

CITY OF NORWALK
LAND USE AND BUILDING MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
JANUARY 15, 2009

ATTENDANCE: Douglas Hempstead, Chair; Richard Bonenfant; Michael Geake; Laurel Lindstrom; William Krummel; Nicholas Kydes (7:46 p.m.); Douglas Sutton (7:40p.m.)

STAFF: Alan Lo, Building and Facilities Manager; Robert Maslan, City Attorney

Mr. Hempstead called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. He asked everyone in attendance to turn off their cell phones. He also said that this meeting was not a public hearing. A public hearing was already held when Fodor Farm went out for proposals. Mr. Hempstead told everyone in attendance that if they wanted to speak to keep it to three minutes.

Mr. Wilfredo Perez, Pine Hill Avenue asked the Common Council to reconsider and accept the bid submitted by Homes for the Brave. He said that this was a good time for Norwalk to lead the way and house the homeless women Veterans coming home from Iraq.

Ms. Doris Lippman, Army Corps Nurse, encouraged Norwalk to reconsider their decision. She said that it was crucial for the courageous women to have a place of their own.

Mr. Matthew Gacy, Easton, CT, Chairman, Homes for the Brave said that he was here tonight to answer any questions about their bid or their program. He said that he would love for the Committee to consider their bid and all the women who would be served.

Mr. Donald Hestler, resident at Homes for the Brave said that he wanted to put a face to a homeless Veteran. He said that men are given a home, but the women have no where to go and no one wants to hear their problems. He said that this is a good opportunity; it has to happen eventually because the problem will not take care of itself. Mr. Hestler said that these women need the same opportunity that he has gotten. This is a chance to give these women a chance.

Mr. Joseph Johnson, resident at Homes for the Brave said that at age 26 he is the youngest resident. He said that he fought next to women in Afghanistan. He said that there are a lot of women in the cold tonight, but he has a wonderful place to go tonight. Mr. Johnson said that he was sleeping in a truck and the Veteran's Administration told him to go to Homes for the Brave. He said that women need this too. It would be great for Norwalk and the State to be the first to do this.

Mr. David Anspach, 140 Water Street said that he grew up across the street from Fodor Farm. He said that this is an emotional issue, but there is a fiscal responsibility to the City. He volunteered to take responsibility to make up the difference between the highest bidder.

Mr. Jim Donohue, Pogany Street said that he is a Veteran. He said that no one is against women Veterans, but the neighbors feel that this is not the right place. They are afraid of what this would turn into once the Veteran's no longer need the home. Mr. Donohue said that he is a third generation Norwalker and is nervous because he is the only one here tonight speaking against this.

Ms. Shalini Madaras said that her 19 year old son served in the Army and was with the Security Detail for their Battalion Commander. The two women in his unit were right with him. Her son died in 2006 while traveling with the Battalion Commander.

Mr. Sutton joined the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Ms. Madaras said that there are a lot of women serving right now and they willingly go and fight for our ability to stand here and speak. She said that this is an investment in our future. Fodor Farm is an ideal location and provides a healing sanctuary. She said that this is a transitional program that allows several women to go there and heal themselves. Ms. Madaras told the Committee that they would want this if it was their sister or mother. She added that this is an investment in our Military and all of us.

There were no other people who wished to comment.

Mr. Hempstead reviewed the details of the bid process. He said that interviews were conducted to be sure the highest bidders met the qualifications. Mr. Hempstead said that he had the utmost respect for Veterans and so does the rest of the Committee.

Mr. Hempstead explained that all proposals were taken into consideration and thanked everyone who sent in a proposal. Mr. Hempstead reminded the Committee members that there are no reasons to disqualify the highest bidders. He said that Mr. Maslan was here to explain the process and answer any questions.

Mr. Kydes joined the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

In reviewing the motion, Mr. Krummel made the following amendment:

**** MR. KRUMMEL MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS**

A. FODOR FARM

1. REVIEW PROPOSAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION ON THE SALE OF THE TWO HOUSES AND REFER THE FOLLOWING TO THE COMMON COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL:

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25 POGANY STREET -

“A. APPROVE TO SELL PROPERTY AT 25 POGANY STREET (D5-B77-L140), LOCATED AT FODOR FARM, TO DOUGLAS L. PEOPLES (THE HIGHEST BIDDER) FOR THE AMOUNT OF \$41,000.00.

B. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA, TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY FOR THE SALE AND TRANSFER OF THE PROPERTY.

C. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA, TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO GRANT UTILITY AND SITE ACCESS TO 25 POGANY STREET FROM POGANY STREET.

D. AUTHORIZE TO SET ASIDE \$3,500 FROM THE SALE OF THE PROPERTY TO BE USED BY THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION TO RETAIN AN ARCHITECT WITH EXPERIENCE IN HISTORIC RESTORATION FOR THE REVIEW OF THE PROPERTY OWNER’S BUILDING DESIGN *IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR’S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*) AND PROVIDE RECOMMENDATION TO THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION.”

322 FLAX HILL ROAD –

“A. APPROVE TO SELL PROPERTY AT 322 FLAX HILL ROAD (D5-B77-L137), LOCATED AT FODOR FARM, TO DAVID C. DETROY (THE HIGHEST BIDDER) FOR THE AMOUNT OF \$110,000.00.

B. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, RICHARD A. MOCCIA, TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY FOR THE SALE AND TRANSFER OF THE PROPERTY.

C. AUTHORIZE TO SET ASIDE \$3,500 FROM THE SALE OF THE PROPERTY TO BE USED BY THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION TO RETAIN AN ARCHITECT WITH EXPERIENCE IN HISTORIC RESTORATION FOR THE REVIEW OF THE PROPERTY OWNER’S BUILDING DESIGN (*IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR’S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*) AND PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION.”

**** MR. KRUMMEL MOVED AN AMENDMENT TO ADD THE FOLLOWING TO THE MOTION: (*IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR’S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS*)**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Bonenfant asked if this was a bid or an RFP. Mr. Maslan said that this was an RFP. Mr. Lo explained the difference between the two. Mr. Sutton asked what steps would follow if either or both bids were turned down. Mr. Lo explained that the recommendation is to award the properties to the highest bidder. They would have had to identify why the highest bidder was disqualified; however, the Committee found that the highest bidder was qualified. If the two bids were turned down, we will need to issue a new RFP.

Mr. Krummel said that as a member of the interview committee, he was please with how it was handled and by the bidders. He said that he feels confident that the two people interviewed with can do the job. He added that he was impressed that they will be putting “sweat equity” into the homes.

Mr. Kydes said that he was also on the review committee which was made up of staff, Mr. Hempstead, Mr. Krummel and himself. He said that if they do not follow the process that ensures objectivity, they put the City in jeopardy. Their objective was to review the proposals and determine if the highest bidder could meet the obligations of the RFP. In both cases the highest bidder was deemed to be capable in meeting all of the RFP requirements such as maintaining the homes in an historical sense.

Mr. Kydes said that before they could turn down the highest bidder, they would have to have a justifiable reason, but there was none. Both bidders were able to meet the RFP. He emphasized that the process was very well conducted and within all of the boundaries of the RFP.

Mr. Lo noted that Mr. Ireland, the City Building Inspector and Mr. Foley, the City Purchasing Director also served on the Committee.

Mr. Sutton referring to a letter the Committee received from Richard Blumenthal said that being a Veteran, it would be noble if the Committee could find a site for the Homes for the Brave. Mr. Hempstead noted that they just received the letter today and said that they have to look at the highest bidder and follow the intent of the guidelines.

Mr. Hempstead told those in the audience that he had the utmost respect for Veterans and asked if they could leave a single contact with him. He said that he would talk to Tad Diesel to see if there is a site that would meet their needs. Mr. Hempstead said that the State does not provide enough for our Veterans.

Mr. Kydes said that in both cases, the highest bidder is going to resurrect the properties and live in them as their primary residence. Mr. Krummel said that it is important to emphasize that the Committee gave a great deal of attention to the proposal from Homes for the Brave and it was very impressive. However, it is clearly the Committee’s obligation to go with the highest bidder and to see if there were any deficits in their bids. Mr. Krummel said that this was not taken solely on the highest bidder.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. SUTTON)**

Mr. Lo explained that the next step is to forward this to the Common Council.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

- December 18, 2008

The following correction was made to the minutes:

Page 6, 4th paragraph, 2nd sentence. Honors should be corrected to: interest.

**** MR. KRUMMEL MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED**

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MR. GEAKE)**

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. David Park, Chairman, Historical Commission updated the Committee on the status of obtaining a qualified architect. He said that \$3,500 per house should be more than enough.

Mr. Krummel said that there was a lot of discussion about the windows and the point that was made is that they are doing all they can to preserve the original materials on the houses. One of the defects of the Homes for the Brave's proposal is that they wanted to remove the windows.

Mr. Hempstead thanked Mr. Park for his due diligence. Mr. Park said that he wants everything to run smoothly and not have any holdup. He said that he hopes an architect will be approved by January 29th. Mr. Hempstead said that it would be nice to see renovations begin this spring. Mr. Hempstead asked Mr. Park to come to the next meeting, if everything moves forward.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Old Police Station

**** MR. KYDES MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

**1. Review architectural/engineering proposals for design services associated with the demolition of the Old Police Station and site restoration and refer the following to the Common Council for action:
"Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an agreement with Andropolus to provide design services associated with the demolition of the Old Police Station and the restoration of the**

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site for a total amount not to exceed (amount to be provided). Acct. #09064021 5777 C0368. (recommendation to be available at the meeting)

Mr. Lo explained that because of the holidays, everything was last minute. He said that he wanted to be in a position to get a better cost estimates for the demolition. The Purchasing Department created a RFP package for demolition and site restoration.

Mr. Lo said that they received eleven proposals and a number of them were very competitive. He said that he and Mr. Foley recommend going with the lowest bidder, Andriopoulos. Mr. Lo said that he hopes to have a demolition cost estimate in a few months.

Mr. Krummel, referring to the document Mr. Lo provided, said that since a breakdown was not provided in the bid summary, he would recommend revising the document. He would like reassurance that the proposal does provide all of the required details of the bid. Mr. Lo said that they hold interviews so that additional information can be provided at that time. Mr. Bonenfant said that none of the information is provided in the bid. Mr. Krummel said that he wanted to be sure they were in compliance with the RFP. Ms. Lindstrom said that she was glad this was moving forward.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mr. Lo explained that the following item was withdrawn by Yankee Gas.

B. Stepping Stones Children Museum – Gas Easement to Contemporary Center for Print Making

Review request for the abandonment of the existing gas line to the Old Police Station and Contemporary Center for Print Making and recommend approval of the proposed utility easement to provide new gas service to the Contemporary Center for Printmaking:

“Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute any and all documents necessary to grant Yankee Gas Services Company an utility easement for the installation of a new gas service for the Contemporary Center for Printmaking (the old Carriage House in Mathews Park) from Butler Street to the building.”

MISCELLANEOUS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Hempstead said that the Fire Department study is available on line; however, if anyone wishes a copy, to let him know.

The next Committee meeting will be held at the Fire House.

A. Review Building Management proposed 2009-2010 Capital Budget Requests

Mr. Mike Sgobbo, Building Management said that included in the capital plan was a line item for building assessment and design. He said that the plan is to go through City Hall and the Roosevelt School buildings. They are on a 20 – 25 year cycle for mechanicals. Mr. Sgobbo said that they need to put an aggressive plan together to replace the mechanicals on a shorter cycle. He noted that these expenditures are expensive.

The equipment at Roosevelt School/Norwalk Senior Center is from the 1930's – 1950's which makes this very challenging. Mr. Sgobbo said that they had to replace a heating module at the cost of over \$4,000. He said that he is preparing a request for the Board of Estimate and Taxation for approximately \$13,000 to maintain the heating system at Roosevelt School.

Mr. Kydes asked what could be done to cut down on maintenance on the cupola at City Hall. Mr. Sgobbo said that he would look at providing a more durable material.

Mr. Krummel asked about the Public Works Center. He said that he is very concerned about the working conditions there. The trucks release carbon monoxide into the garage area. Mr. Sgobbo said that there was some remediation work done there, but to take care of the problem, they need a very good exhaust system to remove the noxious fumes.

Mr. Hal Alvord, Director, DPW explained that part of the solution was to have a dry fire suppression system but that drives the cost up. He said that they have not found a solution to withdrawing the fumes without freezing the fire suppression system.

B. Discussion on the Naming of Municipal Facilities

Mr. Krummel suggested that proposed names be submitted by a petition.

Mr. Bonenfant said that they took all of the ideas from the last committee meeting into consideration. He said that the proposed name should be submitted to the Committee member, to the Chair. It is the privilege of the Chair to place the item on their agenda. Mr. Hempstead asked if a Committee Chair could place the name on the Common Council agenda if the name was not approved in Committee. Mr. Maslan said that it could be submitted. Mr. Bonenfant said that it was the sense of the Committee that when a name reaches the Common Council for a vote, it would take a 2/3 majority to name a building or facility that is managed through this Committee.

Mr. Kydes said that he thought the objective was to develop a procedure for all City owned properties.

Ms. Lindstrom asked if the rules would need to be approved by the full Common Council. Mr. Maslan said that there are no rules right now. A room on the second floor was recently named. Mr. Hempstead said that it would depend. The rules are only good during this term. He said that the goal would be to put this into an ordinance.

Mr. Hempstead explained that this item was on the agenda for discussion only. He said that he would like the Committee to come to a decision about whether or not they are ok with the procedure.

Ms. Lindstrom said that she has not had a chance to process this and asked if the Committee will be able to rename streets and parks. Mr. Hempstead said that he thought the naming of streets is in the Charter. Mr. Alvord said that it is in the Ordinance. Mr. Kydes said that they need to have a procedure with teeth in it so that it is not changed every term. They need to develop a procedure that is acceptable to the Common Council and create an ordinance.

Mr. Hempstead asked the Committee members to take the document home, review it and make comments.

Mr. Hempstead said hat the next meeting is at the Fire House. He asked if there was anything the Committee members would like on that agenda.

Mr. Lo said that about a month ago, this Committee authorized the Board of Education to buy a number of laptops. However, that model is no longer available and has been replaced with one at a lower cost.

**** MS. LINDSTROM MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES FOR A
TECHNICAL CORRECTION
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. LINDSTROM MOVED TO REVISE THE APPROVAL FOR THE
PURCHASE OF MODEL HP6910 LAPTOPS TO MODEL 6930
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. KYDES MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services

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