

**Downtown TIF Advisory Committee
153 Farmington Falls Road
September 9, 2015 6:00 p.m.**

Minutes

TIF Committee members present were Richard Davis, Alison Hagerstrom, Ron Gelinias, Joshua Bell, Paul Mills, and Cindy Gelinias.

Kevin Madore, Tom Saviello, Byron Davis, John Moore, Gary Edwards, Cindi Ferguson, and Mike Mansir were unable to attend.

Mrs. Hagerstrom called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

ITEM 1: To Approve the Minutes of the July 8, 2015 Meeting

Mr. Bell made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2015 meeting.

Mr. Gelinias seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5 – Affirmative 7 – Absent

Motion carried.

ITEM 2: To Review the Banner Designs

Mrs. Hagerstrom said the Banner Design Committee has finalized the design. She said there are three areas where they will be displayed, and she distributed printouts of the banners. Mrs. Hagerstrom said the banners will follow the same design format and each area will depict a graphic distinguishing that area: Front Street will have a train; Downtown will have the clock tower; and West Farmington will have the grange. She said the words – Experience – Explore - Enjoy are the tag lines. Mrs. Hagerstrom suggested they consult with Signworks owner, Mike Monahan, to get a cost estimate to refine the designs. She said it would be good to have Franklin Printing print it on vinyl.

Mr. Mills made a motion to contact someone like Mr. Monahan to get a cost estimate for further refining the design and a cost for printing the banner on vinyl.

Mr. Gelinias seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5 – Affirmative 7 – Absent

Motion carried.

Mr. Davis said we may be able to fund the production of the banners from the Franklin Printing TIF because we have used it before for marketing and printing promotions.

ITEM to 3: To Hear an Update on the Church Street Parking Lot Project

Mr. Davis said the closing was scheduled for September 14th, and we have asked for an extension to October 14th, which was approved. He said the extension is because of the Town's cash flow, and one of the tenants has refused to move out and this matter is now in the hands of the sellers. Mr. Davis said there may be further issues with removing the tenant's personal possessions and vehicles. He said we should schedule a walk-through prior to the closing date to view the interior building and inventory any personal property left behind to determine if it belongs to the sellers or tenants and decide how best to dispose of them. Mr. Davis suggested inviting demolition or salvage contractors to walk through the property before we begin demolition to determine if there is anything the Town could sell to offset the costs.

Discussion followed how best to advertise or contact salvage contractors.

Mr. Davis said he has been talking with Mr. Underkuffler about drafting a formal agreement for the shared use of the alley between the Homestead and Renys to be voted on at the Annual Town Meeting in March. He said there was a site walk-over meeting on September 3rd with the abutters: Homestead Bakery owner, Laurie Danforth; Renys owner Bob Reny, District Manager, Barry Moody, and Store Manager, Tom Burr; and Franklin County Children's Task Force representative, Caitlyn Bogar. He said Steve Braconi was also contacted and he is apparently in favor of any improvements, but he couldn't attend the meeting. Mr. Davis said there are two main safety concerns: conflict of delivery trucks and foot traffic, and snow/ice coming off the Renys roof. He said designating a foot path with an imprinted sidewalk would minimize this concern, and he distributed photos and diagrams of the alley. Mr. Davis said Renys has installed roof breaks and there is no way to further mitigate that issue on their side, so he came up with an idea of installing steel posts with a shed roof along the Homestead side of the alley but it wouldn't be attached to their building. He said it could be made attractive with lighting to encourage people to walk under it, and installing temporary bollards at the Broadway end would prohibit vehicles driving through. Mr. Davis said it would be good to memorialize the public use of the alley for the future in case an abutting property changes ownership. He stated it would exempt the abutters from slip and fall liability but not snow/ice falling on someone from the Renys building. Mr. Davis said this project could be funded through the Downtown TIF.

Discussion followed regarding parking in the alley, fire truck access, along with Church Street parking lot time limits, reserved spaces, and plowing.

ITEM 4: To Hear an Update on the Slum and Blight Designation for West Farmington

Mr. Davis said photos have been taken of West Farmington and we received a copy of Wilton's application to review. He said it is a permanent designation that will be voted on at the Annual Town Meeting in March.

ITEM 5: To Consider Recommending an Amendment to the Downtown TIF Program to Require an Annual Minimum Tax Increment Capture

Mr. Davis said he agrees with Assessor, John O'Donnell, that it is much simpler to look at the recommended project and its estimated costs in order to set the amount of TIF capture, and not lock ourselves into a percentage. He estimated that \$25,000 TIF capture makes a \$.05 difference on the mil rate. Mr. Davis said the mil rate is also impacted by the overlay which has been underfunded over the years, and the Selectmen increased it to \$26,000 this year.

Mrs. Hagerstrom said the numbers are simpler to figure if a TIF is designed for a specific project, whereas the Downtown TIF wasn't designed for a specific project.

Mr. Bell said he got the impression from the other four Selectmen that they wouldn't agree to a minimum percentage limit on the Downtown TIF.

Mr. Mills asked if the Church Street parking lot was a multi-year project.

Mr. Davis said it should be completed in two years.

Discussion followed regarding a contingency fund in the TIF for marketing, banners, landscaping, and commemorative plates.

ITEM 6: To Discuss Other Business

Dates for the next meeting were proposed and Mrs. Gelinias will send out a Doodle Poll to the members.

Mr. Gelinias made a motion to adjourn at 6:46 p.m.

Mr. Davis seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5 – Affirmative 7 – Absent

Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cindy Gelinias, Planning Assistant.