

Groton Municipal Building Committee – Prescott School - Minutes

5-5-2016 Call to Order 7:04 pm by Greg Sheldon, meeting at Prescott School

Present: Greg Sheldon, Halsey Platt, Becky Pine 7:06pm, Val Prest, Annika Nilson-Ripps, Bruce Easom, Anna Eliot

Public: Ann Wortman, Mary Jennings

Voted to approve minutes:

3/31/16 – 1st Easom, 2nd Prest, Vote – unanimous – correct spelling of Eliot’s name

4/7/16 – 1st Easom, 2nd Pine, Vote – unanimous – Eliot’s abstained

4/28/16 – 1st Easom, 2nd Pine, Vote – unanimous – Eliot’s abstained

- Sheldon, Easom & Eliot were just at a meeting with Mark Haddad, Josh Degan & Superintendent Rodriguez. The School’s consultant said that by Mass General Laws Statute a regional school district cannot pay rent to a municipality. Sheldon met on Wednesday with Dr. Rodriguez and Allison Manugian to discuss this fact. The GDRSD could pay rent to a non-municipal entity.
 - GDRSD is carrying \$60,123 for next year as an expense to stay in Prescott.
 - Sheldon reminded the superintendent and Allison that this committee is not the one negotiating with the school district, the selectmen will do that later.
 - Jarret Stanton did say that escalating over 5 years the rent from the current ~\$60,000 up to 80% of the market rate rent was reasonable in his eyes.
 - Easom clarified that the state law does not prohibit rental to a municipality but it does require language allowing it in a regional agreement.
 - Eliot said that Allison and Dr. Rodriguez do not want the GDRSD listed as an anchor tenant in our report – debate ensued.
- Platt said that Stanton and Byrne of GDRSD said that the upper floor and 4 hours of access per week to the 1st floor conference room was sufficient in the March 2016 meeting with Easom, Sheldon, Platt, Stanton & Byrne.
- Sheldon reminded everyone that the committee did not individually interview Evans with the full committee because it would likely be perceived by the other 27 groups interested in space as showing a bias towards Evans On the Common.
- Mary Jennings suggested a working session with the entire school committee to review this report.
- Eliot agreed that we do not need to make adjustments to the committee’s report in a hurry.
- Platt suggested that we edit the committee’s report in Fall 2016 after a series of outreach meetings.
- Platt suggested that the Selectmen reappoint this committee to do this public engagement.
- Pine acknowledged that there is budget uncertainty in a number of different departments and that we should continue the financial modeling after this town budget cycle is completed.
- Wortman said she could understand the high tension for the school district given their current request for an override.

- Wortman said that the implementation of this report will require ongoing work, discussion, resolution, etc.
- Eliot said “Nobody is saying ‘Sell the building’, I am not saying ‘Sell the building’”
- Sheldon discussed strategy for Monday night’s selectmen’s meeting.
- We discussed the wording for the Prescott School Development Committee:
 - The committee agreed that the Friends of Prescott should have a seat on the 5 member future committee even if they were not selected as the managing partner for the building.
 - Motion to accept the wording of the Prescott School Development Committee Charge
 - 1st Pine, 2nd Easom, Unanimous 6-0-0
 - Sheldon to copy the committee on the language as revised
- Discussed the possibility of canceling the meeting with selectmen for this coming Monday
- Committee agreed to edit our report by:
 - Eliminating the reference to GDRSD
 - Include rent assumptions of \$60,000 from GDRSD
 - It was agreed to address this in the addendum
- Vote to change
 - the wording in our report and spreadsheets from GDRSD to Anchor Tennant
 - the floor plan graphic as discussed
 - to add two additional spreadsheets showing other financial models
 - Include the addendum as written and discussed
 - 1st Pine, 2nd Easom, 5-0-1 Eliot Abstained
- Eliot stated “I would like to see Evans come to this building. I think that 1/3rd commercial and 2/3rds community is not financially sustainable.”
- Platt said that the committee’s model has always been 2/3rds rental space and 1/3rd community space and that is how the building’s business model could generate \$100,000 in net revenue back to the town.
- Prest moved to adjourn 9:10pm

Respectfully submitted, Halsey Platt, Clerk