

Amherst Finance Committee Minutes
Thursday, October 27, 2016
Police Community Room

ATTENDANCE: Marylou Theilman (Chair), Steve Braun (Vice-Chair), Bernie Kubiak, Janice Ratner, Anurag Sharma.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Sonia Aldrich, Co-Finance Director; Gilford Mooring, Superintendent of Public Works; Jerry Guidera, local developer; Chris Brestrup, Director of Planning.

Meeting called to order at 7:01 PM

Theilman thanked Braun for running the meeting last week and for the opinion piece in Amherst Bulletin.

Article 7: Land acquisition of a parcel in Amherst, a 2-acre undeveloped house lot on Overlook drive. Can be developed, 90 percent of the parcel is Zone A of the watershed, water feeding directly into service reservoir. \$58,000 from Water Fund Surplus. No water nor sewer in that area.

Water Fund Surplus has \$1,567,644 as of today to be certified tomorrow. Expect revenues to be down because of the drought. No matching grant as the lot will not compete well in grant process so we're funding it ourselves.

Vote: Recommend 5-0, 2 absent.

Article 9: Temporary easement for Mill Street Bridge Replacement Project. The Select Board has asked the state for this to be one way uphill. Property owners are cooperative thus far.

Vote: No position 5-0, 2 absent. No financial implications.

Articles 19-21: Objective is similar for all 3 articles (19-21). Most of downtown zoned B-G but some of downtown is not B-G and they are instead B-L. Petitioner plans to amend article 20 to include only the properties between Hallock and Cows Lane. BG allows by right residential dwelling unit and by right an additional floor. Building coverage lot is about 35 percent to 70 percent. No parking on site required. Biggest opposition is for article 21, for the Triangle Street area, especially from residents on cottage street, even though it has the greatest development potential. Petitioner likely to withdraw article #21.

Potential Financial impact: all 3 areas combined current total tax revenue is approximately \$230,000; fully developing the lots in question could increase tax revenue by the factor of five or ten.

Extensive discussion followed, especially about impact on the town in terms of need for additional parking. How do owners feel about these proposed changes? Petitioner says that he reached out to owners and abutters and that they were generally supportive.

Article 19 vote to recommend: 5-0, 2 absent

Article 20 amended by the petitioner to limit the area south of Hallock and north of Cows.
Vote to recommend: 5-0, 2 absent

Following is the summary of FC positions and votes on the Articles on the Warrant.

Article 1: No position.

MT-Article 2: Deferred until Town Meeting. Michael Morris and Sean Mangano will attend November 10 FC meeting

AS-Article 3: Dave Ziomek will attend FC meeting November 3

SB-Article 4-5: FC voted at last meeting (October 20).

JR-Article 6: FC voted at last meeting (October 20).

BK-Article 7: Voted tonight (5-0-2) Recommend

BK-Article 8: Dave Ziomek will attend FC meeting November 3

Article 9: No position.

AS-Article 10: Voted tonight (5-0-2) - \$202,000 from Medicare: \$106,000 to OPEB and the rest to towns of Pelham and regional schools.

JR-Article 11: Certified Free Cash \$4,818,684; \$1086,162 to be transferred to stabilization (Option 2, see handout Free Cash to Stabilization Fund FY17).

Vote: 5-0-2

Article 12: No position

Article 13: No position

Article 14: No position

Article 15: No position

Article 16: No position

Article 17: No position

Article 18: No position

SB-Article 19: As above

SB-Article 20: As above

Article 21: As above

Article 22: No position

Article 23: No position

Preliminary Fiscal Guidelines (see handout)

Motion to approve the preliminary budget guidelines as amended

Vote: 5-0-2

Member Liaison reports:

Ratner attended the Historical Commission meeting yesterday evening at which the library trustees, architects, and owner's project manager presented the proposed design for the library renovation/expansion project. Good attendance, no public comment. Information exchange and discussion.

Theilman reported that, as per the town manager, FC may attach summaries of four capital projects, the Op-Ed piece, Select Board 4th quarter report, and budget process calendar to the Finance Committee report.

Minutes October 20: Vote 4-0-1-2

Next meetings November 3 & November 10, both in the first-floor meeting room in Town Hall.

Thank you, Amherst Media!

Adjourned 9:22 pm.

Acting clerk,
Anurag Sharma

Handout: Maps for Articles 19-21
Handout: Free Cash to Stabilization Fund FY17
Handout: Preliminary Fiscal Guidelines