

Aquidneck Island Planning Commission

Meeting of the Board of Directors

AIPC Office 321 East Main Road Portsmouth RI 02871

Friday March 4, 2005

Attendees: Peter Martin, Robert Quigley, Art Weber, Robert Beaver, Tina Dolen, Sandy Thomas, Ronald Wolanski, Jan Eckhart

Peter Martin, Chairman, convened the meeting at 11:43 am.

Minutes from February 11, 2005 meeting were approved as printed.

KEY OUTCOMES: MARCH 4 MEETING

- The AIPC plans to present findings to the Portsmouth Town Council on creating a Redevelopment Agency to address properties that may be excessed under BRAC. Such an agency may also have additional powers.**
- The AIPC will offer to present a special workshop session for Portsmouth, Middletown and Newport on the West Side Master Plan Trends Analysis prior to the West Side Public Meeting on March 30. It will also schedule another presentation with each Council prior to the release of the West Side Master Plan Report.**
- The AIPC will continue its efforts with GMH to be reimbursed for the total (\$60,000) or partial cost of the Navy PPV report.**
- The AIPC has set preliminary dates for spring/early summer**

Municipal Training classes.

- **The AIPC arranged a meeting on March 15th with Captain McLaughlin of the Navy to discuss transportation and other important issues.**

Discussion:

WEST SIDE PLAN STATUS REPORT

Dr. Quigley stated that the Portsmouth workshop presented to the Town Council went very well. The AIPC team made a powerful presentation. The Council members stated that this was the best presentation they had seen thus far. AIPC will be meeting with Senator Reed's office next week and will also meet with Dennis Riley next Thursday. On March 15th O'Neill Properties will give a presentation to the Portsmouth Town Council. The AIPC plans to be there to present findings on creating a Redevelopment Authority which may allow the town to have more control over the land use decisions. The basic structure and powers of such an agency will be presented. For example, AIPC was informed by its consultant that Tiverton did not establish a Redev. Agency or other legal authority and therefore, they could not stop the development of the mall. The O'Neill plan will create hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxes and hundreds of jobs which is appealing. However, given the enabling legislation to create a waterfront district that was just introduced without Portsmouth's knowledge, authority would be vested with the state and not the town. O'Neill could also obtain an accelerated

review process, among other benefits, and the town would be at a disadvantage with control over development plans and could possibly lose control over the adjacent Marine trade areas as well. The Newport County Chamber of Commerce may be positioning itself with RIEDC on the Redevelopment Agency issue. Tina stated that she will be meeting with funders next week and can possibly ask for funding for this effort or perhaps write a proposal. Dr. Quigley stated that legal counsel could be hired for the town and that Portsmouth would have to move quickly on this issue.

The AIPC has contacted Middletown and Newport to arrange a Council presentation prior to the West Side Public Meeting on March 30. It will also schedule another presentation before each Council prior to the release of the West Side Master Plan Report.

GMH UPDATE

AIPC is still seeking reimbursement for the \$60,000 report. Paul Hannon, director of GMH, had responded to Tina's request when the initiative first began that his company would consider reimbursing us. GMH had requested the fiscal impact reports to begin with. Also Bob Rulli mentioned that he would encourage the Navy to do this when he worked for BBP& A. GMH could use the reimbursement as a good-will gesture to the communities while simultaneously garnering more favorable public relations. Robert Beaver stated that the information in the report equally benefited GMH as it was a valuable product for them; this may encourage the reimbursement.

MUNICIPAL TRAINING

The AIPC has set preliminary dates for spring/early summer classes. It is considering the Green Valley Country Club to for classes. The schedule for each evening consists of the presentation from 5:30-6:30; light dinner from 6:30-7:00; Q & A period with Conclusion from 7:00-8:00; and individual instructors will remain available for those who elect to stay from 8:00-8:30. The AIPC Board members stated that the scheduled classes Tina presented may be too numerous given all the other meetings that occur throughout the county. The Board suggested the following changes:

 Reschedule the March 31 class, “Shoreline Issues: The Intersection of Local Zoning, State CRMC, and Federal Army Corps Jurisdiction” to an April date as it is too close to the West Side Public Meeting.

 Reschedule the “Linking Land Use to Water Quality” class to a date in May.

 Reschedule the “Building Strong Teams to Promote Strong Communities” class to the fall.

GMH PRESENTATION BY BOB RULLI, DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Leasing to the private sector is somewhat complicated; there is no government guarantee and no federal dollars. Any monetary profit from the sales goes right back into the housing for sailors and upkeep and maintenance. GMH is interested to market the Rainbow Heights area in Portsmouth. A new community center in Anchorage

will replace a portion of the demolished units.

On the possibility of affordable housing in the Green Lane area—Mr. Rulli explained that there is uncertainty when mixing military and civilian communities i.e. federal magistrate and police power issues. With regard to addressing Anchorage transportation issues—Mr. Rulli stated that a new fire station may allow a through street for gate-to-gate flow-through traffic. Tina mentioned that the AIPC arranged a meeting on March 15th with Capitan McLaughlin of the Navy for its consultant Pare Engineering and others to discuss transportation and other important issues.

Mr. Rulli stated that they already have an agreement with Portsmouth. On March 6th, the Melville fire house will close and Portsmouth will acquire that service area. GMH will still provide plowing (acting as Public Works). Negotiations with Newport are going back to the drawing board. The only service that can be acquired from Newport would be Fire and Emergency. The City of Newport fears has been told by GMH that if they reference part of the payment from GMH as an education tax cost, they might lose their existing education Impact Aid funds. Mr. Rulli stated that Newport will not recognize the financial impact of the Navy presence and that occupancy rates on the Island are only about 60% (GMH had initially believed it would be higher).

Middletown also has issues to consider, such as a new fire station.

Aquidneck Island has been more difficult for GMH to deal with than most of their other privatized areas in the northeast due to the complexity of the Navy here and the various needs/concerns of the three municipalities. Mr. Rulli added that GMH is under no obligation to negotiate with the towns on this process, but they do because they feel they should contribute to the communities; GMH's obligation is to obtain the most value for the property (the highest and best price) in order to put the money back into Navy Housing.

The Middletown Council seems to be looking only at Church Community Housing to develop the Anchorage. Mr. Rulli would not recommend Church as they are not a mixed-use developer, but he feels that the Council will not entertain any other option. He believes that the Anchorage needs a very good, experienced developer. GMH wants to go out to bid for the Anchorage and Middletown wants Church Housing to be the developer. GMH and Middletown are currently at a standoff.

Mr. Rulli said that he believes the two most important issues for the Island regarding development are waste water and transportation issues.

Tina inquired about the reimbursement of all or part of AIPC's \$60,000 cost of the report. Mr Rulli could not give confirmation whether this would be possible, but he would think

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy F. Thomas

Land Use Planner