

**A JOINT MEETING OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
SUBCOMMITTEE AND TOWN COUNCIL  
THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2022 – 5:30 PM  
VETERANS ROOM**

**Draft Minutes**

Subcommittee Members in Attendance: Committee Chairman David Adams and Ctz Mbr LaRochelle

Subcommittee Members Excused: Ctz Mbr Bernardone and Clr Daou

Subcommittee Members Absent: Clr Lazo

Others: TM Michael McCall, Clr Daniel, Mark Carron and Peg Dean

Documents:

- Draft Meeting Minutes from January 20, 2022
- Draft Meeting Minutes from February 10, 2022
- CDBG FY19 Commercial Rehab Design from Graphics Unlimited
- Approved Pursuing Complete Streets Tier 2 Technical Assistance
- MOTT Destination Development Capital Grant

5:30 PM meeting called to order

**1. Roll Call**

\*Clr Daniel asked to sit in on meeting as a voting member to make quorum.

**2. Consider and accept Planning and Development Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2022.**

Motion Ctz Mbr LaRochelle, Seconded by Clr Daniel, 2-0-1 (Clr Daniel Abstains).

**3. Consider and accept Planning and Development Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2022.**

Motion Ctz Mbr LaRochelle, Seconded by Clr Daniel, 2-0-1 (Clr Daniel Abstains).

**4. Review/discuss the agreement with Graphic Unlimited LLC for \$1,950.00 for CDBG commercial rehab project at 1-11 Central Street, entertain a motion vote to recommend that Town Council ratify the agreement and authorize the Town Manger to sign all related documents.**

Motion Ctz Mbr LaRochelle, Seconded by Clr Daniel, 3-0-0.

Ms. Dean asked if all contracts need to go through the Town Council, Clr Adams states service contracts need to go through only. Ms. Dean is requesting approval for this contract and discussion was had about if she could compact agreements with a service contract where the amount is under a certain amount so as not burden the subcommittee or Town Council with small items such as this contract. Clr Adams stated the Town Council has had plenty of conversation about the service contract and not sure at this point but is willing to set up any meeting if necessary as not to delay work or applications. She also stated the town had done business before with this LLC and did a great job. Ctz Mbr LaRochelle asked who owned the property and was there any back taxes on it? Ms. Dean replied the building was owned by Johnny McCarthy, no back taxes were owed and the town pays for it upfront. Clr Adams noted that a soft lien will be placed on the property and they must maintain that business for at least five years or they will be required to pay for some of the work done back to the town.

**5. Review/discuss pursuing Complete Streets Tier 2 Technical Assistance to hire an engineer based on the Request for Qualification (RFQ), entertain a motion to vote to recommend that Town Council enter into the MassDOT Agreement for Tier 2 Technical Assistance and authorize the Town Manger to sign all related documents and ventdor contracts.**

Motion Clr Daniel, Seconded by Ctz Mbr LaRochelle, 3-0-0.

Ms. Dean reminded everyone the Town Council approved the Complete Streets policy last month and MassDOT approved it February 15, 2022. She was aggressively trying to get through the Spring's grant round which April 1 would be the deadline for Tier 2 and May 1, 2022 for Tier 3 deadline, since drafting the memo for this agenda item MassDOT stated she would not be able to make the deadline for Tier 3 but continue forward for the Tier 2 so as to receive technical assistance for the Fall deadline. Her intent was to have this ready for the West Street Project but because she can't make the deadline maybe another project can be recommended. She is asking for approval to move forward so as to get the experts assigned to thus moving forward with he assistance. Ctz Mbr asked who makes the decision on the expert, Ms. Dean stated they would but not to exceed the \$38,000.00.

**6. Review whether to recommend Town Council approve applying for the MOTT Destination Development Capital Grant for up to \$50,000 for the design portion to create a historic walking tour in Southbridge and allow the Town Manager to sign any related paperwork.**

Motion Clr Daniel, Seconded by Ctz Mbr LaRochelle, 3-0-0.

Ms. Dean explains the town is going a great job going after expression of interests and because of this the agenda we are discussing now is a result of it. Ms. Dean was invited to attend a webinar on this subject and was provided an opportunity to bring this forward even if it was a 1 for 1 match but the great thing was it was over a 12 month period. She recommended the town pursue this and if awarded allow for fundraising through organizations such as the Southbridge Business Partnership or Historical Society. If they can't raise the funds the town just declines it. Clr Adams asked if that would hurt us for other grants, Ms. Dean noted she would find out but didn't believe so. Clr Daniel noted not all grants are fully funded and looks at this as 50/50. He also asked how involved this construction would be, Ms. Dean replied QR Code Readers, audio, Kiosks.

**7. Town Manger update on Cannabis establishments in town; retail, cultivation and lab.**

Clr Adams noted he brought this forward to the Town Manager because of the number of Host Agreements and wanted to get an update. Town Manager stated retail has 4 Host Agreements for retails: Green Meadows has been in operation for about a year, they have paid into the contribution, working on the community compact with them now, has medical and cultivation is going well. They are employing 80 people 40% of which are Southbridge residents. Cady Brook retail just opened. Green Path is still under construction but should open in May. Mellow Tiger is in limbo, nothing has begun including permits or work with the Cannabis Control Commission. Cultivators: Green Meadows has already been briefed and the Dutchmen have not progressed but more needs to be followed up on with them and he states someone else is looking to come to town as well. Labs: LabX should be open later this Spring. Town Manager and Mr. Rumsey have continued to follow up because of the Pavement Management Plan which will help pay for it. Ms. LaRochelle asked if the one retail establishment that hasn't really moved on (Mellow Tiger) anything was where the new fire station was going to be built, Town Manager

stated it was. Clr Daniel asked if it was industry wide for these Host Agreement to be slow moving or failing to follow through. The Town Manager stated he wasn't sure but can look further into it. He believes there were those who thought it would be a gold mine but may not have known what they were getting into, there could be a lot of factors. Clr Adams noted one retail establishment (Mellow Tiger) hasn't moved forward with anything and has not met their Special Permit Timeline, should we send a letter to owners of this Host Agreement asking them to appear in front of the P&D Subcommittee? Their contract with the town is over 2 ½ years old. The Town Manager mentioned he was a bit frustrated and said he can reach out to counsel or just send them an email to attend. Clr Adams noted he can set up a meeting just for them if the Town Manager would like.

## **8. Adjourn**

Motion by Clr Daniel, Seconded by Ctz Mbr LaRochelle, 3-0-0, 6:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Adams