



CITY OF DOVER

**COCHECHO WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE - MINUTES**

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: McConnell Center Room 305, 61 Locust Street, Dover, NH
Meeting Date: **Tuesday, March 20, 2012**
Meeting Time: **5:30 pm**

PRESENT: Jack Mettee (Chair), Dana Lynch (Vice Chair), Steve Brewer, Frank Torr, Kim Schuman, Thom Hindle, Sean Fitzgerald, Jim Schulte, Brian Gottlob

EXOFFICIO MEMBERS: Jack Buckley, Dean Trefethen, Michael Joyal

STAFF: Steve Bird-City Planner, Dan Barufaldi-Economic Development Director, Gary Bannon-Recreation Director,

OTHERS: Dean Peschel, Doug Dede, Chris Wyskiel, Mark Dickinson, Molly Hodgson Smith, Gary Gardner, Gar Morse, Tom Severino, Gordon Leedy, Mike Asselin, Wil Boc, Tom Fargo, Norm Fracassa, Gary Green, Bob Carrier, Don Medbury, Doris Grady, Karen Weston, Otis Perry, Catherine Cheney, George Maglaras, Joyce El Kouarti, Mark Moeller, Others.

1. Meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

2. Minutes of May 17, 2011

Motion: Torr made the motion to approve the minutes, Brewer seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

3. Citizens Forum

Mettee asked if any citizens would like to make any comments. There were none.

4. Changes to the Agenda

None

5. Correspondence

None

6. Old Business

None

7. New Business

A. Update and Presentation from Mark Dickinson on Revised Concept Plan

Chris Wyskiel stated that the purpose of the presentation was twofold, one to update the work done by Dickinson Development in the last year and two, to request an endorsement of the concept plan by CWDAC.

Dickinson: They have had a very busy year. They have meet with Dan Barufaldi and local realtors on a number of occasions. They looked at issues like the viability of underground parking given the soil conditions and the cost of parking garages. Both are not economically feasible. The apartment

units will be quality units in the \$1.50/square foot range for rental. They undertook market studies to determine if the regional economic recovery is sufficient enough to proceed. They reviewed absorption rates and determined that 100 apartments per year was the maximum. He explained that apartments are more marketable now and condominiums are difficult to finance. Design elements have been preserved to be consistent with the CWDAC Design Guidelines. There are about 12-14 permits required for the project. We have been meeting with the state and federal agencies to discuss the issues. A significant issue is the condition of the soils, both unsuitable and contaminated soils. There are over 100,000 cubic yards of bad soils that will need to be removed. We have been talking with the City about the ability to place these soils in the dredge cell to help fill it up and provide cover. There are between 10,000 and 30,000 cubic yards of contaminated soils and we have been working with the City to seek permits to allow the use of the dredge cell.

Dickinson updated the group on the revised concept plan. One big change is in the increase in how much will be built in Phase 1, which will now include the restaurant/office building, the 108 unit apartment building, 14 attached single family units, and the 8 or 12 live work units. The surface parking lots would be heavily screened. River Street would be extended to the adjacent City parcel to allow access to the potential site for a UNH boathouse. We looked at the bluff area in more detail. We want to bring the bluff down to grade by blasting to rock. The blasting needs to be done at the same time as the Phase 1 construction due to the impacts. We have not figured out what will be built in the bluff area yet.

Gary Gardner (Sheskey Architects): The public park is still the driving force for the project and the apartment building is a key to the project success. The design of the restaurant is an important component of the project. The 8 live/work units have been retained. The apartment building will be a design unique to Dover and most of the parking will be hidden behind the building. The apartment building will contain 40 one-bedroom units and 68 two-bedroom units.

Gordon Leedy of VHB presented a summary of the permitting issues. The park plan is very similar to the original plan, but has been impacted by erosion along the shoreline. The walkway continues along the river for the entire property. The park will be wider near the bend in the river. The sheet piling installed for the dredging will remain in place but will be refaced to make it more attractive. Trees that will be removed are invasive species. The permitting process is quite complex. Wetland impacts associated with riverbank stabilization will be the primary concern of environmental agencies.

Dickinson: We reviewed the previous plan with the revised plan and prepared an analysis. A sheet was distributed with the comparison. River Street has shifted inland a little. We want to be able to do Phase 2 site work during Phase 1. Dickinson asked the CWDAC for an endorsement of the revised plan so that he could move to the next step of spending funds to complete the permitting. Phase 1 will include more than required by LDA.

Mettee asked CWDAC members for any questions or comments.

Trefethen: Will the bluff material be used to back fill?

Dickinson: Not really, we may need to import material.

Trefethen: I would like more detail on the bluff removal.

Dickinson asked Tom Severino to speak to that question.

Severino: 250,000 cubic yards will be created from the bluff material. 50,000 cubic yards is unsuitable material of overburden that will have to be put in the dredge cell. 200,000 cubic yards

will be created by blasting and crushing the rock on site. Since the blasting will be lower in elevation, the homes on top of the bluff will not be impacted. The material produced will be used by Severino in other projects offsite.

Lynch: The impact of not being able to put in underground parking seems to be driving the large amount of surface parking. Have you had any discussions with the City about partnering to build a parking garage?

Dickinson: We have had no direct discussions yet but would be willing to do so.

Brewer: What is the finished grade of the bluff area? What is the development plan for the bluff area? Who will build in the bluff area?

Dickinson: We don't know who would build yet. I have had some discussions with representatives of a land, sea, and air museum about locating on the site, but they would require a big subsidy. A hotel/conference center has also been discussed, but not sure if there is a market for it yet. An office building would only work if you had a tenant. Grade will be 10 feet near the river and 25 feet at top of Washington Street.

Gottlob: What are the differences in the rental units?

Dickinson: The biggest difference is no underground parking and the number of units has decreased. The building will mimic the mill design.

Schulte: What is going to be done in Phase 1?

Dickinson: Phase 1 will include the entire River Street with utilities, entire riverbank stabilization and public park, the restaurant/office building near the bridge, 8 live/work units, Washington Street to the end of the property, and the 108 unit apartment building. It will take 30 months after closing for completion.

Trefethen: Concerns have been expressed about traffic flow at the end of River Street where you will have no other outlet.

Dickinson: We will have to build a turnaround on the City property.

Brewer: What is the difference in commercial square footage from 2011 and 2012 plans? How can the committee be sure the plan meets the design guidelines?

Dickinson: There is a small reduction in commercial.

Brewer: Will the location of on-site detention basins or other storm water devices cause the relocation of buildings?

Leedy: Detention is not much of an issue, treatment is the issue. Water has to be treated before it can be released to the river. We will use under pavement filtration and tree boxes. We will be as green as possible, but will not have a large detention basin.

Schulte: LDA requires 22,000 square feet of non-residential space.

Dickinson: We may have to ask for an amendment to the LDA, but I believe that we are substantially in compliance with the LDA. An office building is not feasible unless there is a tenant in hand.

Hindle: The original proposal included three live/work buildings, but now you have only two. I am pleased to see three entrances to the site.

Dickinson: That will depend on the market.

Trefethen: What is the timeline for starting? The bluff removal would be better in the winter.

Dickinson: Timing is tied into receiving DES permission to use the dredge cell, in hopefully a month. The rest of the permitting will take 9 months. We hope to close in April of 2013.

Schuman: Is the footprint of the apartment building larger than the previous building?

Dickinson: Two buildings have been combined into one.

Tom Fargo: Is the sub-base that you are putting in for the parking lots going to be suitable for converting to buildings in the future?

Dickinson: Yes, because the sub-base will be all new.

Seeing no more questions, Mettee said that he had received a list of questions from a member of the public that he would read.

Mettee: What is the square footage of the park?

Dickinson: It is bigger than before. The area in front of the single family homes may be an access easement for the walking path.

Mettee: You should provide a calculation of area including access easement.

Mettee: Will pier still be open to the public?

Leedy: The dock area has been redesigned to make it easier to permit and it will be public.

Mettee: Is there public parking available for the park?

Dickinson: Yes, along the new River Street.

Mettee: What number of permits has been filed for?

Dickinson: None yet because plan is not finalized.

Mettee: Is there a current marketing plan for commercial and townhouses?

Dickinson: Yes for both. We have meet with Peggy Carter and other brokers.

Mettee: Who receives the money if the penalty provisions of the LDA are accessed?

Dickinson: The City.

Mettee: Will there be an independent audit of the expenses incurred by Dickinson Development?

Dickinson: No, unless someone wants to pay for it.

Mettee: This is the last question from the list. Is this plan similar to the original Northland plan?

Dickinson: I am not familiar with that plan.

Mettee: We can ask the planning staff to take a look at that.

Mettee: We have been asked to endorse this concept plan. I am looking for input from members.

Brewer: I would feel better endorsing a plan that has a design for the bluff area. I need more detail.

Torr: I am concerned with the amount of surface parking. The plan seems very different than the original. We need this to be a unique project.

Gottlob: I am concerned about the amenity value of the project that includes the park and the built environment. I am not seeing that yet.

Hindle: We need to preserve the live/work areas.

Lynch: There are a few lose ends that need to be answered first. We should try to develop questions for Dickinson to answer.

Trefethen: This is a lot to digest. There are important elements still there.

Fitzgerald: I am concerned about the diminished commercial spaces and need to add more detail to Phase 2.

Schuman: We need more time to make a decision.

Schulte: Agree that more time is needed. The plan is becoming too residential.

Brewer: We need to make a timeframe for making a decision so it doesn't drag out.

Mettee: We need to set a time to meet again and summarize the concerns that we have. The list I have includes: # of parking spaces, park area, 7 acre bluff plan, quality of development, diminished commercial concern, LDA compliance issue, and design guideline compliance.

Dickinson: The plan may not be consistent, but the project is bigger now so the financial benefits are better.

Mettee: How long will it take you to respond?

Dickinson: Two weeks, but I don't know how to respond to some concerns. It is hard to project bluff development. I am worried that I will be held to whatever I show there.

Mettee: Let's meet again on April 17, 2012 at 5:30 PM in the same location if it is available.

Lynch motioned to adjourn at 7:35 pm, Torr seconded. So voted.