

**Capital Expenditure Planning Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 10, 2023
5:22PM-5:48PM**

RECEIVED

By Town Clerk's Office, Town of Westborough at 12:53 pm, Dec 13, 2023

Members Present: Lisa Blazejewski, Andrew Bradley, Steven Doret, Peter Bouchard, Ian Johnson, Lisa Clark

Members Absent: Lea Maclean

Also present: Kimberly Foster-Assistant Town Manager; Kristi Williams- Town Manager; Jakub Moskal, - School Committee Member

Chair Ian Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:22PM and acknowledged it was being held remotely via Zoom. Lisa Blazejewski read the Governor's Orders allowing remote meetings into the record as printed on the posted agenda. The posting included a Zoom meeting link to allow members of the public access to join and view the meeting in real time.

The Committee met to consider Articles 3 and 4 on the October 16, 2023 Special Town Meeting Warrant related to the purchase of 1500 Union Street.

Ms. Williams noted that she was aware the Committee had been provided with link to the various presentation materials and recording and FAQ document posted on the Town's website in advance of the meeting and therefore she would provide an overview of the project and then take any questions members may have. If approved by Town Meeting, Article 3 authorizes the Select Board to purchase the property and to borrow \$8.8M for its purchase. Article 4 seeks to fund Community Center operating costs upon acquisition, additional due diligence prior to closing (e.g., engineering assessments) and a public engagement process to seek input on the design and use of the first floor. The 2018 Strategic Plan identified an intergenerational Community Center with activities for all ages as a top priority. The 2021 Master Plan also identified Open Space and Recreation, including a Community Center, as a top goal. The Senior Needs Assessment Report released in May 2023 identified the location of the current Senior Center, and the need for more physical activity offerings, as concerns of seniors in the community.

The purchase price negotiated by the Select Board is \$8.8M for the approximately 64,000 square foot two-story building. The plan use of the building is a Community Center that would include relocating the Recreation Department to the second floor and relocating the Senior to the first floor. Article 3 is for the purchase price of \$8.8M which would pay for the acquisition. Article 4 is a free cash Article of just under \$200,000, and would fund the public engagement, utilities and due diligence costs, including all the inspections of the roof, pool, systems, structure, environmental and other assessments which all would need to be satisfactory to the Select Board in order to move forward. Ms. Williams noted the FY25 budget items/carrying cost of \$521,890 which includes maintenance, utilities, and additional personnel costs.

The proposed timeline was discussed, including the potential need for a future Town Meeting Article to fund the building fit up, although there are currently funding sources available for this

purpose. Ultimately the fit up cost will be determined by a design that will be informed by the community engagement process.

Mr. Doret spoke in favor of supporting the Article based on the identified need for a facility of this type and also identified the benefits of purchasing an existing building in the downtown.

Mr. Bradley shared that the Advisory Finance Committee's vote was a split vote (4-4). When asked what reasons were offered by members voting against recommendation of the project, Mr. Bradley indicated detractors expressed concern about the Town making such a large purchase without concrete plans as to how it will go forward.

Mr. Doret moved to support Article 3; Mr. Bouchard seconded; A roll call vote was taken: Clark –yes; Doret- yes; Bradley –yes; Blazejewski-yes, Bouchard-yes; Johnson-yes. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Mr. Doret moved to support Article 4; Ms. Blazejewski seconded; A roll call vote was taken: Clark –yes; Doret- yes; Bradley –yes; Blazejewski-yes, Bouchard-yes; Johnson-yes. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Adjournment

Ms. Blazejewski moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:48PM. Mr. Bradley seconded. A Roll Call Vote was taken: Bradley-yes; Blazejewski-yes; Clark-yes; Doret-yes; Bouchard-yes; Johnson-yes; The motion passed (6-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Foster

Documents Used During the Meeting:

1. Meeting Agenda & Meeting Packet

APPROVED: 12/11/2023