

**DOVER PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP
MINUTES OF MEETING
NOVEMBER 19, 2002**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Allen Schintzius, Parks Christenbury, Joyce El Kouarti, Frank Torr, Anthony McManus, Pete Lavoie, Dennis Ciotti, Beth Thompson, David Landry

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ron Cole, Margaret Stevenson, Chuck Maglaras

STAFF PRESENT: Bruce Woodruff, City Planner; Chris Parker, City Planner; and Jacqueline Freeman Recording Secretary

Tony McManus, in the absence of Chairman Ron Cole, Chaired the workshop and brought it to order at 6:34 PM.

Parks Christenbury said that the City Manager asked him to explain to the members and the people at home that there has been a lot of press lately about the Council passing a resolution capping the CIP at 2.3 million dollars and certain Councilors saying that certain projects should be moved. He said this Council resolution is something that will be enacted at a later date. The Board's mission tonight is to hear all the information that the City and the School is going to present. The Planning Board moves projects forward based on its attachment to the City's Master Plan. He said that there will be things that he will probably pass on as a Planning Board member that as a City Council member, when it comes time to decide where the money is coming from, he'll have a different decision. He said that The Board has a job to do regardless of what has been in the newspaper and regardless of the Council which is a completely different function than the Planning Board.

Bruce Woodruff echoed what Council Christenbury said. He said that the Planning Board's traditional role in assessing and recommending the projects in the CIP, which is a six year plan, and to focus mainly on whether it follows the Master Plan; the Dover Transportation Improvement Program, which is tied to Federal grant monies and not to worry about the money. He said what he would like the Board to focus on the first year in the CIP, but also look at all the other five years to be sure that it flows in following the Master Plan.

Mike Joyal, Assistant City Manager, stated that the CIP reflects the presentation of the 6 year program that has been put forth by the City departments for capital improvements needs. Included in the document is a financial analysis showing how the various projects are financed. He said that he hopes to get to a final approval stage by January so that they can get these projects under way in time for the bidding season which is late winter/early spring. The document breaks the projects down by financing source. He said that there is a list of all projects regardless of their funding source on Page 19 of the document.

The CIP document is a 6 year plan. He asked everyone to review the projects and see if they have a connection to the Master Plan and if not, to suggest recommendations that they can look into to make sure that they are heading in the right direction.

Chief Perry Plummer, introduced himself as the new Fire Chief and distributed handouts to give the Board background information on his projects. He explained how the City runs three ambulances. When Ambulance I is tied up the second ambulance at the Southend Station covers the City at that time and when they are both tied up then the third ambulance covers. He said that they look at getting 7 or 8 years out of an ambulance life expectancy. He said that they replace the #1 ambulance and it is then bumped down the line. It's imperative that they keep up replacement of the #1 ambulance to make sure that the number 2 ambulance is still service ready. He said that they typically buy low end ambulances and the cost is \$115,000 as opposed to \$150 – \$160,000. The bottom line is that they are not going to get more time out of the more expensive ambulance. He said that they typically spend \$10,000 - \$15,000 less on an ambulance than the neighboring communities and they are getting two to 5 years longer out of them.

Chief Plummer said that the breathing apparatus replacement is a safety issue. He said that one of the reasons for the replacement is that their equipment is old and unreliable and needs to be replaced. The feature on the new apparatus will add to the increased safety of the firefighters. He explained that if they waited the requirements would be changing and from a financial standpoint it would add about \$1,000 a pack after January 1st. He said that for 40 packs it would be about \$40,000. He explained about the grant process.

He spoke about the renovation of the Southend Fire Station and how they have cut back from \$200,000 to \$100,000 and that would be strictly for the expansion of the living quarters, a little bit for a training room and some safety issues around the station.

David Landry said that this would be a good time, not needing a vehicle for 6 or 7 years, for a Capital Reserve account to be established.

Chris Parker spoke on the McConnel Center saying that it was earmarked for education and a multi-use center. It has taken a 5 to 10 year period to rehab the building. The first year that the School Department has put money in is 2006 so they have tried to speed things up on the City's side to get the ball rolling on that project. They have worked with The architect Mike Lassel, and came up with a figure of \$675,000 for the first year. These monies would be earmarked for the final design and site plan and engineering of the site. They want to work on the brick repointing, cleaning up the entrances and replacing the windows to try to keep the cost of operating the building down. It is being used right now and that's why they are looking at putting in an elevator in the rear section which is the community recreation section. Chris said they would also like to do some hazardous abatement to the building in the first year.

Tony McManus asked if they have figured out who is going to use the building and how it's going to be divided.

Chris Parker said that they have a preliminary plan which divides up the building. He said that he would see that Tony gets a copy. The front portion will be taken over by the kindergarten and their district offices. DALC will take over a big part of the back section and the Recreation Department on the second and third floors. Chris said in answer to a question that he has been told that the condition of the heating system needs minor tweaking but is in good condition.

Dennis Ciotti how much money is being earmarked for the recreational side of the McConnell Building.

Chris Parker said that in the first year out of the \$675,000, \$150,000 is to be used towards the elevator in the rear section of the building which would help facilitate the use as a community recreation center. He explained that in the 1980 section of the building the windows are fine but the 1920 section needs to have some buttoning up and some of the money would be earmarked for the shell improvements. The majority of the repairs are in the front section.

Parks Christenbury said that he is hearing that out of the \$675,000 we are going to earmark \$150,000 for the elevator. He said that they have looked at last year to build the elevator, but now the School Dept. is asking that we transfer that money towards a grant.

Chris Parker explained that that is the CDBG funding and that money was allocated for this building. The hope is to reallocate the money to Woodman Park and then in next year's CDBG funding, ask for the funding for this building. He said that they had a problem with HUD, they weren't too keen on doing an elevator that wouldn't be used for two years.

Nick Skaltsis, Chairman of the School Board, said that there is more than an elevator in the plan. The plan for the City side is an elevator in the rear of the building that would function for the Recreation Department for ADA approval. The elevator that was funded by CDBG funds is in the front portion of the building and would be for school use.

Tony McManus said that when he voted for the elevator money from CDBG it was because it was guaranteed that it would be used for that purpose. He said that what you are saying now is that it won't be used for that purpose.

Nick Skaltsis said that is a decision that has to be made by the City Council. He said that they had a couple of things happen. They took a chance in competition with a couple of dozen communities to go for a grant for an elevator and they were able to get \$75,000 from an outright grant for construction of an elevator at Woodman Park. \$75,000 does not buy a three story elevator, therefore, the thought was that if they requested that the money be moved from the Old Middle School where they won't need it tomorrow to Woodman Park where they will use it immediately that combining that \$75,000 grant with the \$150,000 they already have in CDBG, they would provide Woodman Park with an elevator with no cost to the property tax.

Nick Skaltsis said that they are requesting a \$1,500,000 in capital improvements for two projects. The first is 1,000,000 to add 8 classrooms to the Dover Middle School. Four classrooms in each wing facing the parking lot. The \$500,000 in completing high school projects. He said that he received approval for a project that added an additional 8 classrooms in a wing outside the Auditorium. The money that they are asking for would complete that project, as well as do some interior renovations in the administrative suite. Nick went into the details with the aid of a power point presentation. He said that there has been some interest in constructing a storage building in the athletic field area. He added that this building would have flush toilets for both men and women.

At the Middle School the core facility was constructed for a 1,200 pupil population but the classroom size at 25 students per class, was constructed for 1,000 students. He said that there is no criticism on the part of the School Department or the School Board. They came in on budget and built a fantastic facility. No one knew that they would outgrow the facility in 3 years of its opening, however that is the case. The plan is to construct 8 rooms, 4 on each wing to relieve overcrowding. They are overcrowded by about 150 students. He said that they get a principal payment from the State for whatever they borrow for building aid. The amount that they are requesting \$1,500,000 is less than they are paying down in principal payments this year. He said that has been their goal for the last 3 years and continues to be their goal. They are paying down right now just under \$1,700,000 in principal payments this fiscal year. This will be approximately one nickel on the tax rate when these projects are done and bonds are sold and the building is on line.

Mr. LaSelva said that there are now 1,600 pupils in the high school. When the high school was first built, you had in excess of 1,700 pupils in that building, however at that time the building did not have some of the lavatories and the classrooms spaces the way that they are now configured. They did not have computer labs, special education classroom space and other kinds of space that encroach on regular classrooms. They now have 1,600 pupils and they are crowded. There are only 1 or 2 classrooms that are available one or two periods during the whole day to put students for a study hall or some other kind of class activity. Mr. LaSelva said that they are hoping that these 8 rooms will relieve that crowding. They are planning on housing all their freshmen in a good portion of those rooms. He said that they will still have a fairly large high school and they will have to address what they are going to do with the high school population as they progress through the next negotiation phase with Barrington and Notingham. If you were to look down range, in two to three years the high school numbers could be pushing around 2000 students if all the population that is now growing was to impact in Dover. He said that they have to negotiate with the other communities. He said that they are also looking at other kinds of approaches to education and trying to think outside the box and recognize that they can't have all the education take place within the confines of those 4 walls so they are looking at more cooperative kinds of education, more job experience kids of education.

Nick Skaltsis said that on the issue of out of district students that they have come a long way with Barrington. They have four years left on a contract with Notingham. He said that Barrington has one more year after this year but they have recognized the seriousness of Dover's problem. They are into negotiations with Oyster River about taking some of their students. He said that he can't emphasize enough that this is a double edge sword. They are talking about too many kids but they are also talking about revenue and these two communities make up about 10% of their revenue in excess of \$3,000,000 that comes into the district. Once they start saying we want less of those students in the building we are also going to see a reduction in revenue and you are not going to see an equal amount of reduction in the cost of operating the building or the personnel. If we told Barrington not to come back to Dover in September, the cost of administration and of operating the building would remain the same and that burden would be taken over by the tax payers. He said they are walking a very fine line, they want some balance. Reasonable growth that we can maintain and doesn't flood the high school to the point that it becomes dysfunctional. Barrington has grown in double digits, twice as fast as Dover and that's why they had to say that's enough.

John O'Connor, Principal of the Dover Middle School, had an overhead presentation along with handouts of the middle school layout showing the locations of the proposed additions and classrooms located on the three floors of the school. He went over the enrollment totals. He said that over the last 5 years they have averaged over 15 to 30 new students into the district above and beyond their projected enrollment. He said that in the next couple of years after 2004 and 2005 those numbers will grow increasingly larger. He said that the number one concern of the parents is the class size. He said that they would like to get the 5th and 6th grade classes in the 21 to 22 range. He said that they are asking for a total of 8 new classrooms.

Tony McManus asked what the plan was in 2006 when the maximum of 1,200 students is reached.

Nick Skaltsis answered that they may look at putting some excellerated 8th graders at the high school, or a couple of groups of 5th graders in the elementary schools. The builder told them that if they build both wings out at the same time they would save \$200,000. That is why the cost of the project is the way that it is, because it makes sense.

Nick Skaltsis said that there is one more caveat that they have been working on. He said that they have asked the Middle School principal to make a presentation on potentially expanding his alternative program. He said that they might take that into consideration if they have additional space to take in some out of district students in an alternative style program. This might be a way for the district to bring in another \$150,000 in additional revenue

David Landry said that we have about 400 to 500 approved residential projects that will be built. The economy will probably result in more students in public school and less in

private schools. He said that this strongly suggests that somewhere in these 6 years there should probably be another entry for land procurement and a fourth elementary school. He thought that in the outlining CIP years there ought to be an entry for the expansion of core areas. He said that he has no problems with the projects and he felt it was a great time to borrow money.

Pete Lavoie, Community Services Director, started with General Government – City Hall – Heating Improvements and explained how the heating system in City Hall is in very poor shape and compared it to heating an old house.

General Streets Improvements – Mr. Lavoie spoke on the number of streets that were involved.

General Sidewalk Improvements - Pete Lavoie elaborated on various sidewalks.

Drainage – Broadway Area – Pete Lavoie explained how critical this item is.

Local Share Transportation Improvement Program- Debt – Bruce Woodruff stated that the bottom line with regard to the debt financing for the TIP is that they are putting in place several of the six projects that were programmed from the 1999 Grant. They have secured 80% federal funding for the 6 projects that are currently going to happen in the next 2 years. They need a bit more money with debt financing to augment the fee that everyone pays when they register their car.

Joyce El Kouarti asked if there was anything planned for the intersection of Route 108 and Back River Road.

Bruce Woodruff stated that that was one of the 6 projects. He said that right now they are at 90% engineering on that and that he is hopeful that you will see construction in the Spring. That will entail coordination with the other signals also.

Dean Peschel spoke on the Drainage System Improvement Study Tolend Rd. Landfill, Cocheco River Dredge Spoils

Dean Peschel said that the Drainage System Improvements Study relates to the implementation of the EPA Phase II Regulations. The EPA came up with these regulations and Dover is one of the Communities that is part of this program. The goal is to improve water quality for our nations water bodies. The largest area of this program relates to Community Services for the storm water system. That system for the most part was our sewer system and storm system, prior to the separation program that went on in the 70's. This project gets the least budget and the least attention and as a result, it had maintenance problems building up over the years. As a responsibility in Phase II, we need to begin to understand our drainage systems better and to come up with ideas and plans for the quality of the water that is discharged from those systems into the water bodies.

Dean Peschel said that Tolend Road Landfill has \$500,000 price tag. He said that they are under a consent decree to put a landfill cap on to the tune of around \$28,000,000. He said that about four years ago a study was undertaken with the EPA and the State to look for an alternative remedy that would be more cost effective than encapsulating the contamination. The City is obligated to submit to the agencies a feasibility study which they will take and review and hopefully, use that as a basis to amend the decision to a less costly remedy. He said that the monies in 2005 and 2006 represents the monies for the construction portion of what they anticipate will be the likely remedy. The \$500,000 in 2004 is to cover the design and additional field studies that will be required to complete that design.

David Landry asked if the City and the other parties have explored selling their liabilities to a third party contractor just in the event that there are cost overruns so we won't get tagged with them.

Dean Peschel said that they have looked at that. He said that he doesn't think that they would ever be able to get out from their total responsibility but they could by way of insurance, buy their way out to a certain number and they have reviewed it.

Dean Peschel stated that the Cochecho River Dredge Spoil Cell is one project with two aspects to it. He said that the dredging was permitted by DES so the City is at the point where the Army Corps of Engineer is coming up with the final design. He said that there was a landfill that was created at that site from about 1915 to about 1960 and it was closed in 1960 to that standard. NH DES has instituted a process for all pre 1980 landfills and this landfill for some reason had never been registered so it fell of everybody's radar screen. He said that they are going to cap a large portion of the area of that landfill area and will create a much more secure closure than what is there currently. As part of the City's obligation, they we have to register it and know the boundaries of that entire landfill to come up with a remedial action plan. There is money in this item to cover some of those costs as well. The City is responsible for 20% of the cost of that cell.

Improvements of Glenwood Ave. – Pete Lavoie that this starts from Central Ave. all the way to Sixth St. and includes drainage, curbing and sidewalks. There is also money in the sewer fund to replace the sewer in 2005. It is basically a design for this year.

Reconstruction of Henry Law Ave. Pete Lavoie said that that is in the design stage right now. They will be having some public meetings with the residents on preliminary design.

Improvement to Bellamy Road – Pete Lavoie said that the advisory commission has been working with the residents of Bellamy Road.

Tony McManus called for a 5 minute break at 8:30 PM.

Tony McManus brought the workshop back in session at 8:35 PM.

Frank Torr left the workshop at 8:30 PM.

Pete Lavoie stated that the reconstruction of Broadway will hinge on the drainage improvements that need to be done.

Butterfield Gym Improvements – Pete Lavoie said that last year they did the foundation work and the \$55,000 is for windows. They are also looking at windows at City Hal. There is \$40,000 to repair the roof and the rest would be to complete the front and the estimate that they got for tying in to what the Rotary Club is doing was a \$140,000 more than the estimate. They are waiting for the Rotary to do the roof part over the stage that they have built.

Tony McManus asked if there are still plans to make the Butterfield Gym into a cultural center or has that been scrapped.

Pete Lavoie said that there is still talk but they can't stop doing improvements to the building. The roof and the windows and the foundation are important. They have already spent over \$200,000 pinning the footings under the building because it was built on river bottom.

Parks Christenbury said that the Butterfield Gym a recreational building and there is nothing on the table to change that so the money that is coming before us is what has to be done to maintain that building. To move those services to any other facility would be one to two million dollars. It will probably remain in inventory for many years to come and we should make the recommended repairs to it.

Water Exploration – Pete Lavoie said that he has some funds available and they hope to be able to use it to purchase some land that will shortly go before the Council. Pete said that there are a couple other location in the City, in areas that are not developed, that they would like to go and drill. He said that we are looking at the future of Dover.

Bouchard Well and Treatment Plant – Pete Lavoie aid that they are working with a couple of firms on getting the Bouchard Well design going.

Radon Removal – Pete Lavoie said that they have not received the final determination from the EPA on what they want them to do.

Water Main Replacement for Dover Point – Pete said that this is to continue construction on the first phase on Stark Avenue down to Thornwood Farms area and now they will be dealing with a State road with different criteria. The 1,000,000 from last year is still in there but their plan is to complete next year from Thornwood Farms all the way to Cote Drive. This needs to be done for improvement of water quality and fire flows.

Water Main Replacement for Broadway Area – Pete Lavoie said that this is the oldest part of the City. They've had money in there and they did have several water main breaks on Grove St. so they did use some of those funds to do the repairs.

Water Main Replacement - Route 9 bridge – Pete Lavoie said that the overpass is going to be rebuilt by the State and he believes that the construction will begin next fall. This money is here to have it in place.

Pump Station Equipment Replacement- Maintenance – Pete said that that figure is for pumps. He said that Finance recommended that they put them in a package because of the quantity of pumping stations and that is why they are in a lump sum cost. He said that the life of the replacement of those parts is 20 years.

Pump Station Upgrade – River St. – Pete said that that pump station is getting to be 12 years old and we need to do some grit removal and the equipment needs to be replaced. He said that grit is hard on equipment.

Heavy Equipment – Front End Loader – Pete said that that has been in the budget for a few years. He said that he has been speaking to Jeff Harrington and the heavy equipment can be purchased out of the Capital Reserve.

Tony McManus asked Pete if he had an estimate on what the Water and Sewer Rate would be if it was passed as is.

Pete Lavoie said that in speaking with Jeff he doesn't believe that it would have much of an increase. He said that Jeff has tried to balance it out.

Beth Thompson asked what the Police Communication for \$65,000.

Parks Christenbury said that the Police Department has upgraded along with the rest of the State to a digital communication system but they are \$65,000 short in completing that. He said that it looks like the State Police may pick that up so we may be able to scratch that.

Tony McManus said that if the Planning Board takes a vote and makes a recommendation that that the Board should continue to be advocates for its position when it gets to the Council and to make the case for what we feel is important for the City. He said that we should not roll over and play dead just because there is a resolution limiting the amount.

Tony McManus said that members of the Board may have been contacted by Brian Stern of the Land Use Open Space Committee with regard to the recommendation on Page 21, that the Open Space Land Acquisition is set for the FY 2007 and they feel very strongly that it should be moved up. He said that they have been negotiating with 2 or 3 property owners. He said that some are very close to final negotiations if the money is there and if the money is not there, and the City is not able to proceed and buy the land, then some of these properties are going to go to residential development. He said that the Board has just gone through the rezoning because of concerns by many people of the tax rate. He said that they heard that the City gains by buying land and preserving it as open land. He said that it seems to him that one compliments the other and it would be foolish to make

the effort to rezone some areas out of residential property and at the same time not come forward with money to preserve open space and reduce the tax rate further.

Joyce El Kouarti said that the \$2,500,000 would be for future use. The current contract would probably take close to \$800,000.

Tony McManus said that the City has applied for LCHIP money. The State won't consider giving the money unless the City has a contract in hand. If they are still negotiating because the City not going to come up with some funds, then we don't qualify for LCHIP.

David Landry felt that if the Board looks at this as a \$2,500,000 or nothing thing, there is a good chance that it will become nothing. Maybe if it's spread out at \$500,000 a year each year for 5 years, then it's not nothing. He said that he hopes that the Council does not make it an all or nothing thing. He felt that it should be spread out.

Discussion ensued with regard to the CIP public hearing at the meeting of the 26th.

Beth Thompson made the motion to adjourn.

Dennis Ciotti seconded.

VOTE U/A