

Southfield Redevelopment Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
SRA Conservation Commission Meeting
Monday, March 9, 2015 @ 7:00pm
Conference Room, 223 Shea Memorial Drive

Directors Present: Bill Minahan, Vice Chairman
Chris Aiello, Clerk
Kelli O'Brien-McKinnon
Patricia O'Leary
Ralph Rivkind
Lyndsey Kruzer
John Brewer

Directors unable to attend: Walter Flynn
Robert Rizzi

Also in Attendance: Jim Young, Project Manager
Scott Bois, Treasurer/Collector
Steve Ivas, Conservation Agent

The Vice Chairman called the Board of Director's meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Minutes

VOTED: Motion of Chris Aiello, seconded by Kelli O'Brien-McKinnon, to approve the open session minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on February 17, 2015
6-0-1 vote Aiello abstained

VOTED: Motion of Kelli O'Brien-McKinnon, seconded by Chris Aiello, to approve the executive session minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on February 17, 2015, not to be released until after the purpose has been resolved
6-0-1 vote Aiello abstained

VOTED: Motion of Chris Aiello, seconded by John Brewer, to accept the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on February 23, 2015
Unanimous vote

7:00 PM PUBLIC HEARING – Conservation Commission

The Board of Directors opened the Public Hearing at 7:05pm. The legal notice was published in the Patriot Ledger on Feb. 21 & 28, 2015 on a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA).

Mr. Gene Crouch, VHB, presented the RDA application on behalf of Pulte Homes of New England LLC. He identified the Transit Village project location, proposed demolition work, the large wetland complex, and the four former NAVY buildings, paved areas and utilities to be removed. A portion of the demolition (one building) would occur within the 100 ft. buffer zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands. Temporary erosion controls would be installed to protect the adjacent wetland resource areas and all debris created by the demolition would be removed from the work site.

Mr. Rivkind was informed that the former NAVY structures were located within the Transit Village footprint.

Mr. Ivas indicated that the measures taken to protect the wetlands were adequate, and recommended the SRA Conservation Commission issue a Negative-3 Determination of Applicability with conditions, for the installation of erosion controls, approved by SRA, prior to the start of demolition activities.

The Board was informed that the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program received a copy of the RDA application, and that all demolition work would occur outside the limits of NHESP habitat protected areas.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lenore White, Independent Wetlands Observer, stated she requested the application be sent to NHESP because the text in the RDA application noted that the proposed work was adjacent to or within habitat areas of rare species and rare wildlife. Ms. White also requested that hay bales and silt fence be installed directly in the rear of one structure because of the very steep slope into wetlands, and that the area be continually monitored to ensure that the erosion controls were working properly during the demo work.

Mr. Brewer was informed that all the conditions discussed would be included on the authorization form.

VOTED: Motion of Ralph Rivkind, seconded by Lyndsey Kruzer, to close the Public Hearing

Unanimous vote

The Public Hearing closed at 7:10pm

Board Measure 15-003

VOTED: Motion of Kelli O'Brien-McKinnon, seconded by Chris Aiello, to approve the Request for Determination of Applicability dated February 2015 submitted by Pulte Homes of New England, LLC for demolition activities at the Transit Village project, and to issue a Negative-3 Determination with conditions for erosion controls approved in writing prior to the start of activities, continued monitoring with written reports on erosion control effectiveness, and upon approval from NHESP.

Unanimous vote

FY15 Supplemental Budget

The Board reviewed the FY15 Additional Appropriation Request of \$443,500 and the five (5) departments impacted with increased operational expenses: Board of Directors, DPW, Legal, Pension & Benefits and Education.

Many of the increases were related to the legislative changes and implementation. Discussion outlining the requested appropriations ensued. The SRA would now be responsible for providing DPW services through June 2015 for items such as street lighting, grounds maintenance and snow removal. Snow removal costs exceeded more than \$150k since January. Mr. Minahan inquired about the SRA applying for emergency reimbursement from the State.

The Board was reminded that the Tax Plan included reference to MOA's for reimbursement of services provided by the Towns from January - June 2015. Police and Fire Service costs were already included in the FY15 Budget as well as Education. An increase for education was requested for costs associated with a Special Education student. Ms. Kruzer was informed that as long as revenue exceeded expenses any unexpended funds would fall to free cash certification in the following year.

Legal expenses were discussed. Ms. Kruzer stated additional control of legal expenses was needed. She was informed that Counsel has been advised to provide a budget and scope for future tasks; if additional funds were required the request would come to the Board. Mr. Rivkind asked to see the February legal bill before it was entered into the warrant process.

Mr. Rivkind was informed that the tax levy was \$200K less than Fiscal Year 2014 resulting in a reduced residential and commercial tax rate. The Treasurer/Collector outlined the balanced FY15 budget including revenue sources and how the data fed into the recap sheet for calculation of the tax rate.

Board Measure 15-004

VOTED: Motion of Lyndsey Kruzer, seconded by John Brewer, that the Southfield Redevelopment Authority raise and appropriate the sum of \$443,500 to provide for the increase in operation expenses for fiscal year 2015 in accordance with the attached worksheets

Unanimous vote

7:05 PUBLIC HEARING – TAX CLASSIFICATION

VOTED: Motion of John Brewer, seconded by Kelli O'Brien-McKinnon, to open the Public Hearing
Unanimous vote

The Public Hearing opened at 7:30pm

The Board was informed that the legal notice was published in the Patriot Ledger, and that the SRA Board of Assessors met and recommended a tax shift of 1.42%.

The Treasurer reviewed the FY15 Tax Recap Sheet, noting increased values and decreased expenses (as compared to last year) resulting in a tax rate of \$11.39 for Residential and \$22.12 for Commercial/Personal Property. This equated to a residential savings of \$2.08 from last year's tax rate and \$8.61 from last year's commercial rate. Ms. Kruzer was informed that the reduced residential tax rate equaled about \$800 in savings on a residential valuation of \$400K.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. McKinney, Weymouth CFO, was informed that the Advisory Board was unable to provide a budget

recommendation because they didn't have a quorum, but the Board of Directors needed to go ahead and approve the Budget in order to set a tax rate and submit the FY15 Tax Recap to MA DOR.

Mrs. Parsons, Rockland, noted the meeting was being recorded for WRPS. She was informed that the Southfield Tax Rate (added to the Town's tax rate) would occur in FY16.

Mr. Rivkind stated that LNR's commercial parcels were not developable because they were not serviced by a road. He felt the Board should leave the residential rate as is and give the developer, whom he felt had been over assessed for the last couple of years, a break for a year.

Mr. Aiello and Ms. Kruzer agreed that LNR benefited from the savings on the residential tax rate and the commercial rate.

Mrs. Parsons, Rockland, stated that LNR had commercial property all along Shea Memorial Drive and all of it was serviced by a public roadway.

Mr. Hart, Rockland, stated that assessed valuations were based on the property's accessibility to build.

Mr. Barry, Starwood, stated that was not true; abandoned NAVY buildings in Southfield had excessive valuations, which was the reason for the ATB cases, that it was inconsistent with surrounding towns. He further stated that LNR/Starwood would settle that issue in tax court.

The Vice Chairman stated it was not the Board of Director's job to determine assessed values.

The Treasurer/Collector informed the Board that a representative from DOR Division of Local Services recently reviewed every Southfield parcel and value, that the SRA had to work with those certified values, that any land owner had the right to file abatements, and that LNR has filed abatements and appealed every parcel they owned regardless of condition or value every year since FY13.

**VOTED: Motion of John Brewer, seconded by Chris Aiello, to close the Public Hearing
Unanimous vote**

The Hearing closed at 7:50pm

Board Measure 15-005

VOTED: Motion of Chris Aiello, seconded by Lyndsey Kruzer, that this meeting was noticed by publication in the Patriot Ledger on Feb. 21 & 28, 2015. The meeting having been duly noticed, the Board of Directors approved the recommendation of the Board of Assessors to set a tax split for FY2015 with a shift of 1.42%, with no Residential or Small Commercial Exemption. In addition, the revenue sources as identified in the FY15 RECAP form is hereby approved.

6-1 vote Rivkind opposed

Ms. O'Leary was informed there was no update on Weymouth's Service Agreement.

The Treasurer provided a brief outline of the mechanics involved in adding a Southfield tax rate to Town tax bills; noted the urgency of identifying the responsible party for future Parkway maintenance; and he recommended, prior to the close of FY15, that the Board appropriate \$324K from free cash to restore the Stabilization Fund.

Discussion ensued on the upcoming FY16 Budget and the services no longer provided by the SRA as of July 1, 2015. The Board was informed that there would be potential free cash available to aid the budget and transition into FY16

VOTED: Motion of Chris Aiello, seconded by Lyndsey Kruzer, to adjourn the meeting

Unanimous vote

The meeting ended 8:00pm

Mary Cordeiro, Recording Secretary

Bill Minahan, Vice Chairman

Documents reviewed during the meeting:

Pulte Homes RDA application

FY15 Budget Worksheet

FY15 MA DOR Recap