

Capital Improvements Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting held via Zoom

October 20, 2021

Meeting called to order at 3:00pm.

Attendees: CIC members: Greg Garrison, Steve Ellis, Fred Bowman, Jason Burbank
3:05). Ariel Elan, Energy Committee Liaison. Walter Ramsey, Planner.
John Martineau, Public.

Roll Call used for all votes taken due to remote meeting format.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Approved the minutes of September 15, 2021. Moved by Mr. Bowman, seconded by Mr. Garrison. Motion passes 3-0.

Business taken out of order to accommodate schedule of guest presenter, Walter Ramsey.

2. Review draft of 500 Avenue A RFP

Discussion of Town Planner's current draft of the RFP to dispose of the Town's vacant former highway garage at 500 Avenue A in Turners Falls. This plan reflects the positive environmental study report received from the engineers who completed our Phase 2 Environmental Assessment. This resolves the concern that led interested parties not to bid when this opportunity was released a year ago.

Plan now is to release the bid on November 3, 2021 with return date of December 9th. Acknowledging that the short term financial return on the property is secondary to the goal of attracting a strong development proposal, the committee nonetheless feels the previous asking price of \$25,000 is too low. Planner has received indications that \$100,000 may deter some expected bidders. \$75,000 is considered a sweet spot by the committee, given the conditions the Town imposes on proposed buyers that would not exist for a typical real estate transaction.

Mr. Burbank moves to recommend a sale price of \$75,000 as the cost for any bidder that responds to the RFP, subject to final approval of the Montague Selectboard. R. Garrison seconds and the motion passes 4-0.

3. Discuss Results of STM Capital Requests

Discussion was opened and it was acknowledged that the CIC Has recommended all articles appearing on the warrant and that all were passed, some with healthy discussion.

4. Review Library and School Building Assessments (Summary Tables)

Discussion focused less on the specific needs of the buildings and more closely on the case examples we have to date and what they say about the accuracy and reliability of the reports. Mr. Garrison noted that the specific costs for any identified project will require further study, but the assessments do clearly identify and suggest a schedule for addressing building deficiencies. They offer prioritization and focus, and a sense of whether the building is worth investing in.

All members agree that these reports are important and so is the consistency of the methodology and reporting format established by the consultant who completed work for GMRSB on the school buildings, as well as the Library reports. Maintaining consistent process will be crucial to integrating data for decision making and reporting. Acknowledgment that we will still need to develop better cost estimates as we approach the time to complete any given project.

5. Discuss Schedule for Communication with Finance Committee

When scheduled, we will want to share what we see in the building assessments to date. Share high-level findings of the library and elementary school reports, as well as information re capital article requests received as of November 1st.

Next CIC Meeting set for November 3rd. Mr. Ellis and Mr. Garrison to meet prior to Finance Committee presentation on November 17.

6. Membership and Possible Change of Meeting Time

John Martineau shares that he is finding it challenging to make the present time, but his work has thus far been accommodating to him. CIC members express willingness to shift meeting to Tuesday nights on those instances where it appears the Wednesday afternoon slot will present a problem to him.

Mr. Ellis moves to recommend to the Moderator the appointment of John Martineau to the Capital Improvement Committee. Mr. Garrison seconds. Motion passes 4-0.

7. Topics Not Anticipated

- Should we request that the Police Department submits a special article request for a new cruiser in FY23. Ordinarily they do not and one new cruiser per year is placed in their operating budget. Committee consensus is that past practice is good – no need to submit a special article request.

Adjournment.

Mr. Ellis moves to adjourn. Mr. Bowman seconds. Motion passes 4-0.