

**PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
DECEMBER 10, 2002**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Parks Christenbury, David Landry, Dennis Ciotti, Joyce El Kouarti, Beth Thompson, Allen Schintzius, Ron Cole, Pete Lavoie, Tony McManus

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Chuck Maglaras, Peg Stevenson, Frank Torr

**STAFF PRESENT:** Steven Stancel, Planning Director and Jacqueline Freeman,  
Recording Secretary

Chairman Ron Cole started the workshop at 6:00 PM.

David Landry said that the Board should be looking at the various CIP items to see if they meet the Master Plan recommendations and if so, ask if it is an immediate need, a short-term need or a long-term need.

Parks Christenbury agreed with David Landry. He said that the Board should not be looking at the financial side because that is the Council's job. He said that the Board should look to see if there are projects that are in the Capital Projects Portion of the CIP, that should be placed in the General Fund.

Steve Stancel said that the Planning staff looked at all the debt finance proposals and matched them up with the recommendations in the Master Plan and then allocated a high, medium or low value based on the Master Plan.

Parks Christenbury said that he is prepared to make an amendment to the 2.5 million dollars for the Open Space. He's committed to funding for Open Space and he believes that most of the members of the Council are, but the issue with the Council will be how to divvy up the money. Some people have come up with \$500,000 a year for five years. He said that he doesn't feel that it is fair for the Planning Board to decide that because it is a financial issue. He is going to offer an amendment to put the 2.5 million dollars to the front of the project in FY2004 and when it gets to the City Council level, the Council can decide if it should be 2.5 million dollars or \$500,000 per year.

David Landry stated that he agrees with him. Most of his reasons for spreading it out was that instead of it being a one-time thing, it could be a thing that stays on the radar screen and becomes the fabric of what we do with our CIP.

Parks Christenbury said that the Board could move the Open Space money up to FY 2004, let the community and staff comment on it and then let the Council make the final decision on how they will handle it. He said that there has to be a balance and he thinks that the rezoning has gone through as smoothly as it has is because this Board has made a

decision to make a balance that if we are going to create more industrial/commercial land, we are also going to put land forever into the hands of the community.

Ron Cole said that if the Board is going to be the watch dog of the Master Plan, he doesn't feel that it is the responsibility of the Planning Board to try to dictate to the Council how the money should be spent. We need to let them know what needs to be done according to the Master Plan and they can figure out how to pay for it.

Tony McManus said that he agrees and made the suggestion that the Board also put in 2.5 million dollars two years from now. He said that he is afraid that if we put 2.5 million in and it is accepted, that there is going to be a perception that the money is in and that is going to be the end of the program. He said if we put more money further down the road, it will say that the Board thinks that it is important enough that more money should be committed once we have some better ideas on what properties are still available. He spoke about the other communities that are putting away money for open space.

Ron Cole asked Tony McManus if he meant to put 2.5 million dollars in FY 2004 and again in FY2006.

Tony McManus answered yes.

Steve Stancel stated that he is now seeing developers from CT, NJ and NY wanting maps and looking at large parcels all over the City.

Dennis Ciotti said with regard to Open Space, that he has never had so many people speak to him on any one issue. He felt that this is something that Dover should have been doing a long time ago. We should have been protecting ourselves. He said that not one person said that they didn't mind another \$2.00 per thousand increase in a one time deal.

Joyce El Kouarti said that the 2.5 million would only add fourteen cents per thousand to the tax rate. She added that other communities have added about \$1.00 per thousand for Open Space.

David Landry said that land is an appreciating asset and many of these things are not appreciating assets and yet we have to pay interest on them. He said when he was on the Council, he couldn't get anyone to discuss this issue.

Beth Thompson said that she just wanted to add caution to this effort to put some land into open space. She said that she believes that it should be done but that there are no checks and balances to this and there are competing interests. Beth Thompson said that there are other committees that have selected the same properties and there is no connectivity. Beth also stressed the need for confidentiality.

Parks Christenbury said that as a Councilor, he is a proponent that staff become involved in any future allocation. He said that Beth is right, it would be crazy to give a large amount of money to a group and then have that group go out and compete against a piece

of land that another arm of the City is interested in. He said that the Open Space Committee has put in an awful lot of work and with not a lot of supervision, but they haven't been playing with any real money either. There will be a caveat that there will be staff oversight when real money is involved.

Joyce El Kouarti said that she agrees 100% with both comments. She said that she serves on the Open Lands Committee and one of the concerns that she has had is that this is not an appointed committee. There is no review process and anyone who is interested in the project becomes a member. If you are going to give this group a budget whether it's 2.5 million or \$500,000.00, you need to make sure that you have a group of people who are willing to work with other departments and are qualified to make these types of decisions.

Parks Christenbury explained that the committee structure would change and would have to go through the appointments process. When you talk about putting this amount of money into it, it changes the scope. It would be like DIDA because most of what they are doing would be confidential. He said that they would operate mostly around the same guidelines. He said that it is very important that they work closely with Beth Thompson's office because there can't be any competition.

Joyce El Kouarti said that the Open Lands Committee is accountable to the Conservation Commission before it can move forward.

Pete Lavoie explained the Broadway drainage saying that it's a million dollar project and the first step is at Red's Shoe Barn where it then goes under the railroad track. He said that somehow \$500,000 to be spent in that Broadway area for a total of three million dollars was omitted every year after that.

David Landry said that this issue will not go away and we should deal with Broadway first. He said that Glenwood Ave., Henry Law Ave. and Bellamy Rd. could be put off a little bit further compared to Broadway.

Pete Lavoie said that the drainage on Broadway is a #1 priority.

Pete Lavoie explained that Henry Law Ave. starts at Washington St. and goes all the way to Penny Lane. He said that they have been asked to continue the work to Back Road which would be another \$500,000.

Dennis Ciotti said with regard to Henry Law Avenue, that since the City doesn't know what is going on with the CWD or the Butterfield Gym, he feels that this should be on the low end of the scale at this point in time.

David Landry said that it's possible that we would like to see a bridge go in at the end of Washington Street at some point and that may be something to work toward, but until all issues are resolved it could involve what happens to Henry Law. He said that we shouldn't put something in and then in 3 to 4 years feel that we have to tear it out.

Steve Stancel said that they do plan for things like that. He said that it was anticipated that we would have more development on the waterfront at this time than we do and he agrees that Henry Law Avenue is one item that could be put off a year or two.

Parks Christenbury said that there are issues that have not been resolved such as the paper street, the waterfront and what we do with the bluffs. He said that there is some talk about realigning the approach with Washington St. He said that he would feel safe moving it out two years until things are settled.

Tony McManus said that he wouldn't have a problem with moving it out but thinks that we should be putting money in there for the Washington St. Bridge.

Discussion ensued with regard to the placement of the potential vehicular bridge, the pedestrian bridge, the waterfront development and the traffic study.

Steve Stancel stated that the first meeting on the traffic study will probably be in January and the traffic report will probably be done in May or June.

Beth Thompson stated that it will take a few years before there is enough traffic down there to merit a bridge.

Tony McManus said that there has to be some access down there before anyone is going to develop it.

Parks Christenbury felt that there has to be a lot of selling that goes on with regard to the waterfront. He said that there is a group that doesn't want a dime spent on it and wants it to be a kite flying park.

David Landry asked if the traffic study is going to contemplate the possibility of a garage downtown.

Steve Stancel said that the study will include an analysis of parking and a recommendation regarding a garage. Steve explained that the City gave a \$150,000., zero interest, CDBG loan to the owners of the mill to tear down the steam heating plant and put in surface parking. There is also a conceptual design to build decks at the time that there is interest. There has been zero interest by the mill because along with the trolley, they have enough surface parking. What comes first the chicken or the egg. He said that you don't want a 5 million dollar white elephant sitting there. Steve Stancel said that there is parking.

Parks Christenbury said that he believes that Fire and Rescue needs both items, the SCBA and the ambulance, however, he does not believe that the items should be in the Debt Finance Portion of the CIP. He said that it is easy to throw them in the debt finance side because you are playing with pennies here. As a City Councilor, he would want this moved to the Operating side of the CIP. He said that we need to start moving items like

this out of the Debt Financing side and into the Operating side of the budget. He said that these articles are here because the past Councils did not have the political will to pay cash. He said that he would like to remove both items.

David Landry said that he agrees. He emphasized that the time to set up a capital reserve is when you do not need a capital reserve and not when you need something the next year. He said that this is the time to establish a reserve fund for the fire truck.

David Landry asked if there was a reason why Local Share Transportation Improvements Debt, which is our 20% share, is characterized as low.

Steve Stancel said that the reason that it is characterized as low is because they probably won't need this \$100,000 dollars. He said that they have a lump of money in the Vehicle Registration Fee Fund.

Discussion ensued with regard to the Tolend Road Landfill, the Dredge Spoil Funds and the schools.

Parks Chirstenbury said that he was on the School Board last year and he said that they made a commitment that they are only asking for what they were retiring. They are coming in with two projects are not going to ask for anything else even though they could. They are hoping that the rezoning proposal that was passed by this Board will be passed by the Council because if the rezoning fails, then all bets are off. Next year's CIP will look completely different than what you are looking at tonight. Parks said that the enrollment at the high school is a catch 22. He said that you could get rid of the tuition students and not have to add on to the high school, but then you loose the revenue and you can't eliminate the staff because you still need them. The School Department made a commitment to only bond what they are retiring.

Workshop adjourned at 6:55 PM.