

Chester Main Street Project Committee

Regular Meeting, August 9, 2016

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1. Call to Order

The Chester Main Street Project Committee held its regular meeting on Tuesday, August 9, 2016, at the Chester Town Hall, 203 Middlesex Avenue, Chester, CT. Chairman Joplin called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Seating of Members

Those members in attendance and seated were Michael Joplin, Steven Tiezzi, John Schroeder, Chuck Mueller, Leslie Strauss, Ed Meehan, Christine Darnell and Jeremy Ziemann.

3. Discussion re status of survey (Jacobson & Associates)

4. How to proceed in the fall in terms of beginning the process of planning and design

Chairman Joplin noted he, Ed Meehan and First Selectwoman Gister attended the July Board of Finance meeting and answered all questions concerning the Phase 1 expenses. First Selectwoman Gister did a great job in presenting the figures of what was spent, all the change orders, etc. Former First Selectman Meehan's excellent record keeping was a huge help in gathering all this information. There was one big misunderstanding on the part of 2 or 3 BOF members that the Committee's decision to cut the project back from Route 154 to School Lane came after the money was allocated. Joplin noted that was clarified and Mr. Joslow said that was one big misunderstanding and let's move on. The money was then released for Jeff Jacobson to do the survey. Ed Meehan noted Phase 1 came in under budget by \$22,000. That money will be put back into the Capital budget. Leslie Strauss noted when the Committee starts Phase 3, the town should be reminded that Phase 1 came in under budget. It was suggested an article should be put in the quarterly report.

Chairman Joplin noted he met with Jeff Jacobson who has the survey about 95% complete. It should be finished in about 2 to 3 weeks. The next step would be the presentation to the Selectmen and this Committee as to where the property lines are. Jacobson has not been authorized yet to hire Brian Kent. This presentation to the Selectmen should occur probably middle of September.

Chairman Joplin noted Chester has been bumped to #3 for the LOTCIP grant. Cromwell is #2. The LOTCIP Grant was applied for in April or June. There was

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a meeting 2 to 3 weeks after that where RiverCOG rated the projects. Middletown came in first with 55 points and a shovel ready project. Cromwell came in with 30 points and Chester had 29 points. This will become significant if we don't do something in the next few months. That would mean Cromwell will get 2018 and Chester will get 2019. Leslie Strauss noted then if a town has a shovel ready project, it gets more points.

Chairman Joplin noted the Selectwomen are meeting tomorrow night and will press the Board of Finance to release the rest of the money. They released \$68,000. Releasing the rest of the \$120,000 will mean the project can get started and in the ground by 2018. Joplin further noted all documentation would need to be ready in June of 2017 and ready to bid. It was also noted the water main between Maple and Main and the Bridge would need to be done. Chuck Mueller noted that would be a matter of scheduling meetings between holidays, quorums and design. He was all for moving ahead but felt this was a 2018-2019 project.

Chairman Joplin noted he agreed with John Schroeder that a lot has already been established after Phase 1 and this should be easier. He noted First Selectwoman Gister will be going to the Board of Finance soon and then to Town Meeting to release the rest of the money probably late summer or fall.

Steven Tiezzi noted there is a concern of this Committee that money already allocated is not being released which may effect scheduling and cost. Ed Meehan also noted there is a STEAP Grant that was granted last year for \$500,000. A brief discussion followed regarding the LOTCIP and STEAP grants. Leslie Strauss asked why the Main Street Investment Fund wasn't applied for. Ed Meehan stated he did not know the reason. Joplin noted it might have had something to do with the survey not being done.

John Schroeder noted he heard the Selectwomen were considering getting a grant writer for the Town. He felt strongly that the Town should be pursuing every grant and deadline. Ed Meehan noted there is enough documentation in the file that could be used for the MSIF. Strauss asked who applies for this Fund. Meehan noted the Selectwomen. Schroeder asked if there wasn't another deadline coming up for the STEAP Grants. Meehan offered to help First Selectwoman Gister with the MSIF.

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5. Schedule public discussion in the fall re center of Village and the schedule
Chairman Joplin noted the Committee should hold off scheduling any public meeting in the fall until the survey is completed. In the meantime, we should hear from the Board of Finance on whether they will release the money and go to Town Meeting. The public presentation will include a report on what was done on the Bridge, a review of the Master Plan, concerns about the center of the Village, general discussion with the public after Jeff Jacobson completes the survey.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be after Jeff Jacobson finishes the survey in about 2 to 3 weeks or so.

John Schroeder will prepare a short survey for the Town website and town email blast on the Main Street Project and State Bridge Replacement.

Chairman Joplin will pursue with First Selectwoman Gister the issue of a grant writer.

7. Other Business, if any – none.

8. Bills for Payment – none.

9. Approval of Minutes – June 28, 2016 Regular Mtg

Motion by Meehan, second by Schroeder, to approve June 28, 2016

Minutes amended as follows -

- **Under 3. Review Meeting with BOS and BOF, last paragraph, last sentence should read, “The LOTCIP and STEAP Grant applications are in.”**

Approved with Tiezzi and Strauss abstaining.

10. Audience of Citizens

Lillian Bella and Nico Tiezzi were in the audience.

Lillian Bella noted having lived in Chester her entire life, she had a few ideas. She had mentioned to First Selectwoman Gister some of the lines on the parking

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spaces in front of the French Hen have been cut from 12 feet to 9 feet. Cars park there and can't open their doors. Chuck Mueller noted the State Standard for parking is 9 feet. Lillian also noted she had the impression Chester was trying to be made into a tourist town with little shops. It was noted Chester will never be a tourist town. The merchants must continue to be supported by Chester residents. Chester should not be taken away from the Chester residents. She also noted the "compact car" sign in front of the old bank should be removed.

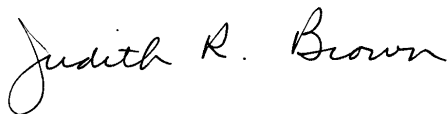
Steven Tiezzi noted he didn't think this Committee ever said this was being geared toward the tourist. The Committee has always strived to make it more of what it is. He also noted the original design of the parking spaces was never for a compact car. The State may have made some adjustment with the State Bridge Project. Ed Meehan noted the idea was not to eliminate any parking spaces. Dave Stanke tried to protect the driveway at 6 Main.

John Schroeder asked if a punch list has been created for the D.O.T. project. Several items were mentioned. It was decided to do a site walk on Friday, August 12, 2016 at 8 AM to create a punch list of items. Everyone should meet at the Main Street Bridge.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary