea Seaton
Lyle Brooks
Jessica Guerrero

PRESENT VIA ZOOM

None

PRESENT IN PERSON (members of the public)

Julie Roach
Leeanne Parker
Marjorie Ray
Mike Seaton
Jeff Thayer
Peter Meyer
Pat Noga
Dara Carlton
Kathy Wolden
Gary Lavorgna
Penny Kalk
Buffy Smith
Marie Tattersall
Ryan Coyne
Danny Lazzarini
Andrew Seidman
Marnie Nicholson
David Parker
Mike DeSocio
Emily Beer
Margaret Carusona
Bruce Mello

1. Meeting started at 10:20am by Jess Guerrero, standing in for chair.
2. Approve minutes from September 1st: Lyle makes the motion, Stan seconds motion.
Motion passes.

3. Changes to the agenda: none
4. Andrea Seaton makes the motion to turn the meeting over to David Parker, Jess Guerrero seconds the motion, the motion passes.
5. Jess Guerrero presented the BBUW PowerPoint slideshow (see attached)

OPTION 1: KEEP STATUS QUO

- a. Mike DeSocio clarifies that in option #1 of the PowerPoint, if the town were to choose to keep the status quo, it does not mean forever, we can change our mind at any time.

OPTION 2: RELOCATE TOWN OFFICE TO SCHOOL, SELL TOWN OFFICE

- b. Jeff Thayer has a question about the septic system of the town office, Stan Noga reports that he had tried to look this information up but that the A&R records didn't go back far enough.
- c. Marie Tattersall asked for someone to speak about the easement attached to the town office. Jess Guerrero answers that the easement allows the Dole family who own land behind the town office to access their land via a 25 ft wide path alongside the town office driveway. It is uncertain if the easement makes the town office less marketable.
- d. Mike DeSocio comments that even though the BBUW has done a lot of work, there are still things that we cannot know unless we decide to actually do one of these options and go farther into a deep dive which would involve hiring lawyers.
- e. There is further discussion among the group bringing up different types of easements, utility easements, adding restrictive covenants in the deed to town office, and properties with easements that have and have not had a lower sale price due to the easement.
- f. Andrew Seidman asks if the town office is moved into the school house and decides to rent out the other two rooms, would there be restriction on who the rooms would be rented out to. Jess Guerrero and Mike DeSocio both answer that the select board would probably be involved in the decision and that they would seek out tenants that are favorable to the town.
- g. Bruce Mello asks the group what building they would rather mothball between the school house and the town office, and answers that the town office is a much easier building to mothball.

OPTION 3: RENT SCHOOL BUILDING. KEEP TOWN OFFICE AS IS

- h. Jeff Thayers asks if the school building has been advertised for rent to see if there is any interest. Jess answers that no, the school building has not been advertised because the select board wants all decisions regarding town owned buildings to be a decision made by the voters first and then enacted by the select board. Mike DeSocio clarifies that the BBUW has been talking with realtors to get informal feedback on both of the buildings. Andrea Seaton gave a recap of

speaking with Bob Doyle, his opinion was that the school building was not marketable and that the town office would be very marketable as a primary home and gave an estimate of around \$170,000. Stan Noga recapped speaking with Chris Lewis who estimated the value of the school building to be around \$100,000 to \$200,000 but she did not provide a value estimate for the town office. Emily Beer talked about meeting with Peggy Winchester Acorn Realty specifically about renting the school house, Peggy said that there are many unoccupied rentals in the area but if the school house was made into section 8 housing there could be more interest. Peggy's view of renting the school house as a commercial property was that there could be some interest but it isn't guaranteed, a daycare business would make sense since it's already set up for that, but essentially that you never really know until you try.

- i. Kathy Wolden asked if the assessments we got from the realtors was an official market appraisal or informal and also asked what our next steps are in terms of the town being able to vote on what they'd like to see done. Stan Noga responded that the assessments we got were all informal, it will cost the town to get an appraisal done. Mike DeSocio clarifies that for our next step we need the town to vote on which option the majority of the town wants to see happen but we aren't yet sure exactly how that will happen, though it will probably be some kind of paper vote.
- j. Marnie Nicholson asked if someone has looked at the impact that each of these options would have on our taxes. Mike DeSocio answers that yes, it is part of the financial impact report he has drawn and which is the second part of today's meeting.
- k. Gary Lavorgna points out that if the school house is rented then the town will more than likely have to hire a property manager which will cost money. Mike DeSocio answers that this information has already been factored into his financial model.
- l. Bruce Mello spoke of talking with several rentals, 2 from local daycare businesses, and one from Windham Central Supervisory Committee, these parties seemed to be interested in renting the whole school house. None of these entities expressed actual interest in renting the building though because the internet wasn't good enough. Bruce also advocated for using the money the town had ear-marked for BBUW to get a market appraisal done for each building.
- m. Stan Noga spoke of being seated next to a real estate broker at a WSWM meeting recently and spoke of rates for commercial leases, she said that if you're wanting to give your tenant a deal you can charge \$8 or \$9 per square foot, if you're going with the market rate it would be \$12 to \$14 per square foot. Stan continued that the ground floor of the school house is 4,100 square feet and that based on the average rent Suzie's Little Peanuts was paying, they were being charged \$5.85 per square foot and that was still seemingly too expensive.
- n. Mike DeSocio reinforced that renting the school house is an option that is incremental and reversible.

OPTION 4: SELL SCHOOL BUILDING

- o. Bruce Mello vocalized his concern that once someone buys the school house they can do whatever they want to do because there is no zoning in Brookline and emphasized that once we sell the building, it's gone for good.
- p. Dara Carlton spoke of working in an assessor's office for ten years and processed thousands of property transfers and her vast experience leads her to believe that creating housing out of the school house is the best option for the town of Brookline as a whole.

MIKE DESOCIO PRESENTED FINANCIAL IMPACT MODEL

- a. Mike DeSocio presented working draft numbers that indicate the relative cost variance between the various options indicating that some of the estimates will continue to be refined in the coming weeks.

- 6. Meeting adjourned by David Parker 12:01pm