

TOWN of RIDGEFIELD CITIZENS COMMITTEE MEETING

APRIL 25, 2016

TOWN HALL/LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM – 7:30 P.M.

APPROVED MINUTES

Present: R. Larson, A. Behymer, E. Burns, D. Daughters, L. Hanley, M. Miller, T. O'Connor, E. Tyrrell, J. Zawacki, - Rebecca Augur by telephone

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comments
3. Review April 28 Meeting Logistics and Presentation
4. Review Last Minute Communication Activities
5. Confirmation of May Meeting
6. Next Steps
7. Approval of Minutes for March 28
8. Adjourn

R. Larson called the Citizens Committee meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. There were no comments from the public.

R. Larson stated how the purpose of this evening's meeting is to review the plans for the April 28 Public Workshop and the draft of the Presentation.

D. Daughters indicated his desire to make a suggestion regarding the possible sale of two acres to close up the gap in the dollars received for the Schlumberger property. Perhaps the wording should be changed to say "primarily open space". The Town should not take action until the Center is done. He has heard that R. Marconi is thinking about the possibility of a new Fire Department facility on the Schlumberger property. A. Behymer expressed concern about the public's perception when they see the property as "open space". R. Larson stated how Jason of M&M will be orchestrating the presentation. We should leave the details of the presentation to the experts. Rebecca responded that she will be meeting with Jason the next day and they will put the presentation details together at that time.

E. Burns commented on the possibility of bikers on the rail trail. This continues to be a sensitive subject and there are still a lot of questions about the EverSource contract. The Link is a vision.

D. Daughters stated how the thought is to bring in Off-Broadway talent for the theatrical productions. We need to show how it will be different but compliment the Playhouse. But this will also be an elevation from local talent at the Theatre Barn. M. Miller stated

how this venue will attract equity Off-Broadway people, which is a “step up”. T. O’Connors asked if this is going to be set up as a non-profit. E. Tyrrell stated how it will take weeks to get the answers to these questions. We just need to move ahead. D. Daughters stated how he does not think bringing in Off-Broadway productions will compete with what is currently in town. T. O’Connors stated how the outdoor venue will be limited to productions at certain hours.

R. Larson stated how the suggestion for use of the Philip Johnson Building is not a “done deal”, but is a possibility. T. O’Connors said how he is a little bit “wary” of this group. Are they a stable organization? He has tried six or seven times to reach them by phone and no one picked up. They need to show us their financials – what is their revenue? – what is their profitability? Also, the purpose of the Sky Dome is not carved out.

Rebecca stated how she and Jason will “spiff up” the property overview and will forward it over tomorrow via email. One will be able to “click” onto different parts of the concept plan. Rebecca will come early to the Workshop and will bring the boards used for the survey.

D. Daughters stressed the need to show how our conclusions are backed up by research. We have done what we were asked to do. We have lots of material to support our suggestions.

The Committee reviewed the Presentation page-by-page prepared for the Workshop scheduled for Thursday, April 28 at the Rec Center. Suggestions were made for the following pages:

- Map page – designate some of the green as “primarily open space” and there is a steep slope. Show what has been sold. Not all “open space” because green.
- Results from the September 2015 Survey – the third column regarding recovery of the original purchase price is confusing. J. Zawacki suggested putting a banner on the top with the percentages – 29% very important, 25% somewhat important, etc.
- Research Conducted by the Committee to Refine Potential Uses – suggest include “Affordable Housing for the Elderly”.
- Conclusions of the Committee – E. Burns suggested changes to the last bullet about Affordable Housing – The property was not considered to be a suitable site for either market-rate or affordable housing and would result in a traffic problem because of the density.
- The Committee Reduced the Suggested 34 Uses to 11 – D. Daughters stated how he “loves the bottom chart – it builds the whole story”.
- Committee Actions from the January 2016 Survey – correct the date in the title

- Overview of Cultural Center – Visual Design – Rebecca stated how his would be a colored concept plan with color pictures embedded in the plan. It will be the first slide highlighting certain areas. Jason will use a lighted pointer and will talk about the slide pictures of the different buildings, and then a slide with the printed comments. These pictures should get the audience excited about the total. It was suggested that Jason highlight the building/area under consideration, and then turn to someone to talk about the text. The overall overview will be first.
- Schlumberger Auditorium – Suggest highlighting where on-site the different buildings are located and the walk-thru pictures as well.
- Sky Dome Building – Add using the Sky Dome for possible art storage.
- Costs and Financial Considerations – We are up to what percent – some costs are already covered.
- Summary – last bullet – include, “use of qualified professionals”

D. Daughters moved and E. Tyrrell seconded a motion to approve the presentations as amended for the April 28, 2016 Schlumberger Citizens Committee Workshop. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Rebecca signed off the conference call at 8:30 p.m.

Logistics for April 28 Workshop

- D. Daughters, T. O’Connors, A. Behymer and R. Larson meet at the Rec Center at 5:30 p.m. to set up the room and the chairs.
- J. Zawacki to bring cookies, large coffee urn, fruit (grapes and melon), paper plates, forks, knives, and napkins. Last time 2 decaf coffee and 1 regular – will order the same amount as last time.
- D. Daughters to pick up coffee at 5:00 p.m. – J. Zawacki to order the coffee.
- R. Larson to bring coffee urn and cookies
- E. Burns to make name tags.

Next Steps

- May meeting scheduled for May 2, 6:00 to 7:00 p.m., prior to the Town Meeting, A. Behymer by telephone, with the goal of finalizing the report and voting on the recommendations. These recommendations will go into our final report to the Board of Selectmen. Anticipating that this report will be about a ten page document – including the history of the Committee, the Charge, the 1st survey, the Charrette, work following the Charrette, the 2nd survey, 2nd Workshop, recommendations

Approval of Minutes for March 28

L. Hanley moved and E. Tyrrell seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the March 28, 2016, Citizens Committee Meeting. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Adjourn

D. Daughters moved and L. Hanley seconded a motion to adjourn the Citizens Committee Meeting at 9:00 p.m. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet L. Johnson