



**Meeting Minutes for August 23, 2021 at 6:00 PM, Carver Town Hall, Room 1.**

The proceeding will be videotaped and rebroadcast by Area 58 TV.

Attendees: Sharon Clarke, Chairman; Savery Moore, Member; Johanna Leighton, Acting Treasurer; Patrick Meagher, Member; Paul Kostas, Member

Also in attendance: Jim Walsh, Town Planner

Absent:

Meeting opened by Ms. Clarke at 6:00 PM

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Ms. Clarke – We will begin this evening with discussion on the Urban Renewal Project

**Urban Renewal Project:**

Ms. Clarke - We are getting close to where we want to get as much factual information out there as possible. One of the biggest things we have been dealing with is fire and safety for a proposed building. We have been working with the Chief and Hillwood. At this time it is just an opening introduction to what our fire chief is thinking about and what Hillwood is thinking about. We have invited our Fire Chief Weston who is welcome at all of our meetings. Also with us are members of the Hillwood Team. I would like to ask Chief Weston to speak first.

**Chief Weston –**

I am very interested in hearing what Hillwood has to say this evening. As the fire chief, I have sat in quite a few meetings all the way back to when the project was initially proposed. Through Hillwood and the property owner, deadlines are trying to be set for the Town Meeting as there are Zoning changes. In order for us to be comfortable with that, we want to be in a position that we feel we represent safety for the people that work there, the people that visit there and our own fire fighters. Right now, the information that has been provided is not complete enough nor substantial enough to address our concerns. We want to get there and will make an honest effort to get there. Through the RDA, we have expressed our concerns that we are not close to being there. We have put in a lot of time and energy into researching distribution facilities through many consultations with Fire Chiefs, Deputy Fire Chiefs, retired Commissioners, retired State Fire Marshalls and professionals that have done presentations on warehouse fire safety. We have been doing our homework and come with a fair amount of common sense and knowledge of working large incidents. We were very involved in a facility, close to this size, in Rochester. We have lived them first hand. We live in a community with no adequate water for fire suppression. Our department is set up with suppression systems for 2.5 story residential dwellings and some commercial complexes, but of a scale much smaller than this. Those are typically sprinkled and have large water capacity underneath them to help us mitigate those hazards. They are also facilities that don't have the height projected on this project. We understand that there are three entities involved; an owner, a buyer and the Town. We need to all be satisfied before moving forward. I think there has been a breakdown in dialogue between parties. This is due in part to misinformation and is just going to be detrimental to the project. I have lived in Town my whole life and care about this Town; I am starting to care about this project. I want to keep my personal feelings and tax payer feelings out of this and just address it as a public safety Fire Chief. Right now, we are not where we need to be. In full disclosure, I did have a conversation with Matt from Hillwood, late last week. Depending on how tonight's meeting went, we were going to agree to have a follow up meeting at the fire station tomorrow to try to get into maybe some more technical aspects of where

we need to be in order to feel a little more comfortable with public safety. We have been working very closely with the RDA and other Boards in Town. We show each other respect in our different disciplines and will continue to do that. Any meetings that we do have, we communicate with the RDA and the Town Administrator just to make sure we remain on the same page.

Ms. Clarke – The developer has plans to develop it as a distribution center of some sort. At Town meeting, several years ago, this land was designated as green business park. There is allowed use of a distribution center but this one is bigger than the allowed use and taller, but is more state of the art. It's likely to be more of an advantage to the Town, but we all have to be there. When we saw that it would be taller than the allowable 40 feet, we immediately went to fire and safety. We don't have a ladder that tall. We don't have any way of putting out a fire where several hundred trucks could be in the lot at one time. These are all concerns that need to be answered to the satisfaction of the Boards in Town, as well as fire and safety. As we move into more details, we need to be more informed on what's going to be there, how it will perform, what is the role of the RDA, Planning Board and certainly fire and safety. Traffic studies need to be done, with improvements made. We need to all stay on the same page and keep communicating. Breakdowns in communications cause issues, we are not at a point where we should have any of those issues. Thank you, chief, for coming tonight and speaking on behalf of fire and safety for the cars and trucks and the people that will work there, the people in this town. A building like this in this Town would provide revenue, jobs and possibly ancillary benefits. However, it needs to be safe and meet the criteria that the Town sets forth.

**Hillwood, Mac and Gary. Also in attendance - Matt Smith, Civil Engineer and Mike Resnick, Fire Protection Consultant**

Mac – We have spent about 4 months working on this site now. As you can imagine there is a lot that needs to be figured out, fire protections being one of them. I appreciate the Chiefs comments and echo the feelings on public safety. We are confident, based on the studies thus far, we can come up with a system that will make everyone happy and meet building codes and provide a level of safety that you are looking for. I think that we will be able to get into more details and provide answers tomorrow. As far as communication goes, this is a Hillwood project this point forward. We are the ones that you need to deal with now. As we mentioned before, we are trying to tackle the allowable building height and other minor elements of designing code that won't allow us to build what we think the market requires. Until we can get through that phase of approvals, it's difficult to move forward into the specifics of a site plan review, the submittal of a building permit, etc. We have to do a little better job of providing more information so that whatever evaluations need to be made to support the height increase that makes everybody comfortable; that is our immediate goal. We have had conversations, recently, about public outreach. That is in process and I look forward to revisit this with your team in the near future and talk about what that looks like. Matt will walk you through some updates on the site plan; we don't have much more specifics on the user but there is more information we can provide.

Matt – Presented plan to the Board. Matt - We don't have a specific user yet; we've looked at a lot of different options for the site that look a lot like what we are talking about here tonight. It may have a different amount of parking spaces or a different amount of truck spaces or the building might be slightly bigger. It's a big building that will look somewhat like this.

We have put together some cross sections tonight to help with the scale of this project. This building is possibly going to be 65' in height.

Ms. Clarke – Is it typical with Hillwood and other big development companies not know who your end user is? Gary Frederick – I've been doing this for Hillwood for over 22 years and have done 2 or 3 dozen of these buildings throughout the years. This is a speculative development. This building is of a class that can only be used by a fairly limited type of tenant. There are not hundreds of perspective tenants for the building; there is more like ten. Amazon is not the only one; they have competition. This is a big investment. When a shopping center opens, it is not usually fully occupied. This building may very well be leased before we submit a building permit. As of today, we do not have a tenant. We may end up building the entire building without a tenant. The E-Commerce phenomenon driven by COVID has driven a high level of demand for this type of building, particularly in the Northeast where there are a lot of people. It could end up being Amazon or it could be one of the other names that does the same thing that Amazon does. We are putting our money on the line with the expectation that this will happen. We are going to get to know each other as we go through the process; I will not lie to you and tell you a story. There is no tenant as of today. You need to have some progress on the site with your plans laid out; without them, perspective tenants will go on to the next guy.

Matt – There has been a lot of discussion about the height of the building. We have been discussing 65', but that is not what we expect it to be. This is a number we chose to provide some buffer. Some cross sections of the site are shown so you can see what will be seen. You've

seen this plan before; we have two buildings proposed. A plan was shown to the Board. 1.2 mill sq. ft industrial warehouse facility; with traffic separated by trucks and employees. We also have a contemplated water tower. It will be about 160 feet in height and will provide the additional pressure that the NCWD will not be able to. The second building is contemplated at 570,000 sq. ft. Matt outlined parking and loading areas. There was discussion on building various heights, ranging from 45' to 53' in height.

Mac – The industry standard is 40' clear inside the building below the roof structure. From the deck, there is 4'-5' or more of girders and joists that hold the roof up. Our customers want to know that they have a clear 40 feet operating window underneath the roof structure and that translates into the external dimensions that Matt is describing. Ms. Clarke – When you say 40' clear, is that empty? Mac - Yes from the floor to the bottom of the roof structure (the usable area).

Matt - We are seeking up to 65' but in actuality looking for something less than that. By in large, the height to the top of the roof, from the outside, is less than 50'.

Mac - I would like to make one more clarification, Many of you know that we are actively building a building in North Andover. This is different from that; that building is 100' tall on the outside. It is a very specialized, automated building for Amazon and is a state of the art building. We are not proposing that here and it cannot happen here.

Matt - We did a study on what this looks like from varying places. Plans were presented to the Board. The building is presented at 65' high for illustration purposes. You can also see the water tower at 160' in height. Due to elevation, you will not see the buildings as you will see trees. Route 44 is at 130' elevation and the finished floor elevation will be at about 92'. Ms. Leighton – Will you be able to see the water tower when you get off of Route 44? Matt? - If you are very careful, you will in one of these sections. You would really have to be looking for it. From the Plympton neighborhood, you can't see it. As you come to the ramp, you can see into the site and see some of it. Ms. Leighton – How well does vegetation cut down sound, especially for the Plympton neighborhood? That side is where all the trucks will be. Matt – It cuts it down some. Sound is related to sight, if you can't see something, you don't hear it as well. It does still have sound. When we put together the ultimate design plan, we will do sound studies. This building that we are looking at is almost a ½ mile off the road. Ms. Leighton – How do you get the water all the way in? Matt – Pumps. The tower will be beneficial to the entire system. The shopping plaza to the north of the site is where you can see the water tower the most. From Tobey Lane, you can't see it. Ms. Leighton – You said you were going to float some balloons for the corner of the balloons as well as the tower. I hope you let us know when you are going to do that so that we can have CCAT there so we can capture that. Matt – We have set the groundwork for that. Ms. Clarke – It is a concern; it's a big building. This idea would help. I am finding the renderings helpful as well. Ms. Leighton – We predominantly have pine trees in Carver so the fall/winter weather should not change the view much.

Ms. Clarke – I am more interested on a time line. We have to consider changing the 40' height limit to 65'. This would be the only place (green business park which is only this industrial area) it would change. We have sent those zoning changes to KP Law but haven't received them back yet. Mac - I think from a timing perspective, we are looking at the process to get to the Town Meeting and coming up with a date this year. From there, we will attend various Board meetings and finalize an outreach campaign to build momentum. In the long term, assuming we get through the process, we will make a formal site plan submittal and get that process going. Ms. Clark – Assuming that Town Meeting is amenable to this project, there are still many steps to go through before a shovel goes in the ground. This space was designated for something like this.

Ms. Leighton – Re: Zoning – When I was reading it, a lot of it looked antiquated and needs to be changed. Is that something you are going to help us do so we can get the right wording in there? Also, what if we can't get everything ready for the fall and we need to go to the spring time meeting? Mac- We have aligned interest here. If we are able to get approved at Town Meeting, Rte. 44 Development goes away. If we don't get approval at the fall Town Meeting, I will still be dealing with them. We really want to move forward with the Town, as Hillwood. We have a good record; it makes it difficult on us if we aren't successful at the Fall Town Meeting.

Mr. Kostas – I don't disagree. As someone that lives in Town, I want to make sure that whatever we are doing as a plan isn't a minimally viable product. I don't think anyone wants a five day event. How do we know that what we are doing isn't scaled to meet the minimum barrier of entry but instead, its scaled to put the Town in a position to be as safe as it possibly can be? I've read the report that came out. I

don't want to meet requirements, I want to exceed requirements. As far as the Town Meeting, at least 75 people will be deciding. Ms. Clarke – 75 people have to show up 50 people would decide. Mr. Kostas – It's going to be tough.

Mac – This is just the first step to address zoning. We then have to come back for Site Plan approval. We have to meet every requirement for site plan approval; we have to meet every requirement for Conservation Comm approval; we have to meet every requirement for a building permit. The decision that is made at Town Meeting changes the code for height restriction. The three other steps, site plan approval, Con Comm, building permit, we have to meet criteria from the DEP and the DOT just to name a few. This is just barely getting started. We fully expect that all of those reviews are very robust and hold us accountable for meeting the code. We have been doing this a long time. Mr. Kostas – I would look to the Chief. If he is not comfortable, we have a long road. Ms. Clarke – I think that is part of the reason we are here today. It is hard to work from an abstract. We can't stand up in front of Town Meeting and say that we are 100% for this if we don't have complete fire and safety; if the water district doesn't feel they can accomplish what you need. We need all of those pieces to come together in three months. If a person of authority can't support this, that carries a lot of weight. Mr. Kostas – How do we trade off of what you have done for so long to get everyone to feel good about it? I feel like maybe right now we aren't doing that. Ms. Clarke – That's where we are trying to get. Chief Weston – We are trying to look for some guarantees that we can hang our hat on as we move forward. Once we change zoning for height, its changed. Hillwood might not be here in two years. We need some guarantees, written, legal or living document that tells us where we are going to be if this project is built and these are the guarantees that will be in place and we move through them, as they go, in a timely fashion. There is a fear; what if it doesn't materialize and we've changed everything? That has to be addressed. If we have made an agreement with Hillwood then something happens and we aren't doing this project anymore? Mac – We are committed to work this out. We still have to meet every criteria before we can take the next step. It's very typical that this goes in this chronological order. Without the site plan approval we cannot move forward. Hillwood – As we move forward with the different boards that we have to present to and report back to the RDA, the sooner we can get to where we need to be, the sooner it becomes a more positive experience. Ms. Clarke – I think the Chief has a good point re: height zoning change. By having our Town Council review it; when I speak with them, it will be brought up. Mr. Moore – I want to revisit what would happen if there was a delay in the fall meeting. I think that a special meeting in the fall would be problematic, especially as the only article on the warrant. We have an active group of people in Town that do not like change. Some of us are concerned that if it is the only thing that will be voted on at Town meeting. The auditorium will be filled with people that have misinformation. I know we are talking about outreach here, but it's hard to forget something you heard. I think there is a lot of work to do before the fall meeting. If it is put to the spring meeting, which has a lot of other articles on it, you will have a broader representation of people in this Town. They will be there to vote on other things; Town budget, school budget, Planning Board issues. I don't know if we know if there will be other articles on the warrant yet. Mac – I appreciate what you are saying and I understand it. It's a big change for a small town. I am striving to have that flexibility. Mr. Moore – We want to have the best possible outcome, with the most votes, based on an informed decision. Ms. Leighton – It would give us more time for PR as well. Mac – I am under contract with Rte. 44 Development. They have expectations of when they want their money. I understand what you are saying. Mr. Moore – The project that you are looking to do will bring a lot more benefit to the Town but also to Rte. 44 Development. Mr. Meagher – I think that there has been a lot of well thought out things said. We have one commonality between us; we have one chance to get this right. We have to do everything we can to maximize that chance. Ms. Clarke – Town Meeting voters will have their opinions. We need to cover everyone. Mr. Moore – We really should be aiming to get 100% of the vote, not just two thirds of the vote. I am not sure we can do that in the next 3 months. Ms. Clarke – Outreach to Plympton is imperative. Go to their Select Board meetings, etc.

Ms. Clarke – The renderings are great! When you get them all together, we would like to have them. We are trying to put together our own outreach. Ms. Leighton – CCAT does have a studio. We could create something that could be used. Would the Hillwood Team be willing to help us set something up? Mac – We would be happy to do that. Mr. Moore – Where does Hillwood stand with putting a presentation together that we can put on the Town website, re: Hillwood's history, track record, etc.? Mac – We were targeting the 23<sup>rd</sup>. We are jumping some legal hurdles and are in process. We have taken some of your feedback and incorporated. Mr. Moore – More is better. Ms. Clarke – Including the rendering we saw tonight would be great. Maybe include a drone flight of what the area looks like right now. After you get that together please get it to Savery who will move it forward?

Ms. Leighton – I talked with Sharon about finding someone to do marketing. I found Paul Kelley. He was unable to attend tonight but is available in the future. Paul's wife is the director of the Council on Aging. He took up a lot of the challenge with that. You Tube, Facebook, CCAT, etc. Paul reminded me about the studio with CCAT. He also lives in this Town. He did all of Sarah Hewins marketing when she ran

for State Rep. I want to make that recommendation. I went so far as to work with Craig to get the Developer Agreement ready to go. Paul pointed out that CCAT is good for the older people and Facebook/You tube is good for the younger crowd. Ms. Clarke - We received an email from Claire, Jim, are they talking about the same thing? Mr. Walsh – Stantec is a large company. They do a lot of community masterplans and large scale projects that would need a public outreach. Claire suggested two of the firms that were on our list that have their own in house capabilities or they would sub contract. Ms. Clarke – The reason for them to be hired would be solely for community outreach? Mr. Walsh – These two firms could do other things that we are looking for. They could advise the RDA on projects/proposals. Ms. Clarke – So they can help us oversee all the little pieces. Mr. Walsh – Yes and they can handle the public outreach. Judy Barrett Consulting can also do that but is already hired by Hillwood. Mr. Moore – So two of the four on our list can do the PR? Mr. Walsh – Yes. Ms. Clarke – Should we interview? Mr. Moore – I think we should get them in. Ms. Clarke – Yes, let’s interview Stantec and Horsley Witten. Mr. Kostas – There’s pros and cons to having them be together. Some people may feel that if the consultant that is also doing the outreach might be too much in one basket. Ms. Clarke – First, we need to interview them and see what they can provide. Maybe we could interview Paul separately. Mr. Moore – I think we get Paul in here sooner; that would give us time to interview the other two. If Paul were to build a website for this project, could that be loaded on to the Carver Website? Mr. Walsh – Yes, I believe it could. Ms. Leighton – I asked Paul about that and he said he has a point person in Carver to load things on to the Town of Carver website; he’s not sure if they can do videos. I was going to reach out directly to Rick LaFond and ask who their contact is. Elaine told me that they work with the IT people. Mr. Walsh – The website is a different piece. Typically, town employees load things like agendas onto the website. One of our challenges is that we don’t have enough bandwidth in the office. Ms. Leighton – That is why I want to circumvent this. I want to ask Rick for a point person that I can see/talk to that I can hand off this information and they’re going to it. Mr. Walsh – We have someone that can do a little of that stuff but they are only a 12 hour / week employee. We don’t have someone in the Town that can do that. Ms. Leighton – Let me have a try at it and I will get back to the committee quickly. Mr. Moore – If you go on the Carver Website, there is a menu. On that menu, there needs to be “Montello Street Development” as its own things. On that, Paul will need to build/maintain that page, adding links, maintaining FAQ section. We should not be answering any questions on Facebook; they should be directed to the website. To Mr. Kostas’ point, do we want to have the same company do both? Every time we have a meeting it seems there is another group involved. If we can keep it to one company, that will help. Mr. Kostas – Yes, I agree with you. I was thinking more from a consumer perspective. Mr. Moore – The disciplines are so far apart that I don’t think it will be an issue. Ms. Clarke – Let’s get Paul Kelly in here as soon as we can and then focus on the other two. Shall I contact the other two? The Board was in agreement. The whole Board would like to be present for those interviews. Ms. Clarke – We also need to determine cost and Consultant agreement to pay. Ms. Leighton – presented the agreement. Since that time, Craig came to talk with Rick and provided a new, final agreement. I worked with Rick to put in where we needed to have RDA, Urban Renewal Plan, MEPA and DHCD. By doing that we came up with this final draft. Everyone needs to look at it.

*Due to audio difficulties with CCAT, the last 30 minutes of this meeting was not captured on video.*

#### **90 Forest Street, Update on MOU - Discussion and Possible Vote:**

The Forest Street MOU was signed by the RDA. Chairman Clarke will attach it to the deed to be recorded at the Registry of deeds.

#### **Treasurer’s Report:**

The Treasury Report was presented and accepted for July 2021

#### **Members Comments:**

- Ms. Clarke –
- Ms. Leighton –

- Mr. Moore –
- Mr. Meagher –
- Mr. Kostas

**Next Meeting:**

Our next scheduled meeting is on September 7, 2021 at 6:00 PM, Room - 4

**Adjournment:**

*Meeting was adjourned at 8:09 PM*

Exhibits

A: Agenda

B: Treasurers Report