

**TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING - THURSDAY EVENING  
MARCH 11, 2010**

PRESENT: Marshall, Cordeiro, Parella, Barboza, and Herreshoff  
(arrived at 7:10 o'clock PM)

ALSO PRESENT: Diane C. Mederos, Town Administrator  
Diane M. Williamson, Director of Community  
Development  
Walter Burke, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Fred Serbst, Director of Public Works  
Craig Pereira, Pare Corporation  
Mr. Robinson Robinson, Consultant/Facilitator

The Council met in special session on Thursday evening, March 11, 2010 in the Town Hall, Council Chambers, beginning at 7:05 o'clock PM, Council Chairman Marshall presiding:

Matters Discussed

1. Golf Course Re-use
2. Animal Shelter

Documents Received

1. Feasibility Study of Alternative Uses for the Bristol Golf Course

**Golf Course Re-use**

Council Chairman Marshall announced that there are two (2) workshops being held tonight and the first workshop on the agenda is to review alternative uses for the Bristol Golf Course.

Chairman Marshall noted that the golf course has not "gone away" and the Town holds a lease which is renewed on a yearly basis should the land need to become available.

Director of Community Development Williamson stated that one of the Comprehensive Plan's action items was to explore the potential to use the golf course for additional industrial development. She noted that the golf course is currently zoned for manufacturing and that there are not many parcels left that have not been built upon.

Director of Community Development Williamson stated that the economic development element of the Comprehensive Plan was to explore the potential for creating more industrial parcels.

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Director of Community Development Williamson stated that Pare Corporation was hired and a small steering committee was created consisting of herself, Director of Parks and Recreation Burke, Councilman Cordeiro, and Planning Board members. She informed the Council that the steering committee "walked the site" with Pare Corporation and looked at various constraints.

Director of Community Development Williamson noted that Pare Corporation considered the economic development element with open space set aside and feasibility when preparing the proposed concept for future development.

At this point in the meeting, Director of Community Development Williamson introduced Craig Pereira of Pare Corporation who worked on the Feasibility Study.

Mr. Pereira explained that he was asked to look at the alternatives to inform the Town's decision making process regarding alternative uses for the Bristol Golf Course property.

Mr. Pereira explained that the process started by evaluating the environmental conditions as well as public infrastructure. Mr. Pereira looked at the industrial build out of the site using recommendations from the steering committee as well as an analysis of existing plans; mainly the Silver Creek Drainage Study, Open Space Plan, and Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Pereira explained that the first step was to develop the constraints analysis. He noted that primarily the northern piece of the site just south of Tupelo Street as well as the southern piece is severely constrained and has limited development potential due to environmental constraints, various easements, and deed restrictions.

Mr. Pereira noted that the portion of the site with the greatest potential for industrial development is the upland portions of Lots 22 and 23 located along Broadcommon Road as well as a small strip that has a deed restriction associated with it to the rear of the existing Industrial Park.

Mr. Pereira explained that one of the many options investigated was industrial lot development which was based upon minimal dimensional zoning requirements to see what the maximum potential could be. The typical lot layout of the existing Industrial Park which is rectangular in nature for industrial manufacturing development was looked at as well as the largest and smallest parcel to come up with a typical average size for an industrial

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parcel and given that information the result was 20,000 sq. ft. which is the minimum zoning requirement.

Mr. Pereira stated that Lots 22 and 23 have a combined area for development of approximately 5.5 acres which provide for 7 industrial lots, six (lots A-F) of which have the typical layout of the parcels in the existing Industrial Park with the seventh lot (lot G) not meeting the traditional industrial layout. He noted that potentially that could be reserved for municipal use, possibly the proposed animal shelter if the floor plan can be revised.

Mr. Pereira explained that the second piece of the conceptual development plan looked at the area south of Tupelo Street, Lots 36 and 47 including the duck pond. Mr. Pereira further explained that because of the various wetland constraints this area is proposed to remain as an open space, passive/active recreation area. He noted that this is a great spot for sitting or walking as it has pastoral qualities.

Mr. Pereira explained that the third piece of the conceptual development plan dealt with the southern portion of the parcel which is a fairly large portion of the site but severely constrained by the wetlands, ponds and area subject to storm flow. He noted that natural resource protection or enhancement was addressed in this area. He further noted that the Silver Creek Drainage Study and Open Space Plan look for different areas where storm flow or flood mitigation can be facilitated. He explained that the detention ponds can be expanded in order to achieve additional storm water mitigation in the area on Gooding Avenue that gets overtopped during storms.

Mr. Pereira explained that the fourth piece of the conceptual development plan dealt with the last piece of upland area which does have a deed and covenants associated with it. He further explained that it is part of the Industrial park and supposed to remain as open space with pedestrian access and no vehicular use or development. He noted that should the Town look to abandon that deed restriction there is the opportunity to offer some existing manufacturers in the Industrial park limited expansion to the rear of their sites.

Mr. Pereira noted that the four pieces of the development plan are based on recommendations from the Silver Creek Drainage Study, Open Space Plan, and Comprehensive Plan. He further noted that there are parcels south of the site that were recently acquired and would facilitate in the expansion of the Silver

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Creek Trail through the entire site, north and into the Town of Warren.

Chairman Marshall noted that keeping the open space component is a good idea as it makes a unique Industrial Park and that this would make the Industrial Park more attractive to businesses locating there.

Chairman Marshall asked if there were 7 available lots with Mr. Pereira answering affirmatively based on minimum zoning while noting if someone were looking for a larger floor plate they would be able to purchase and merge multiple parcels.

Chairman Marshall asked if a soil analysis was done with Mr. Pereira stating that hydric soil tests were done when wetland indicators were looked for but additional investigation would have to take place to fully understand the development potential.

Chairman Marshall stated that this is basically a tool that the Town asked for regarding future knowledge for Zoning, Planning and Community Development, Administration, and the Council to move forward in the event that an interested party needs a suitable location.

Councilman Cordeiro noted that he would like to see the site remain a golf course but would give the matter careful consideration should the need arise in the future. He further noted that when Billy Andrade, a professional golfer, returns home to Bristol he plays at the Bristol Golf Course with his friends.

Chairman Marshall thanked Councilman Cordeiro for being on the steering committee as he kept the element of golf in the discussion.

Councilman Cordiero noted that it wouldn't be a bad idea if in the future there was a young golfers program at the Bristol Golf Course as they do at Button Hole.

Director of Parks Burke noted that his issue with the golf course is that at one time it was a beautiful, big golf course and now it has been constricted by buildings and businesses. He further noted that 7 years ago netting had to be put on one side to protect the businesses.

Director of Parks Burke noted that with all of the effort that his Department and Community Development has done to the restoration of Silver Creek he is of the opinion that the golf

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course has a detrimental impact. He further noted that the chemicals needed to maintain the golf course leech into the watershed, flows underneath the High School, into DaPonte's pond, and into Silver Creek.

Director of Parks Burke noted that he would love to see a golf course at another location in Bristol with golf instructions at the Town Beach perhaps.

Director of Parks Burke stated that he has had conversations with Richard Sheridan, a Professor of Landscape Architecture at URI concerning the proposed park on Tupelo Street. He noted that as a classroom project, Professor Sheridan's landscape architect class will present Director of Parks Burke with twenty different renditions for possible uses of the golf course.

Director of Parks is of the opinion that environmentally the golf course is a very important part of Bristol and that putting trails and making an environment for the businesses that are around it to utilize is a good option.

Councilman Cordeiro reiterated that this is a future plan to have in hand for when the situation arises and that this is not something that would be done in the next year or two. He noted that his vision is to fill all the empty buildings in the Town first.

Director of Parks Burke stated that there is a lot of money available through NRCS and Save the Bay for bringing the golf course back to an active wetland. He noted that to receive this money it is required that the land would have to come under an open space land trust which is true in this situation.

Director of Community Development Williamson stated that the proposed plan is a guide for the Town to use moving forward over the years. She noted that the proposed plan shows that there are not as many parcels zoned for industrial use as has been speculated.

Councilman Cordeiro noted that he discussed with Councilman Herreshoff and Chairman Marshall the pond on the southeast corner, adjacent to C & C Yachts and thought it would be a good idea to secure an easement from his property to the pond so he could test boats for buoyancy.

Chairman Marshall announced that Bristol Parks and Recreation Department will be recognized for being the best in the State on

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Tuesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 12:30 PM at RWU with the President of the University attending.

Chairman Marshall noted that he would like to see the twenty different proposed use options from Professor Sheridan's class with Director of Parks Burke agreeing to provide those when available.

Fred Ramos of the Golf Course Study Committee noted his presence along with Mike Minutelli. He mentioned that Louis "Duke" Medeiros was not present this evening due to an illness. He stated that he would like to go on record that the Golf Course Committee is in favor of keeping the golf course open.

Councilman Herreshoff asked Mr. Ramos how many people he speculates use the golf course with Mr. Ramos noting it is hard to get that information from Everett Francis.

Chairman Marshall noted that there are no intentions of closing the golf course in the near future.

S. Michael Minutelli noted that he was informed that the golf course has "average play" and also noted that the golf course is being advertised on television.

Mr. Minutelli asked Mr. Pereira if he had to obtain any environmental permits with Mr. Pereira noting that was not part of this scope of work as he was looking at alternatives to see what the Town had for assets.

Sarah Amaral, former Town Administrator noted that the mentioned land was once owned by her father and that the land is wetland. She further noted that she goes by the golf course everyday and notes a steady decline in its use and she is of the opinion that it could be used for better things.

Keith Maloney of Van Wickle Lane asked what the current lease agreement was with Chairman Marshall answering it is a year to year lease agreement.

Councilman Herreshoff asked what maintenance Mr. Francis has to do at the golf course with Chairman Marshall stating that the uncle cuts the lawn presently but the responsibility belongs to Mr. Francis.

**Animal Shelter**

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Director of Community Development Williamson stated that Mr. Robinson was hired with the Council's support as a consultant to review the process to move forward with the proposed animal shelter. She stated that Mr. Robinson achieved this by objectively meeting with all parties involved and putting together a "white paper" with the next steps, action items, who's going to do what, and how to bring the Friends and Town together.

Mr. Robinson explained that the presentation will go over the process and recommendations. He noted he has prepared a white paper that he will forward to Director of Community Development Williamson after this evening's meeting so he can incorporate any pending comments from this evening's meeting.

Mr. Robinson stated that the Friends has organized and hired Rauhaus, Freedfield and Associates (RFA), a well known firm, to design the building which was designed after a building program for the capacity needed was formulated and with that information the \$2 million bond was passed in 2008.

Mr. Robinson explained that the bonding authority and the Friends own the design of the building and the two have to join and move forward together.

Mr. Robinson explained that there are State standards that exist such as how much space is needed for cats. He noted that program needs are crucial and taken into consideration when determining the facility size. He further noted that facility size drives the cost of the project as well as site parameters and location.

Mr. Robinson stated that there are not many sites available to build municipal facilities on. He noted that the existing facility was built in 1975 by the CETA Program and the present shelter is undersized for current animal population and does not meet the minimum State standards.

Mr. Robinson explained that a survey was performed for the bond issue concerning historical volumes and in a four year period approximately eight hundred dogs were impounded at the shelter.

Mr. Robinson noted that Bristol does a great job returning dogs to their owners and has a high adoption rate as well as a low euthanizing rate which is only used for very ill dogs. He further noted that it is not unusual for the Shelter to have 25-40 cats.

Mr. Robinson stated that future population planning is crucial in setting the facility size. He noted that the existing site is

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problematic as it does not meet State standards, there is no parking for adoption customers with vehicular safety an issue due to trucks driving through to the Transfer Station, and there is no room for expansion.

Mr. Robinson explained that design is crucial and very specialized. He noted that RFA, the firm hired by the Friends, is very well-regarded in the field and this Study is not intended as a design review.

Mr. Robinson explained that there are three phases currently proposed; Phase I is the core building consisting of a cat room, training and meeting room, dog kennels, staff space, and intake space which is the minimum to run an animal shelter. Phase II is a veterinary wing which was on the initial plans. The Friends envisioned fundraising and coming up with a business lease arrangement to help subsidize Phase II so that would be a rental space. Phase III is additional dog pens and outdoor areas; there are two pods proposed and this would be to add two more pods in the future if needed.

Mr. Robinson explained that to build Phase I the area required would be 190 X 200 sq. ft., to add Phase II the area required would be 190 X 250 sq. ft., and to add Phase III the area required would be 250 X 250 sq. ft.

Mr. Robinson stated that he estimates the cost of construction at \$185-215/sq. ft. with Phase I being a total of 10,255 sq. ft., the total hard cost would be \$2.1-2.4 million. Mr. Robinson noted that the soft costs for Phase I which include architecture, engineering, insurances carried during construction and if a 10% contingency is kept aside if needed totals out to \$2.6-3 million.

Mr. Robinson explained that the bond is \$2 million and the remainder of the cost would come from fundraising by the Friends. Mr. Robinson noted that this is within a feasible range for this project size.

Mr. Robinson noted that the timing of the Town bonding is a crucial issue. Mr. Robinson further noted that during discussions with Town Treasurer Day and Director of Community Development Williamson, the Town has certain comfort levels concerning how much indebtedness the Town wants to take on at any one time in terms of paying back.

Mr. Robinson stated that after investigation, it was agreed that land acquisition was not an option concerning a possible site. Mr. Robinson noted that Rep. Gallison assisted in looking at

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State land such as Colt State Park which did not come into fruition. Mr. Robinson explained that John Lannan offered a parcel of land at the Deer Run Development prior to the bond issue.

Mr. Robinson explained that the Deer Run parcel is owned by John Lannan and adjacent to the parcel is a parcel of land owned by the Town which was acquired with open space funding. He stated that the current plan to access said parcel is to go in through San Francisco Drive, across the Town-owned land and head up to the Deer Run parcel.

Mr. Robinson further explained that there is one upland area approximately 125 x 150 sq. ft. on the Deer Run parcel and there may be upland on the open space parcel as well. He noted that all three phases cannot fit on the upland parcel and to access it you will have to cross wetland.

Mr. Robinson stated that the biggest issue that the Deer Run site will face is wetland permitting. He noted that 40,000 sq. ft. of wetland would have to be filled (23,000 sq. ft. is on upland) on the Deer Run parcel for the building/parking areas and that does not include the access roadway or sewage line/pump station.

Mr. Robinson further stated that when applying for a permit by DEM for alteration of freshwater wetland, Dem requires that you avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands which means you either reduce the project size or locate on other viable sites.

Mr. Robinson stated that building on top of the landfill site was investigated and while it will spatially fit, structurally building on top of a landfill is problematic and there are environmental issues.

Mr. Robinson stated that there is a parcel of land approximately 500 X 300 sq. ft. north of the existing Town facilities. He further stated that this is part of parcel 25 and owned by the Town currently and it has the potential to house the facility at full build out in terms of its size. He noted that it would also be buffered from the uses around it and there is a paper street that currently comes directly off Metacom Avenue.

Mr. Robinson stated that parcel G from the Pare golf study is an odd-shaped parcel but since the animal shelter has a less traditional footprint it could possibly fit. Mr. Robinson noted that a portion of the parcel of land in back of parcel G could be used to fit the full build out and the advantage of this site is that it is located on Broadcommon Road, between Hope Street and

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Metacom Avenue. Mr. Robinson stated that when assessing this site, a policy decision needs to be addressed as whether to use potential industrial land for municipal use. Mr. Robinson noted that there are potential wetlands on the east side, an open space easement, electrical lines, and grade and ledge issues also associated with this site.

Mr. Robinson explained that the current zoning ordinance does not permit animal shelters in any zone. He noted that a defined land use type could be created in the current ordinance for an animal shelter facility and permit it in certain zones or a new Public Use zone could be created.

Mr. Robinson strongly urged to investigate the feasibility of how a regional shelter might work. He noted that at this time both Bristol and Warren are studying the feasibility of new facilities. Mr. Robinson recommended a meeting between the two Towns at multiple levels such as Councils, Administrators, Planners, Police Chiefs, and Animal Control Officers. He noted that even if discussions do not yield a regional facility the Town would be left open to criticism years later for not investigating that option. He further noted that regional facilities can work with long term agreements or contract arrangements with a nearby Town.

Mr. Robinson stated that the Friends own the rights to use the design that RFA put together under the contract. He noted that the Friends have arranged for donated services and materials but the Town owns the bonding authority which requires public bidding. He further noted that the bond issue requires the contracts to be made by the Town Administrator and the Town traditionally has a Capital Project Committee for any municipal building construction.

Mr. Robinson suggested that the first steps would be to form the Capital Project Committee, exploration of the regional facility feasibility which should be fairly short lived, check capacity needs and adjust the architectural program by retaining architectural and site selection assistance.

Mr. Robinson noted that Potter League would host a tour of their facility and explain the pros and cons of the building.

Mr. Robinson explained that the steps to take moving forward would be to select a site, complete the architectural design, finish the cost estimates, issue the bonds and go out to construction.

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Chairman Marshall thanked Mr. Robinson, Councilwoman Parella, and the Friends for their time. He noted that the presentation was valuable and gives the necessary steps to move forward in a quantitative and clarified manner.

Councilman Herreshoff questioned if dogs are being brought in from outside sources as he does not understand how the dog population would increase when the number of citizens has not with Mr. Robinson noting that he is not an expert on animal intake numbers and he is working with the numbers that came out of the bond issue. Mr. Robinson further noted that one of the duties the Committee would be empowered to do is to go back and double check those numbers based on both historic performance and predictors.

Councilman Herreshoff noted that in the past it was suggested that there might be animals other than dogs and cats at the animal shelter with Animal Control Officer Gibree answering that the figures that were presented when moving forward with the bond issue were animals that were impounded in Bristol only and it did not include the rescue effort that the volunteer group was doing through the shelter.

Animal Control Officer Gibree stated that last year the Town impounded 198 dogs and the average per year is between 200-225 and if you multiply that number by 4 the amount is 800 and that is the figure that was verified through the RI Department of Animal Agriculture.

Councilman Cordeiro asked for the clarification of impounded with Animal Control Officer Gibree stating if a phone call is received and an animal picked up brought back to the shelter that is an impounded animal.

Councilman Cordeiro mentioned that he has noticed people walking with multiple dogs.

Councilman Herreshoff asked if there were other animals besides dogs and cats involved with Animal Control Officer Gibree stating there is not a holding area for other animals such as rabbits, tarantulas, ferrets, snakes, etc. but on occasion has had to hold animals other than dogs in a dog run.

Councilman Cordeiro asked if the surrounding communities such as Warren, Barrington and Portsmouth pick up dead animals along the road with Animal Control Officer Gibree stating that Bristol is one of the few Towns that address this issue. She further noted that most communities will not touch animals on a State road or

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private property because of the high cost factor involved with disposal of these animals.

Councilman Herreshoff stated that he would like to provide an animal resource for dogs and cats. He noted that there are a number of interesting buildings for sale on Metacom Avenue, etc. and was curious if these existing buildings could be converted into an animal shelter rather than construct a brand new design. Mr. Robinson explained that the design challenge would be the requirements from the RI Department of Environmental Management for shelter facilities especially in terms of internal finishes for floor and wall surfaces because that can be an expensive retro fit and another issue would be natural light and the outdoor animal runs.

Councilman Herreshoff asked if Mr. Robinson had any plans for shelters that could be reviewed with Mr. Robinson stating that he looked at about four firms to view designs from but they were regional dependent.

Mr. Robinson noted that the Committee should look at different designs especially the ones specific for the northeast.

Councilman Herreshoff noted that the preliminary design presented tonight seemed to show multiple little rooms with Mr. Robinson stating that there is a mixture of space which include rooms for training for new owners, emergency space, and intake for animals.

Councilman Herreshoff asked if Mr. Robinson could present a design with these various provisions with Mr. Robinson suggesting that the council visit the Potter League.

Councilwoman Parella stated that the plan that the Friends had developed was by a respectable firm with Mr. Robinson agreeing. Mr. Robinson noted that this design is already paid for that it is not an extravagant design.

Mr. Robinson noted that Potters League has high-end exterior finishes and the staff has mixed issues regarding this. He further noted that RFA's design is a conservative design from a material standpoint.

An unidentified citizen in attendance asked how Potter League was funded with Mr. Robinson answering that he did talk to the head of the foundation committee and they were able to finance some through contractual relationships with Newport, Middletown and Portsmouth and there was private fundraising from different committees.

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The citizen stated that he hopes consideration is given as to how close the shelter will be to private homes. He noted that he lives about one mile away from the East Bay Kennels on Broadcommon Road and when the wind blows in the right direction he can hear the dogs barking as if they were three houses away.

Mr. Robinson stated that RFA did take that into consideration with their design in terms of location and shape. He further stated that another key factor is multiple layer buffering.

Chairman Marshall asked if Mr. Robinson would provide his presentation to the *Phoenix* with Mr. Robinson recommending that the town website would be a great place to post this evening's presentation and suggested an interview with the *Phoenix* regarding talking points and perhaps referring people to the website for more information.

Councilwoman Parella is of the opinion that Committee needs to be formed and begin to move forward on the project. Councilwoman Parella suggested walking through proposed sites in the near future.

Councilman Cordeiro asked what the feasibility would be to buy the RICO building and rehabilitating it to house the animal shelter with Mr. Robinson suggesting that direction be given to the site selection committee. Mr. Robinson noted that space and cost need to be considered.

Councilman Barboza asked if the project committee was moving forward under the premise that 250 X 250 sq. ft is needed with Mr. Robinson noting that the project has steps and can be re-evaluated.

Councilman Barboza noted that there is only enough money for Phase I and suggested to look for location for Phase I and move forward and perhaps abandon Phase II and Phase III. He further noted that if you shrink square footage it will give more site options.

Councilman Herreshoff recommended looking carefully at cost management; which design requires a certain level of staffing compared to other designs.

Councilman Herreshoff agreed with Councilman Barboza and suggested that the Committee move forward with a good design for basic necessities and with dotted lines for a future addition perhaps five years from now.

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Councilwoman Parella agreed that the main objective is to build the core building which is 190 X 200 sq. ft. Councilwoman Parella questioned how the Deer Run Estates would accommodate that with Mr. Robinson stating there is 125 X 150 sq. ft. of upland so it would require fill to move forward.

Councilman Herreshoff noted that 200 sq. ft. is almost an acre with Mr. Robinson stating that area includes parking, spaces between parking and the building, and spaces around where the dog runs come off the building for light and air. He further noted that the actual building square footage is 10,255.

Chairman Marshall asked if anyone looked at the Champlin Foundations with Animal Control Officer Gibree noting that organization will not get involved until they see the project progressing.

It was noted that looking for site that would be large enough for Phase II and III build out as the vet clinic would be a rented space which would be income for the town and shelter. Friends were looking to raise funds or obtain grants and this would not be a Town expense.

Director of Community Development Williamson requested consideration for a budget once the Committee is formed and is charged with their tasks. She explained that funds are needed for architects, surveyors, and engineers in order to make recommendations to the Council.

Councilman Herreshoff suggested that Director of Community Development Williamson bring this matter forward at the budget meetings being held next week with Director of Community Development Williamson agreeing to do so.

Chairman Marshall stated that the next step is to form a Capital Project Committee with Friends representation. It was discussed that John Lannan serve as the representative for the Friends.

Chairman Marshall asked Director of Public Works Serbst if there is sewer behind the Compost Facility with Public Works Director Serbst stating there is ledge there as well as at the paper road.

Councilwoman Parella noted that a positive aspect concerning the Compost Facility is that the methane recovery and wind turbine would all be part of that complex and could be a good reduced cost on the project with Chairman Marshall suggesting that the rain recapture could be used to wash the kennels.

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There being no further business, upon a motion by Councilman Barboza, seconded by Councilwoman Parella and voted unanimously, the Chairman declared this meeting to be adjourned at 8:51 o'clock PM.

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Jennifer Walsh, Deputy Town Clerk