

JOINT WORKSHOP of the Town Council held Wednesday, September 12, 2007 at 6:00 P.M. in the Council Chamber, Town Building, Harrisville for and within the Town of Burrillville.

PRESENT: Council President Nancy F. Binns, Councilors Kevin M. Blais, , John M. Karmozyn Jr., Norman C. Mainville and Cynthia L. Roe

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilors Wallace F. Lees and Margaret L. Dudley were excused.

Note: Councilor Cynthia L. Roe was not present at the beginning of the workshop.

OTHER PARTICIPANTS:

Burrillville Conservation Commission

Burrillville Land Trust

Burrillville Recreation Commission

Relative to consideration and discussion of placing an open space recreation bond on the 2008 ballot, as requested by Stephen N. Rawson, Chairman, Burrillville Conservation Commission.

Stephen N. Rawson, Chairman, Burrillville Conservation Commission,

acknowledged the difficulty of considering a proposal to place a bond referendum on the ballot during difficult financial times. However, Mr. Rawson said, it was the intention of the Conservation Commission, Land Trust and Recreation Commission to outline the many benefits of the proposal, which include:

- 1. Help to preserve the rural character of the community;**
- 2. Reduce financial impact on Town services;**
- 3. Provide passive and active recreational opportunities to enhance the quality of life;**
- 4. Preserve large tracts of land;**
- 5. Protect ground water and the Town's aquifers.**

Mr. Rawson asked Paul Roselli of the Burrillville Land Trust to make a presentation to the Town Council.

Paul Roselli addressed the Town Council, showing a video presentation.

Mr. Roselli addressed issues that the boards believed to be relevant to the matter, as outlined below:

- Why the Conservation Commission and Land Trust agree that this is the appropriate time for a referendum**
 - o Research and planning opportunities**
 - o Regional/national momentum**
- Why the boards support more open space**

- o Reduce tax burden
- o Improve recreation
- o Environmental
- o Alternative to development
- Public support for a referendum
- o Historic support
- o Use/value of open space/recreation land/farms
- o Supports Comprehensive Plan

Note: Councilor Cynthia L. Roe arrived at 6:20 P.M.

- How to protect land
- o Role of Private Entities
 -  Grant application
 -  Purchasing land
 -  Accepting donated property
- o Role of government
 -  Adopt suitable ordinances
 -  Increased fees associated with new construction
 -  Review development
 -  Referendum question
- Focus areas for conservation
 - o Areas near water
 - o Areas near existing open space, farmlands and recreation areas

Mr. Roselli asked the Town Council's support to move forward. He indicated that the boards would develop a plan, including more

specifics related to proposed areas, costs and how those costs could be paid. He recommended further discussion when the proposal is complete.

Kurt Schatz, Chairman of the Burrillville Recreation Commission, reviewed discussions related to an earlier presentation to the Recreation Commission. Mr. Schatz said that every year presents financial challenges but suggested that the Town needs to be prepared. Mr. Schatz supported having money in reserve to answer future opportunities, stressing that use of the money could be deferred until needed.

Stephen Rawson, Chairman of the Conservation Commission concluded the presentation, suggesting that the voters have an opportunity to decide. Mr. Rawson also discussed the timeframe, noting that issuance of any bond approved could be deferred until the time was right. Mr. Rawson discussed earlier open space and recreation bonds and the benefits realized by the Town.

Councilor Kevin M. Blais raised a concern that the electors might not understand that bonds must be paid, but might believe that bonds are grants that do not need to be repaid.

Councilor Blais also asked whether a bond is feasible, taking into account the tax cap. Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, suggested that more information would be needed to make a determination,

such as the extent of the bond, the number of years for which the bond would be issued, and other Town needs and obligations. Mr. Wood suggested that all financial decisions moving forward would be impacted by the tax cap.

Councilor Norman C. Mainville discussed the public notice process associated with any referendum question, which he said includes the cost to taxpayers. Councilor Mainville was confident that electors are fully aware that bonds must be repaid.

Councilor Mainville asked whether there are any bonds that would be fully paid in the near future. Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, discussed the planning of debt service. Debt service was discussed.

Councilor John M. Karmozyn, Jr. spoke in support of open space but voiced concerns about outstanding and up-coming debt. Councilor Karmozyn suggested that more information was needed. Councilor Norman C. Mainville agreed. Michael C. Wood, Town Manager, suggested that the administration could evaluate the proposal and report to the Town Council.

It was agreed that the Conservation Commission and Land Trust would provide a more comprehensive report at a future session.

VOTED to adjourn at 6:48 P.M.

Motion by Councilor John M. Karmozyn, Jr. Seconded by Councilor

Cynthia L. Roe. The motion was unanimous by the five members present. Voting in favor of the motion were Council President Nancy F. Binns and Councilors Kevin M. Blais, John M. Karmozyn Jr., Norman C. Mainville and Cynthia L. Roe. Councilors Wallace F. Lees and Margaret L. Dudley were excused.

The workshop was taped. The tape is on file with the record of the workshop.

Louise R. Phaneuf, Town Clerk