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TOWN OF CHELMSFORD

PATRICIA E. DZURIS

TOWN CLERK

**TOWN OF CHELMSFORD  
VINAL SQUARE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN  
COMMITTEE**

Approved 2/9/2021

**MEETING MINUTES**

**January 12, 2021**

**7:00 P.M. CALL TO ORDER VIA ZOOM**

**Members Present:** William Gilet, Jr., Mike Walsh, Janet Murphy, Laura Lee, Brian Creamer, Dan Rokas

**Others Present:** Evan Belansky, Community Development Director  
Paul Cohen, Town Manager  
Lisa Marrone, Economic Development Director  
Steve Callaghan, Parks & Playgrounds Coordinator  
Kenneth Lefebvre, Select Board

Mr. Gilet called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Planters for Vinal Square**

An update on the tree planters for the Square was provided as follows: committee would like 8 or 10 planters which DPW will move one or two times per year; locations must be in compliance with ADA regulations, there is a preference for two trees planted in the ground; a plan must be devised as to a maintenance plan for watering, by whom and when.

There is \$10,000 available to purchase the planters. Mr. Belansky stated that DPW will pick up the cost of two trees for the municipal parking plot. Funding is in place for this, per Mr. Belansky. Ms. Lee stated her preference for permanent trees in all locations.

A vote is needed to authorize the Town to proceed with this project:

Mr. Creamer made a motion to authorize the Town to continue to work with Mr. Creamer and Mr. Walsh to purchase trees for installation in Spring 2021. Ms. Murphy seconded. Unanimous.

**Vinal Square Improvements**

Howard Stein Hudson Engineers will be asked to submit a scope of services proposal with budget numbers, to include a concept and design options, showing existing conditions, for a

one mile area in scope. A public input session would be desirable. Two or three quotes from engineering firms would be needed for evaluation. Mr. Belansky said he would report at the next meeting with information from HSH on such a proposal.

Mr. Cohen thanked Mr. Creamer and Mr. Walsh for their input on the tree program.

### Business Updates and Square Activities

Ms. Marrone reported that many small businesses in Town continue to struggle with the economic impacts of pandemic. She has sent more than 400 emails to local businesses informing them of a new sector-specific grant program from Governor Baker. Establishments such as restaurants, fitness, and personal services are the focus of this round of grants. Ms. Marrone is available to assist in this application process. She added that she has heard from a number of business owners who, due to reduced revenue over the past ten months, may not be able to stay in business. Mr. Rokas reiterated these difficulties. Ms. Murphy encouraged members and others to take advantage of the excellent restaurants in North Chelmsford by ordering take out.

The Holiday Decorating Committee has removed the lights from the trees. Other decorations will be removed at the committee's convenience,

Mr. Callaghan of DPW reported that the Varney Playground funding application will be presented to the Community Preservation Committee on January 21. He is preparing a brief power point presentation highlighting the condition of the 20 year old playground which is in a state of deterioration. Playground replacements are eligible for CPC funding. It must be ADA compliant. A drainage issue coming from the ball field will be addressed by DPW.

Members expressed their support for this project and for the application to the CPC, as discussed by Mr. Callaghan. Ms. Lee made a motion to support the application for CPC funding of the Varney Park Playground. Mr. Creamer seconded. Unanimous.

### Committee Priority List For Vinal Square and Other Updates

Members felt that because Mr. Tierney was not present this evening, the Priority List should be tabled until the next meeting.

The signage program may be revisited at the next meeting to review progress to date and next steps.

Mr. Lefebvre stated that he had no updates on the quarry situation.

Mr. Gilet said that the train study group being formulated by UMass Lowell would like a member from the North Chelmsford community.

A subdivision for several homes on Dunstable is under review by the Planning Board. There seems to be little if any opposition to this plan, according to Mr. Walsh. Mr. Walsh also noted there are openings in Precinct 3 for Town Meeting Representatives and he would like to get the word out.

A potential tenant is hoping to rent space at 40 Vinal square.in the building next to the municipal lot. It is a dog day care operation which is currently in the permit approval process by Town departments, per Mr. Belansky, who does not see any opposition to the permit request.

The UMass West campus property is actively under consideration by a potential new owner with a similar concept for a housing development on the property. It is characterized as a “friendly 40B”.

UPS is looking for a satellite facility for storing its trailers and is considering Rivard Way. Its current facility has reached capacity, especially during the pandemic upswing in the delivery business.

There being no further business, Mr. Walsh moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Lee. Unanimous. The next meeting will take place Tuesday, February 9, at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Murphy