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TOWN OF CHELMSFORD
VINAL SQUARE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN
COMMITTEE

APPROVED 10/14/2021

MEETING MINUTES

September 16, 2021

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

Members Present: Joe Tierney, Laura Lee, Bjll Gilet, Brian Creamer, Janet Murphy
Mike Walsh

Others Present: Lauralynne Morey, representing. North Congregational Church
Belansky, Director of Community Development
Virginia Timmins, Select Board
Colin Andrus, NMCOG

Miscellaneous Updates

Freeman Lake

Mr. Tierney noted the weed problem at Freeman Lake. Over the summer due to extreme heat and rain the weed growth became excessive throughout the lake, and and made it unusable. To address the situation in the short term, the Town assigned employees led by Steve Callaghan of DPW, to clear some areas. There was neighborhood help also in this effort. A warrant article requesting approximately \$65,000 for a full scale clean up of the lake will be put forth at Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Creamer added that COC money can be used for this purpose if Town Meeting denies the request. Funding may also be available through some Federal monies coming to NMCOG. If funding is obtained, the Town would ask Solitude Water Solutions to formulate a specific program to manage the issue at Freeman Lake. There was discussion about possibly forming a lake committee. Mr. Belansky has a list of email addresses of interested neighbors. Mr. Tierney will follow up with Mr. Belansky.

Planters and Beautification

Mr. Tierney thanked all who were involved maintaining the flower planters this past Spring and Summer. It was noted that the tree planters are still in storage at the DPW. They are awaiting direction from this committee. Mr. Creamer stated that once planted by DPW, he would assist in placing them this season in the North Village.

Other Follow up Items

- Mr. Gilet asked if the committee's list of priorities had been submitted to the Select Board yet.
- Mr. Tierney felt the committee should re-visit this list and prepare a final version for presentation to the Select Board.
- Banners and flag poles have been updated in Vinal Square.
- Vinal Square Craft Beer at 11 Vinal Square will be relocating to the condemned building next to Princeton Station. It is anticipated that Mr. Ready will find an appropriate tenant for the vacated space.
- Ms. Lee reported that North Town Hall is booking some groups who have used the building in the past, but no new groups at this time.
- It was reported that in another town, they are able to charge \$5 for resident parking at a lake similar to Freeman, and \$50 for non-residents to park.
- A new barber shop has opened in the Square.
- Renovations to the North Fire Station are ongoing.
- We may invite Rep. Golden and Town Manager Paul Cohen to attend the next meeting in October.
- Wayfinding funding will be requested at Spring 2022 Town Meeting.
- Mr. Tierney stated his desire to be vocal about asking for grants and making sure we are informed of their availability.
- The physical delineation of the North Village was discussed. Questions arose as to the area covered, such as to Mahoneys, toward the Post Office and the mills, then to the lake, the Senior Center, and possibly the Williamsburg Condominiums on Tyngsboro Road.

Planning Board Updates and Relevant Issues

The committee remains concerned about a number of recent events involving properties in North Chelmsford. Mr. Walsh, who serves as liaison to the Planning Board, reported as follows.

- In the case of a proposed housing unit at 61 Dunstable Road, Town staff failed to notify the abutters of a multi-unit housing proposal on this property, which was a requirement. The Planning Board approved the building proposal and notified abutters of the decision. Neighbors were upset about the lack of communication. They have appealed the decision and are trying to work with the Town on several issues to help mitigate the impact of additional housing units at this location, including traffic and drainage.
- At 314 Dunstable Road, staff mistakenly signed an authorization to demolish the structure, which was over 75 years old. The Historical Commission had not yet reviewed and signed off on this demolition request. The home was subsequently demolished without Historical Commission approval, as a result of this error.

Mr. Walsh reported that staff procedures are being reviewed with relevant personnel at the Town Offices.

He also discussed plans for the UMass West Campus on Princeton Street. A “friendly 40B “ proposal has been submitted, to include some senior citizen housing and other multi-unit housing. Discussions are ongoing with the Planning Board and the Select Board.

Two homes are proposed to be torn down on Route 40 to make way for the development project that is proposed.

Chase Ban is expected to move into the Applebees building in Drum Hill.

Mr. Walsh assured the Board that he will monitor Planning Board agenda items as they pertain to North Chelmsford in particular, and report accordingly to this committee.

Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes/Next Meeting

Mr. Creamer moved to approve the draft meeting minutes for July 15, 2021, seconded by Mr. Gilet. Unanimous.

Mr. Tierney will schedule an October meeting based upon member availability and the dates for Fall Town Meeting.

There being no further business, Mr. Gilet made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Creamer seconded. Unanimous. Meeting adjourned 8:25 p.m.

.Respectfully submitted,

Janet Murphy