

Medway Redevelopment Authority
March 23, 2016
Thayer Homestead
2B Oak Street
Medway, MA 02053

Members	Andy Rodenhiser	Ray Himmel	Michael Griffin	Doug Downing	Paul Yorkis
Attendance	X	X	Remote Participation	X	X

ALSO PRESENT:

Stephanie Mercandetti, Director, Community & Economic Development
 Amy Sutherland, Recording Secretary

The Chairman called the meeting of the Medway Redevelopment Authority to order at 6:30 pm.

Member Griffin called in to participate remotely due to geographic distance.

BSC Invoice:

The Medway Redevelopment Authority is in receipt of an invoice from BSC group in the amount of \$15,297.73.

On a motion made by Doug Downing and seconded by Andy Rodenhiser, the MRA voted by roll call vote to pay the invoice for BSC in the amount of \$15,297.73.

Roll Call Vote:

Doug Downing aye
 Andy Rodenhiser aye
 Mike Griffin aye
 Ray Himmell aye

Approval of Minutes:

February 17, 2016

On a motion made by Mike Griffin and seconded by Ray Himmel, the MRA voted by roll call vote to accept the minutes from February 17, 2016.

Roll call Vote:

Doug Downing	aye
Andy Rodenhiser	aye
Mike Griffin	aye
Ray Himmell	aye

On a motion made by Doug Downing and seconded by Ray Himmel, the MRA recessed their meeting at 6:46 pm to attend the Oak Grove Public Forum set to start at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call Vote:

Doug Downing	aye
Andy Rodenhiser	aye
Mike Griffin	aye
Ray Himmell	aye

Member Griffin did not participate in the Oak Grove public forum.

Member Yorkis arrived at 7:00pm and attended the Oak Grove public forum.

Public Forum Presentation on the Development of the Oak Grove Urban Renewal Plan:

Chairman Rodenhiser gave brief opening remarks and welcomed members of the public. He explained that this will be one of four public forums on the Oak Grove Urban Renewal Plan.

The presenter from the BSC Group, Russ Burke was introduced, along with Mary Ellen Radovanic.

Russ Burke began the presentation by explaining that in the back of the room there is a map. Yellow post-it notes have been provided for anyone to write down comments and concerns and place accordingly around the map.

The public was made aware of the previous planning efforts for the Oak Grove Area. In 2007, there was a Density by Design completed by the UMASS Studio Project. The Town Master Plan also included reference to this area in 2009. In 2013, the BSC Group completed an Oak Grove Mixed Use Feasibility Study. The creation of the Medway Redevelopment Authority was approved at Town Meeting in 2013 and was established in 2014. Funding for the Urban Renewal Plan was approved at the 2014 Fall Town Meeting. It was explained that this plan is a powerful tool for development. The feasibility study focused on the “Bottle Cap” lots off Route 109. The study identified developable areas along with any regulatory constraints. This report also established goals for the site. Some of these included expanded economic development opportunities, increase local tax revenues, create sustainable jobs while maintaining the historic character. The Urban Renewal Plan builds on these previous efforts. One of the requirements of the plan was to gather public input. The results of the economic and market analysis will be included. From here, there will be conceptual plans, a fiscal analysis and implementation strategies developed.

The Urban Renewal Plan needs to be submitted and reference the statement of need. The URP boundaries need to be delineated. There also needs to be a project area eligibility designation. The plan will include both goals and objectives along with noting specific parcels for acquisition and assemblage. It will also include potential targeted public improvements (water, sewer, and drainage).

It is important to note that without the plan and participation by the public sector, development would not occur. The bottle cap lots have been sitting vacant. The private sector has not been able to develop in the oak grove area. Some of the funding programs were noted to secure outside funding for the development of the area.

Can the town use Chapter 90 funding for the Urban Renewal Plan?

The consultant responded that this type of money is typically not used for this purpose.

What happened with the deeds?

The Consultant responded that there are some parcels with title issues. In some situations, people were deeded lots, and some residents died without a will and this has created some title issues. The town has cleared many of the titles. The Urban Renewal Plan can assist with this for those properties with unknown owners. The town can inquire through eminent domain. The title will then be cleared. If a parcel is acquired, it must be fair market value. For some of the unknown titles, some money needs to be set aside for escrow if an owner comes through.

One resident commented that she has paperwork which has been gathered through the years about these parcels. The problem is that the town did not place liens on these parcels over the years. The town also did not clear these titles through the years. This issue was brought up years ago. The only ones to benefit from this will be the town and Mr. Williams. There is a question if all of that land is actually Mr. Williams.

The consultant responded that he is very interested in seeing those records in terms of clearing the titles, but in respect to their role, town has authorized BSC to proceed through the URP. Town has the desire to see what development opportunities may exist.

How the fair market value is established?

The Consultant responded that there have been appraisals completed on some but not all properties. In the URP, it requires inspections on all parcels to determine their conditions and market value. If acquisition is going to occur the property must have two appraisal reports.

Are there any Brownfields with these parcels?

The Consultant responded not that he is aware of.

What can the town negotiate without money?

The Consultant responded that the established plan will show funding and sources. There was money allocated at the last town meeting to fund the development of the URP.

Will the project require sewage?

There is currently no public sewer on the site, but the 2008 sewer extension project brought sewer service to the outer parts of the site.

There was discussion that some of the lots over time have merged together. The ownership pattern is 1/3 owned by Williams, 1/3 owned by the Town and 1/3 owned by various owners. The problem with many of these parcels is that there is no access, so many of the parcels are landlocked. Under the Urban Renewal Plan regulations, this area could meet the criteria as property that is blighted open.

One of the residents expressed concern that Mr. Williams owns land which he has not been taxed on. This information was gathered from the Board of Assessors. There is a question about how many other parcels might be misrepresented. The Consultant responded that due to the fragmented ownership, the record keeping in the town was not what it should have been. We want to get this resolved to move forward.

Site Environmental consideration:

The site is about 47 acres. This is located off of I-495. This is a desirable area for developers. It is also very close to Interstate Route 95 and the MA Turnpike. The area has frontage on Rt. 109 and is also bordered by West Street and Alder Street. The site is also adjacent to Medway Business Park. The site is relatively flat. The ownerships of these lots are divided between the town, a single private owner, and multiple property owners. The resource map was shown. This was created as part of the feasibility study. The wetland areas and buffers were marked. The potential vernal pools were noted. The 47 acres does not include the Cybex properties but they would like to be included.

Land Use:

The land use is mostly forested, and adjacent to areas of residential, commercial and industrial. The current zoning is split between industrial and residential. This area is within the Medway Groundwater Protection Overlay District.

Zoning:

The site is currently zoned Industrial III on the West Side and Agricultural Residential II on the east side.

Will there be rezoning of the area?

There will need to be a plan and will make recommendations for what type of zoning would be necessary. This type of change would need a vote at town meeting. This change would be required to follow the same procedures as with other zoning changes. It requires a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting to be adopted.

Utilities:

There is water service available on site. The DEP will need to decide about any increase of withdrawal limits. There will be availability to tie into sewer. The town is allocated .895 MGD of flow.

Planning Approach:

The planning of the site will come from the design principals established in the feasibility study. The goal is to avoid creating strip commercial appearance. There is a need to create a sense of place and protect the resource areas. There will be an exploring of mixed use, along with promoting internal pedestrian circulation. The plan will need to meet the market demand. There will need to be adequate parking with low impact development.

Vision:

The draft vision was “As a gateway to Medway, the Oak Grove Area shall have a strong identity and image while sustaining Medway’s high quality of life for residents and businesses...”

Who are you reaching out to?

The MRA is trying to do as much outreach as possible. This information will be on the website. There was a mailing sent to 120 residents. Social and print media was also utilized.

What type of housing?

There should be consideration for mixed housing types.

What is the goal for work force housing?

There is a need for work force housing. In studies there is also a need for affordable rental units in town. It was suggested to look at this when creating the plan. Inclusionary zoning would allow for this.

Steering Committee:

It was explained that the steering committee is a variety of residents in Medway. The steering committee members act in an advisory capacity to the BSC Group in the development of the plan and can only make recommendations. They have no voting capability. The Steering Committee held their first meeting on February 2, 2016. Stakeholders are allowed to be part of this committee. The list of steering committee members was read aloud.

Goals:

The next step is to try to facilitate land assembly and disposition to advance the goals and objectives of the Urban Renewal Plan which reflects the town's priorities for appropriate development. The plan should also foster an environment for business to thrive and create sustainable jobs, while encouraging and preserving economic diversity and quality of life. There should be an integration with adjacent land uses and transportation networks (ex. shuttle buses to T stations) along with developing incentives to promote sustainable development.

There are specific eligibility requirements which the project will have to meet.

What is the definition of blighted area?

The definition of a blighted property was read aloud from the Urban Renewal Plan regulations.

Was the market analysis done on what the market can sustain?

Yes, the analysis does look at what the area can sustain for a 20 year span.

Will there be street lights?

The long term goal is to have a traffic light at the intersection of Route 109 and Trotter Drive.

Is there potential for widening Alder Street?

At this point, there is no answer to that question.

The concept plan does include the parcels on Trotter Drive. The balance of creating green space for those residents to work and live.

Next Steps:

The next meeting will be a working meeting with RDA and steering committee. The plans and comments will be looked at to put together a more refined vision for this area. It was suggested to the audience to jot down any comments and suggestions on the back board. Any questions can be addressed through Stephanie Mercandetti.

The goal is to put together a developable parcel.

The audience was made aware that the next public forum will be in the early part of summer.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Sutherland
Recording Secretary
Approved April 27, 2016

