

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SEPTEMBER 22, 2009 – 7:00 P.M.
LINCOLN CENTER HEARING ROOM

PRESENT: Mayor Spadaccini, Deputy Mayor Peak, Secretary Pelletier, Directors Tweedie, Beckman, Zingler, O'Neill, Kissmann, and Farina

ALSO: General Manager Shanley and Town Attorney Naab

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Mayor Spadaccini called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mayor Spadaccini.

1. Consideration of the Broad Street Redevelopment Plan.

General Manager Shanley said the Redevelopment Agency members have been meeting often and working hard to develop a plan for the Parkade. Public hearings were held, revisions were made, and the final plan was formally adopted last week. The Board of Directors now needs to either approve or disapprove of the plan. He reminded all present that the purpose of the meeting is to vote on the plan itself; it is to discuss neither financing nor the referendum.

Tim Devanney, Redevelopment Agency Co-Chair, explained that the Redevelopment Agency had been charged with producing a redevelopment plan for the Broad Street area. It investigated area assets, issues, and opportunities, market demand and likely future uses along Broad Street and the surrounding area. The recommendations included in the plan reflect this work and outline a vision for Broad Street's future. The plan received unanimous approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Housing Authority, and the Economic Development Commission. All Statutory requirements have been met. The Agency put aside any preconceived ideas and agendas, listened and learned, used available expertise, and is proud of its final document.

Gary Anderson, Senior Planner, reviewed the changes made in response to the public's comments and questions. Changes include the addition of information regarding a 2003 market study, information concerning traffic impacts including a map of proposed street grids, and information regarding a Smart Growth study done on the Broad Street area. The section on implementation was expanded, Green Manor Boulevard improvements were moved to a step 1 item, a requirement that a developer must provide an economic feasibility analysis was added. Each step was specified in the final report and the way the plan will be pursued was clearly defined. The new version provides for the possibility of environmental assessments on all properties and the property at 363 Broad Street was added as part of the plan.

Deputy Mayor Peak said there is a lot he likes about the plan. He has seen a number of solutions to the puzzle of the Broad Street area, but so far none of them have solved the problem. There is an overwhelming sense of urgency that needs to be applied because this is the most

serious, pressing challenge that the Town of Manchester faces. Mr. Peak believes there is a cost to not treating this issue with a sense of urgency. Grand list growth is good for taxpayers; it will reduce the taxpayers' burden. Mr. Peak said he originally thought the free market would take care of itself and the Parkade area would be taken care of. He realizes now that help is needed and knows the right people were asked to serve on the Redevelopment Agency. He thinks this plan will contribute to making Manchester a better place to live.

Director Tweedie acknowledged the hard work of the fourteen people listed as contributors and the twelve residents who served on the Agency and attended meeting after meeting.

Director Zingler said he appreciates the hard work of the Agency and the time spent on this plan on behalf of the residents. He asked for clarification on the Board of Directors' role on the use of eminent domain, the Agency's role, and how the relationship works. He recalled that the Board took a firm stand several years ago that it would never use eminent domain.

Mark Pellegrini, Director of Neighborhood Planning and Economic Development, explained that the plan as drafted gives the agency the ability to use eminent domain if necessary to advance the plan. The Board of Directors, by approving the plan, approves this power. If the Agency reaches an event where it believes eminent domain is necessary, it would still need to come before the Board of Directors for funding, unless funding can be obtained elsewhere.

Town Attorney Naab added that State Statutes require a Public Hearing and full notice to the public before the use of eminent domain. He does not remember specifically what was said by the Board of Directors in the past regarding the use of eminent domain, but the notion that a municipal legislative body would foreswear any use of eminent domain does not make a lot of sense. It is a tool necessary for some times and some purposes.

Director Zingler has heard comments from the public regarding the height of the buildings, possibly as much as six stories tall. He understands that these are just conceptual designs, but wondered how the Planning and Zoning regulations would be modified. One specific comment he heard was that the Town does not even own fire apparatus that extends high enough for such a tall building.

Tom Tomko, Redevelopment Agency Member, explained that all buildings would be built according to national building codes. There will be egress in case of a fire. The plan does call for changes to the Zoning Regulations and public safety will be of utmost importance. There are a host of remedies available for the creation of safe buildings.

Secretary Pelletier said it was true that the Board of Directors was involved in lengthy discussions regarding eminent domain in the past. The issue in Manchester was private property being taken to build a school, which is the right of a municipality. Members of the Board are very aware of the issues involved with eminent domain; Ms. Pelletier's family was affected by this issue. Eminent domain will be used as a last resort. The properties that would be affected in the Broad Street area are commercial properties, not residential properties. Ms. Pelletier thinks the members of the Redevelopment Agency have addressed many of the comments and concerns

they heard from the public. The Agency consists of strong community leaders who are committed and concerned taxpayers and citizens. This plan is a starting point for all kinds of possibilities.

Director Farina questioned the sequence of steps within the plan and specific wording on page 27 which seems to indicate it is acceptable to proceed out of sequence.

Bob Schneider, Redevelopment Agency Co-Chair, explained that the Redevelopment Agency thinks the plan will follow the sequence specified. The Agency is already receiving feedback indicating it may not even have to go to step 2. The Agency will not jump to step 3 without first exhausting steps 1 and 2.

Mr. Pellegrini added that the plan was written in such a way that the steps must be addressed in sequence. The part of the plan Mr. Farina is referring to recognizes that the Town or Agency does not control all aspects of the marketplace so to be able to avoid missing an opportunity, sequence flexibility is necessary.

RECESS.

The Board of Directors took a brief recess at 7:47 p.m. for the purpose of caucus discussion and consultation with the Town Attorney. It returned at 7:55 p.m.

Director Farina moved and Director Zingler seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

Director Beckman said he supports the plan and thanked the Redevelopment Agency for its hard work and bipartisan effort. He could feel the energy and enthusiasm of the group and is grateful for its vision. Mr. Beckman has a lot of confidence in the plan and thinks the right team was brought together.

Mayor Spadaccini thanked the Agency members for their presentation and said he has been continually impressed with the team and the way members worked together. All individuals on the Agency have been in Manchester for a while, and are invested in and have deep care and concern for the community. The plan includes a mix of residential, commercial, and civic use and a mix of work and play opportunities. It incorporates Bigelow Brook and connects to park and recreation areas. The plan is deliberately flexible and can be tailored to work with property owners. Town ownership of the properties is not the objective; property acquisition is reserved as a last resort. The Planning and Zoning Commission found the plan consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development and the Housing Authority has given its approval. Mr. Spadaccini said he was glad to see that the Agency took input and made changes; it listened to concerns and addressed them. He is truly impressed with how far the Agency has come in a matter of months.

Director Tweedie moved to approve the plan and Director Beckman seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

2. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a. Real Estate
- b. General Manager's Annual Performance Review

The Board of Directors went into executive session at 8:06 p.m. for the purpose of real estate negotiations and the General Manager's annual performance review and concluded at 8:55 p.m. Present for real estate negotiations were Mayor Spadaccini, Deputy Mayor Peak, Secretary Pelletier, Directors Tweedie, Beckman, Zingler, O'Neill, Kissmann, and Farina, General Manager Shanley, Town Attorney Naab, and Director of Neighborhood Services and Economic Development Pellegrini. Present for the General Manager's annual performance review were Mayor Spadaccini, Deputy Mayor Peak, Secretary Pelletier, Directors Tweedie, Beckman, Zingler, O'Neill, Kissmann, and Farina and General Manager Shanley. No votes were taken.

Director Tweedie moved and Director Zingler seconded the motion to go into executive session. Nine Voted in Favor

ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Director Peak moved and Director Kissmann seconded the motion to adjourn. Nine Voted in Favor

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Secretary, Manchester Board of Directors

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