

APPROVED
WOBURN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MINUTES FOR THE OCTOBER 27, 2020 MEETING
****MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM PLATFORM****

Chairman Queenin called the October 27, 2020 Woburn Redevelopment Authority meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and called the roll.

1. Roll call of members

Mr. Wayne McDaniel, Mr. Art Duffy, and Chairman Queenin were present; Mr. Gary Fuller and Mr. Dave Ryan were absent. Planning Board Director/WRA Administrator Tina Cassidy and City Planner/Grant Writer Dan Orr were also in attendance.

2. Approval of minutes: June 23, 2020 and September 22, 2020 meetings

Queenin called for motion to approve the prior meetings' draft minutes if members were prepared to do so.

Motion to accept the June 23, 2020 and September 22, 2020 meetings, made by Duffy;

McDaniel seconded, for discussion. He stated that he was not in attendance at the June 23, 2020 meeting and could not make a motion on this matter.

Members agreed to postpone a vote on adoption of the June 23, 2020 meeting minutes until a sufficient number of eligible voting members are present at an upcoming meeting.

Roll Call Vote on the motion to accept the September 22, 2020 meeting minutes, as submitted

Queenin-Aye
McDaniel-Aye
Fuller-Absent
Duffy-Aye
Ryan-Absent

Motion carried, 3-0-0.

3. Bills to be paid

Queenin asked Cassidy if there are any bills that have been received by the Authority since the last meeting.

Cassidy stated that there are two bills before the authority for payment: the first, in the amount of \$13,867.74 (payable to MassCOR), is for the purchase of street furniture in the downtown area. She added that members had authorized the procurement of street furniture in an amount up to \$20,000 at its February meeting.

Cassidy further stated that the second bill is in the amount of \$981.90, payable to the Group Insurance Commission (GIC).

Queenin asked about the status of installing the new street furniture. Cassidy stated that some of the street furniture has already been installed, including benches at the new pocket park and receptacles along Main Street. She is unsure of the timeline relative to the installation of the remainder of street furniture but can obtain clarity on that point from the Deputy Superintendent of Public Works, Lenny Burnham.

Queenin called for a motion to approve the bill roll, as submitted.

Motion to accept the bill roll, as submitted, made by McDaniel;
Seconded by Duffy;

Roll Call Vote on the motion to accept the bill roll, as submitted

Queenin-Aye
McDaniel-Aye
Fuller-Absent
Duffy-Aye
Ryan-Absent

Motion carried, 3-0-0.

4. Monthly financial report

Queenin asked for the figures of the monthly financial report for the period ending August 31st. The Authority's Operating and Sign/Facade Program current account balances are \$85,101.14 and \$16,294.15, respectively.

Motion to accept the monthly financial report, as submitted, made by McDaniel;
Seconded by Ryan;

Roll Call Vote on the motion to accept the monthly financial report

Queenin-Aye
McDaniel-Aye
Fuller-Absent
Duffy-Aye
Ryan-Absent

Motion carried, 3-0-0.

5. Update on Storefront Façade and Sign Program, including financials, interest in program expressed since last meeting and efforts related to recent expansion of sign grant eligibility area

Orr stated that he has received an inquiry from the business owner of a Nail Salon (“Impression Nails”) located at 440 Main Street to upgrade the existing business signage in the form of a new awning. He added that he provided the business owner with the relevant guidelines and procedures paperwork and will plan to keep members posted as to any further updates at upcoming meetings.

Queenin asked how much the prospective applicant intended to invest on a new sign. Orr stated that the applicant is still seeking quotes, so he is not yet aware of an amount.

6. Correspondence

Chairman Queenin asked if there is any correspondence to submit for the record. Cassidy responded that there is none.

7. Update on various downtown-related activities and projects

Queenin asked if staff was aware of how the BrickYard was doing with the use of the Marlowe Park during the outdoor dining season. Cassidy stated that she has seen anecdotally that its business appears to be operational, with required social distancing in place for the outdoor dining area. She added that no entertainment in the form of live music or movies had been offered over the summer to discourage crowd gathering.

Queenin asked if there are any additional updates to share regarding projects in the downtown area. Cassidy stated that Orr is prepared to provide a series of updates on a list of active downtown projects should members be interested this evening, or to wait until November when additional members may be present. Queenin responded that he is in support of relaying the updates at this meeting.

Orr proceeded to provide brief updates on a number of projects in the downtown area. Most notably, the Armory project has been completed; all other projects remain ongoing or are seeking the required municipal permitting to move forward.

Queenin asked for more specific information relative to the 27 Montvale project. Cassidy responded that permitting for that project occurred several years ago by the City Council with multiple extensions granted to keep the permit current, but it is her understanding it is being constructed as a multi-family project.

8. Authorization of Char to execute acknowledgement of release of expiration of covenant in 1968 Urban Renewal Plan (8 Roessler Road)

Cassidy provided an overview of the request before the Authority to release a property located at 8 Roessler Road that is currently subject to restrictions under the City of Woburn’s 1968 Urban Renewal Plan. Because the property is proposed for a transfer of ownership, and the duration of the plan was only intended for 40 years, the request is to formally document a release of the subject property from the terms of the Urban Renewal Plan, with the release to be recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

Queenin asked if the draft release form language has been reviewed by City Solicitor Callahan Doucette. Cassidy responded that the language has been reviewed by the City Solicitor and verified that it is subject to notarized signature by the WRA Chair. She added that she intends to provide the document to Chairman Queenin, if approved by the Authority, within the next 24 hours.

Queenin called for a motion on this matter.

Motion to approve the Chair's authorization of the release of property located at 8 Roessler Road from the Covenant of the 1968 Woburn Urban Renewal Act, made by McDaniel;
Seconded by Duffy;

Roll Call Vote on the motion to approve Chair authorization of the release of Covenant, as stated above

Queenin-Aye
McDaniel-Aye
Fuller-Absent
Duffy-Aye
Ryan-Absent

Motion carried, 3-0-0.

9. New/Other Business

Queenin stated that the next WRA meeting may be held on either November 17th or 24th and left the decision to other members.

Cassidy stated that she would like to poll the availability of members specifically for the evening of November 17th to both accommodate potential unavailability of members because of the Thanksgiving holiday and to allow staff to schedule the meeting to coincide with a scheduled Planning Board meeting on Nov. 17th. Members expressed general support for rescheduling the next WRA meeting on November 17th.

Queenin stated that he also takes no issue with the proposed 2021 meeting schedule and asked members to communicate any scheduling conflicts to Administrator Cassidy.

Queenin asked Cassidy to provide any updates that she might have available relative to the Microenterprise Grant Program. Cassidy responded to provide a brief background on the program purpose and indicated that the total award for City of Woburn microenterprises is \$320,000. She added that qualifying businesses are eligible to receive up to \$10,000, although there are a number of qualification thresholds that must be met based on factors such as the number of employees and income.

Cassidy stated that approximately four (4) Woburn businesses have qualified for microenterprise grant funding to date, which means that a large amount of funding remains for eligible Woburn businesses. She added that remaining funding is available on a rolling applicant basis, until December 2021, and that it is possible that all remaining funding may be pooled with other recipient communities in the future so that those communities with greater need may take better advantage of underutilized funding.

Cassidy further stated that any businesses with five (5) employees are less interested in grant funding for their business operations may access all Microenterprise Grant program information and application materials on the City's main webpage (the grant program is highlighted as an announcement).

Queenin stated that this program seems to be ideal for many of the small businesses along Main Street to help mitigate pandemic-related operational losses. He added that he has had a couple of inquiries in his line of work and would encourage others to refer businesses to this information as members come across other potential applicants.

Queenin asked if the City has any resources to offer with regard to "coaching" prospective applicants with voluminous paperwork. Cassidy stated that the City is very limited on resources for coaching or guiding applicants through the application process, but she explained that the written program guidelines tend to be very explicit. She added that she is happy to try to obtain answers for prospective applicants who might have more technical questions on the guidelines if they are inclined to reach out to her via email.

Queenin stated that he would like to keep abreast of this program and prospective applicants to the extent possible. Cassidy added that she will commit to emailing a link regarding the program information and application materials directly to WRA members, allowing them to quickly forward such information as they may come across interested business owners.

Queenin asked if there was any additional business for discussion. Cassidy responded that there is none.

10. Adjournment

Seeing no further business, Queenin called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn the October 27, 2020 WRA meeting at 5:24 pm, made by McDaniel;
Seconded by Duffy;

Roll Call Vote on the motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:24 pm.

Queenin-Aye

McDaniel-Aye

Fuller-Absent

Duffy-Aye

Ryan-Absent

Motion carried, 3-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 5:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Orr

Dan Orr
City Planner/Grant Writer

APPROVED