

**Redevelopment Authority Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, January 13, 2021**  
**1-2:30pm**

**Meeting Recording: <https://vimeo.com/channels/shctv15/500971144>**

Members in Attendance: Frank DeToma, Tony Judd, Diane LaRoche  
Helen Fantini joined the meeting at 1:22pm

Chairman Frank DeToma opened the meeting at 1:00pm.

**1. Discuss and Consider DHCD Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Grant Final Report and Survey Results, Next Steps**

Frank DeToma stated he had reviewed the report and that it was a detailed analysis as had been presented to the RA and the public. He was concerned about how to engage the residents of the Falls in their review and comment on the plan considering there were only 40+ people in attendance at the virtual workshop, and response to the survey, despite 600 postcard invitations having been mailed.

Frank stated that he has scheduled to meet with the owners of two local Falls businesses next week to gather their feedback on the redevelopment concepts, and see if they have any interest in joining the RA's Advisory Board. Tony Judge stated he was interested in attending those meetings. Members discussed other local business owners that could be contacted about joining the Advisory Board, including the Chief of Police and a Selectboard member. It was agreed that after members received confirmation from individuals about their interest in joining the Advisory Board, they would send their contact to Anne so that she could schedule a meeting for mid-February. Anne will also email the members of the existing Advisory Board and ask for confirmation as to whether or not they want to continue on the Board. The expectations of the Board are that they serve as an entity to report the activities of the Redevelopment Authority to quarterly, provide feedback on projects and proposals, and provide advocacy at Town Meeting for proposal set forth.

Tony Judge inquired as to whether or not we should seek organization of the Advisory Board, e.g. chair, etc., to ensure there is a committed person taking charge of the activities of the Advisory Board. Other members didn't think that was needed.

**2. Discuss and Consider Town Meeting Appropriation Request**

Members discussed seeking an appropriation at Town Meeting to capitalize a fund for the initiating projects as identified in the URRP, specifically for the acquisition of real estate for redevelopment. The request would be based on Table 1-2 Parcels to be Acquired for South Hadley Falls URRP Implementation, in the July 2019 South Hadley Falls Urban Redevelopment and Renewal Plan. Table 1-2 identifies 27 parcels with a total combined assessment at \$6.7M. A request of 5% of this value would be \$337,000; 7.4% would be \$500,000. If allocated, the funds would be used for hard costs associated with specific projects as identified in the URRP related to property acquisition for redevelopment.

Tony Judge inquired about the status of the redevelopment of the former library at 27 Bardwell Street, expressing concerns about the condition of the buildings. Anne Capra stated that the developer had requested an extension for the Special Permit claiming delays related to COVID-19, and was granted an extension by the Planning Board to a date she was not sure of but would report back to the board. Members discussed other local businesses and their status during COVID. Anne mentioned that it might be time to reconsider alternative uses to the Town Hall building. The new work environment imposed by

the pandemic may mean looking at alternative sites that offer a more efficient building with better control of public access within the building. Town Hall might have some interesting redevelopment potential as housing, for example.

### **3. Discuss and Consider MDI Local Rapid Recovery Planning Grant Application**

In December, the Town applied for this new grant made available by the State to assist in planning to identify community needs for economic recovery within targeted commercial areas. Consistent with the structure of other MDI grant programs, if awarded, they provide you with a prequalified consultant to perform eh services. In our application, we identified four commercial nodes with 39 food and beverage establishments as the target for the project (the Falls, Newton Street Smart Growth District, Granby Road, and the Village Commons). Supporting entities to the application included the South Hadley and Granby Chamber of Commerce, the Center Redevelopment Corporation, and Mount Holyoke College.

### **4. Discuss and Consider Approval of November 12, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Frank DeToma moved to approve the minutes as written, Diane LaRoche seconded the motion, all in favor.

### **5. Other New Business**

Anne reported that the reconstruction of Main Street which had been planned for construction in FFY21 on the regional Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), as coordinated by the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which is the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) has been pushed out to 2023/2024. The project is currently at 25% design and has identified some encroachments within the ROW which need to be resolved. The Town is responsible for the cost of 100% design plans. The project was put on hold last year at the outset of the COVID pandemic. The DPW Director and Town Administrator are working to reinstate design work to move this project along.

Expansion at 27 Gaylord Street, Fuel Services Inc. – This business recently received permitting from the Conservation Commission for the construction of a new 50'x60' accessory garage to house their fleet of trucks. This parcel is now subdivided from the parcel at 60 Lamb Street, which is occupied by the Mill 6 mothballed factory, and owned by Fuel Services Inc.

Frank DeToma reported that the received a request for an Annual Report for the Redevelopment Authority. He will work on a draft and send it to Anne.

Diane LaRoche made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:15pm, seconded by Frank DeToma, all approved.