

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Meeting Date. November 17, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 6:49 P.M. in the Band Room Amherst Middle Regional Middle School

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Brian Morton (chair), Marilyn Blaustein, Barry Federman, Kay Moran, Douglas Slaughter, Andrew Steinberg, Marylou Theilman

OTHERS PRESENT

John Musante (Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director); David Ziomek, Director of Conservation and Development; Julie Johnson, Executive Director of the Hitchcock Center; Elizabeth Hamin, Conservation Commission's liaison with the Hitchcock Center

COMMITTEE AGENDA

1. Article 11—Hitchcock Center/ Larch Hill---Update and then Vote New Position
2. Member Reports
3. Minutes
4. Next Meeting and Agenda

Miscellaneous.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Voted 7-0 to support Article 11

Discussion

Ziomek informed the committee, that discussions with Town Counsel had taken place and Town Counsel stated that any amendment for land compensation was not appropriate for this article and the article should remain as is. Town Counsel also stated the Town Manager would return to Town Meeting at a later date with any information or a recommendation about land compensation. Ziomek also reported that any form of land compensation would be a legal act. Also any ground lease would have to come before Town Meeting. He also stated the land compensation would be approximately 33,000 square feet. Ziomek said that Article 11 does not commit the Town for any costs; it only broadens the use of the land from conservation to conservation and education.

Theilman asked if the Finance Committee would be kept apprised of ongoing negotiations and if the Town would be expending any costs. Johnson said, that the Hitchcock Center "has never looked at the town as being a financial partner". She said that she sees the Town as a partner for things such as ground lease.

Steinberg asked if the Commonwealth has any specific guidelines for compensation. Ziomek stated it is 1to1 land compensation and the Hitchcock Center would need approximately 33,000 square feet of land.

Theilman asked if citizens might be opposed to the renovation due to any historical value of the present building. Johnson said she has spoken and informed the Historical Commission.

Moran moved to consider the original recommendation.

MEMBER REPORTS

Moran reported regarding the Capital Plan includes the purchase of the quint fire apparatus but the price has increased since the initial estimates. Musante reported that it would be good to wait until the bids were opened.

NEXT MEETING

December 11, 2008

MISCELLANEOUS

Musante announced that the Four Town Regional School Finance Committee meeting would be December 6, 2008.

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Barry Federman
Acting Clerk