

Chester Main Street Project Committee

June 28, 2016

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1. Call to Order

The Chester Main Street Project Committee held its regular meeting on Tuesday, June 28, 2016, at the Chester Town Hall, 203 Middlesex Avenue, Chester, CT. Chairman Joplin called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

2. Seating of Members

Members in attendance were Michael Joplin, Chuck Mueller, John Schroeder, Ed Meehan, Jeremy Ziemann and Andrew Landsman (arrived during the meeting).

8. Approval of Minutes – May 10, 2016 Regular Mtg

Motion by Mueller, second by Schroeder, to approve May 10, 2016

Minutes amended as follows -

- **“Add to the Minutes discussion by Chuck Mueller that it was his opinion the \$186,000 seemed a more than generous fee (Jacobson) given the anticipated cost of construction even factoring in the \$15,000 for the survey. There was talk about negotiating that. Mueller was hoping the Committee (Chair) would ask Jacobson to cut the fee in thirds for purposes of getting Board of Finance approval. There had also been discussion regarding the request for 11 or 12% of the construction costs. Mueller also noted there was discussion last time of certain BOF members to find evidence and proof of previous Town Meeting approval.”**

Unanimously Approved.

Chairman Joplin noted First Selectwoman Gister brought up the same subject about “evidence and proof”. Joplin noted this issue at a subsequent BOF meeting never came up.

3. Review meeting with BOS and BOF

Chairman Joplin reviewed his meeting with First Selectwoman Gister and Selectwoman Janecek relative to a request for funding. Jeff Jacobson was very helpful in breaking down the \$186,600 to hire Jacobson who would hire Brian Kent to do Phase 3. They were hoping to break ground the Spring of 2017.

The Board of Finance refused to release funding and go to Town Meeting. Joplin noted there is a disconnect between the Selectmen, the Committee and

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the Board of Finance.

Jacobson has divided the proposal into 2 parts. The first part covers up to and including 30% design and the 1st public presentation for an amount of \$61,000. First Selectwoman Gister requested the BOF to release that much money and it was approved. The \$60,000 will allow Jacobson to do the survey downtown and find out about the voids under the sidewalk.

It was noted during discussion the BOF hasn't gotten a full phase report yet on Phase 1. Joplin volunteered to the BOF and Gister that he and Ed Meehan would review the budget, find out how much money was spent on Phase 1, where the money came from and is everything closed out. There are still a couple of unpaid bills. Joplin will report back to First Selectwoman Gister in about 2 weeks and then Joplin, Meehan and Gister will go back to the BOF to explain expenditures in Phase 1. Joplin noted he invited the BOF to come talk to the Committee about the history of Phase 1, but didn't think that was the BOF's purview.

Chairman Joplin noted it will probably be August before this group has an opportunity to start on the design process of Phase 3. Probably not break ground until April or June of 2018. The LOTCIP and STEAP Grants are in.

4. Time line to see adequate funding to move forward with design

It was noted the estimated budget on Phase 3 is \$1.8 to \$2.3 million. The big numbers are Brian Kent and the survey. There was discussion on some things in Brian's portion that had already been done in Phase 1, but were being charged in Phase 3. First Selectwoman Gister will speak with Jacobson about bringing down the cost.

The BOF will support this project upon completion of the reports, but aren't willing to grant the \$186,000.

Andrew Landsman asked if there wasn't previous discussion about talking to merchants regarding the timing of additional phases. Chairman Joplin noted he was not in favor of leaving it up to the merchants. John Schroeder noted Charlene Janecek had said there was quite a few people who wanted a breather in time. There was discussion as to whether there should be a survey – what did you like about Phase 1, what did you not like about Phase 1? It should be a simple survey. Ed Meehan noted that would be a good way

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to announce the Committee is going forward and encourage their participation.

Chairman Joplin noted the State is not in very good financial condition. He also wasn't convinced the National economic condition was flourishing. His thought was to qualify as soon as possible for grants and grab them. The LOTCIP and STEAP Grants probably will not be as generous or even be around in 2 to 3 years. The Committee needs to get its act together and move forward. Joplin reiterated that funding is probably available now, but not sure it will be in the future. Ed Meehan noted the Town is in a stronger position as it has already completed 2 projects. He agreed with Chairman Joplin that the State is in a tough financial situation and these grants will be eliminated.

There was much discussion regarding the CT Water Company. There are a couple of roads in town on the back burner because CWC hasn't given a period of time when they are going to construct. The State spent money on tie ins on the bridge and Maple and Main. Chuck Mueller noted the CWC should not drive the Town, the Town should drive the CWC. Ed Meehan noted First Selectwoman Gister should write CWC and notify them the Town has started Phase 3. It was hoped to start in the Fall of 2017, but Town approvals may string this out. Joplin noted work will probably take about 4 to 5 months with 1 lane road traffic.

Next steps -

- In the next 30 days, Joplin and Meehan will work on closing out Phase 1 and meet with BOF.
- Joplin and Meehan to meet with Jacobson about getting started after Town Meeting.
- Schroeder will work on putting together some questions for a survey.
- Next meeting will be August 9, 2016.
- After next BOF meeting, Chairman Joplin will send out email to members on progress.
- Ed Meehan volunteered to do the report due to the State.

John Schroeder asked if any work should be done in the winter. Joplin and Mueller both said no. Joplin stated optimum time to start is April Fool's Day or mid March. Traffic management will be 1 lane, this also doesn't lose as

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much parking. Farmer's Market will have to move.

Andrew Landsman asked about status of telephone poles. Joplin noted some of them are temporary. Pole in front of 6 Main is temporary, pole in front of Simon's will be taken out.

Andrew Landsman noted the Pattaconk Brook sign by Helene's building is in the middle of the sidewalk. Meehan noted that can be moved. The State will be back next week. It was also noted the black chain link fence by Sarah Jansen's building will be coming out.

There was a brief discussion regarding natural elements in the Jacobson proposal (Kent/Frost responsibility). John Schroeder asked who pays for any situations that may come up regarding building foundations. Joplin replied the property owner. Schroeder noted if they don't have financial means or are not ready, that could complicate and slow down the process. Maybe there should be a larger contingency. Meehan noted all easements need to be in place. Lead time could be months if there is an uncooperative property owner. Until we actually have the survey, all this is a wild card.

Meehan noted the survey will show the locations of the vaults. There is no language in the proposal to address this problem. Maybe this should be discussed at the next go around with the Selectmen and Jacobson (Villager, Simon's, Lori Warner, River Tavern, Pattaconk).

It was noted the Town didn't go for the Main Street Investment Fund. Meehan stated he didn't know why. Schroeder noted the Town should submit for the next round of STEAP Grant. Chairman Joplin noted First Selectwoman Gister wanted to hire a grant writer on an as needed basis. That individual would also research available funding.

It was noted Economic Development is doing a State Workshop on July 11th at Town Hall.

5. Next Meeting – August 9, 2016

6. Other Business, if any – none.

7. Bills for Payment – none.

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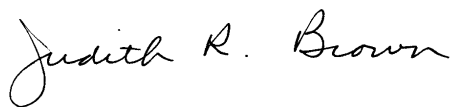
9. Audience of Citizens – no audience was present.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Schroeder, second by Meehan, to adjourn at 8:00 PM.

Unanimously Approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith R. Brown". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully submitted,".

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary