

RECEIVED January 16, 2024 @8:30 A.M.
Michele R. Grande, Redding Town Clerk
4 pages

**Minutes of the
Gilbert and Bennett Wire Mill Advisory Committee Meeting**
Thursday, January 11, 2024
6:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room
100 Hill Road, Redding CT

Committee Members Present: Amy Atamian, Chairperson; Aimee Pardee (via Zoom); Dave Pattee; Rob Dean; Richard Wenning; Steve Gagnon; Tracy Kulikowski.

Also Present: Mark Paulson of Tighe & Bond (T&B); Marissa Chrysochoou and Dominic Anziano of the UCONN TAB program; Janet August, Recording Secretary; members of the public.

Call to Order: Chair Atamian called the meeting to order at 6:09pm, and introduced Steve Gagnon, Chair of the Planning Committee, as a new member to this committee.

1. Approval of the November 9, 2023 Minutes

Chair Atamian asked for any corrections or edit to the minutes. Hearing none, the minutes of November 9, 2023 were approved.

2. Review of the 2024 Meeting Schedule

Chair Atamian presented the 2024 Meeting Schedule for the committee.

2024 Meeting Dates:

February 8, 2024
March 14, 2024
April 11, 2024
May 9, 2024
June 13, 2024
July 11, 2024
August 8, 2024
September 12, 2024
October 10, 2024
November 14, 2024
December 12, 2024

MOTION: Mr. Dean moved to accept the 2024 Meeting Dates. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pattee, and the motion was carried unanimously.

3. UCONN Status Update

UCONN TAB Program Director Marissa Chrysochoou, PhD and UCONN student Dominic Anziano provided an update on the UCONN TAB program efforts at the wire mill to date. Mr. Anziano presented a rendering of potential low density affordable housing in the West Pond area and town houses in the OMS area. Mr. Anziano also provided examples of possible uses for the Center Mill Area which included a greenhouse in the Sawtooth Building area, a wedding venue in the chapel, and a restaurant and/or brewery on the pond. Dr. Chrysochoou said that since a higher density plan as proposed by GLDC was concerning to many, they focused on lower density, access to the pond without extensive regrading of the site.

The committee asked several questions and commented on the potential uses presented by the UCONN TAB program. Dr. Chrysochoou stated that additional renderings were being prepared to show the road connectivity to the surrounding area. Mr. Pattee commented on the reconfiguration of North Main Street railroad crossing to access Route 7. Chair Atamian noted that GLDC conducted a traffic study and Dr. Chrysochoou stated that study would be helpful.

The committee asked if the TAB program could provide the renderings in their presentation from different angles. Mr. Wenning asked given the interest in connecting North Main Street to Route 7, if they could provide a rendering of what that would look like. Dr. Chrysochoou stated she will provide renderings from different angles.

4. Tighe & Bond (T&B) Status Update

Mark Paulson of T&B provided an update stating that T&B received the scope approval for work under the 2023 DECD grant and has prepared the sampling plan for the Phase III Environmental Assessment to determine the extent of contamination and form the basis of the remedial action plan. The sampling plan may be updated once additional historical data from Fuss & O'Neill (F&O) are received. He stated T&B expected to be onsite in February and has already plotted the positions and updated the GIS. He is starting to schedule tasks and will be looking at the Fuss & O'Neill (F&O).

5. Working Groups Status Reports

Workgroup Restructuring: Chair Atamian reviewed the working groups and suggested some changes. She suggested moving committee member Regina O'Brien, a landscape architect, to the Environment and Aesthetics working group. Building stabilization has been under the Environment & Aesthetics and she suggested moving building stabilization to the Planning working group. Steve Gagnon, our new committee member

representing the Planning Commission, will be on this committee and Rob Dean will be added to this committee.

Planning Workgroup: Chair Atamian informed the committee that she has received a proposal from the Architectural Preservation Studio (APS) for conducting an update to the building assessment performed by the principals of this firm in 2015. APS has proposed that the update include the old Post Office and Main Office buildings not previously studied and focus on scope and construction cost estimates for building stabilization.

Mr. Dean noted that this assessment can help us to determine the feasibility of saving different structures and mothballing structures to prevent further deterioration, noting that the Board of Finance members has concerns about expending funds prior to understanding the current conditions and costs. Mr. Gagnon agrees that a feasibility assessment and implementation planning is needed. Mr. Dean stated that this committee must substantiate the value of building stabilization, and this needs to be incorporated into the APS scope along with areas on the site subject to historic preservation and restrictions. Mr. Wenning suggested that the committee, or subset of this committee, meet with Architect Carl Rothbart of APS and Mr. Dean agreed.

The committee discussed the town procurement process, and use of the SHPO grant, with agreement that expediting an assessment would provide useful information for Town budgeting and more precisely defining the scope of the SHPO planning grant application authorized by the Board of Selectmen in December. The committee discussed the need to better understand procurement requirements for quals-based selection (Town and SHPO) and may also consider engaging historic preservationist Dr. Daryn Reyman-Lock PhD, who is very familiar with SHPO grant procedures, to help define an appropriate breakdown of scope for work funded by the Town vs. grant funding.

Grant Workgroup: Chair Atamian noted that DEDC just announced a Round 4 of the Brownfield Area-Wide Revitalization (BAR) Planning Grant program. There is a \$200,000 grant that can be used for a variety of planning activities for the Wire Mill site and surrounding Georgetown Area. This grant requires a 10% Town match. She suggests that the Planning Workgroup develop the scope for how this grant funding would be used. The application is due March 1. A 10% Town match will be required.

Finance Workgroup: Mr. Dean discussed the Town's unassigned fund balance, which is high right now due to unexpected surpluses in recent years. He noted that the Town has some needs which are difficult to budget for, noting that the Town needs to think wisely and prudently about how, and if, to spend this money. He has discussed the potential of using a portion of this funding to stabilize and mothball suitable buildings to protect them for future development. Updating the 2015 building assessment and developing a stabilization implementation plan would be a prudent first step.

Site/Aesthetics Workgroup: Ms. Pardee discussed the need for a clearer understanding of the site uses and allocated spaces. Guidance for tenant space management and enforcement could then follow. Ms. Pemberton was coordinating with Town Counsel to review these agreements.

6. Discussion of Project Schedule

Chair Atamian listed the Action Items pending:

- Speak with Julia Pemberton re: the APS proposal.
- Attending upcoming BOS meeting where the Annual Plan recommendations will be discussed.
- BAR grant application schedule and preparation.
- Tenants' status report regarding space allocations and conditions; develop management parameters.

7. Member Comments

Mr. Pattee discussed an email he received from Troup Unlimited to Ms. Pemberton requesting a meeting to discuss the scope of their work studying the Norwalk River, which may include a study to remove the G&B dam. Some discussion ensued regarding what dam removal could entail, and the resulting need to reconstruct the river path and surrounding pond area.

8. Public Comments

None.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Pattee moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Gagnon. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41pm.

Submitted by,
Janet August, Recording Secretary

Use the link below to access the Zoom recording of this meeting:

https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/VCT1LGMsYR_VgFiub0HJbMyMu_3GwipMoHd6ujsWfJhtNVmA7KTxrzCHASkth6oG.HJBJSEcJvMXTLaJE

Passcode: yf.86*33

Town of Redding Website link to documents about the Wire mill:

<https://townofreddingct.org/about-redding/boards-commissions/board-of-selectmen/gilbert-bennettwire-mill/>