

**Torrington Development Corporation
Joint Executive and Project Committees**

Tuesday, September 14, 2010, 8:00 a.m.

TDC Office

Executive Committee Members Present: J. Baer, P. Herbst, V. Muschell, J. Lalonde.

Project Committee Members Present: J. Baer, E. Fabbri, G. Perosino, P. Herbst, J. Paganini, M. Maskovsky, Mark McEachern.

Others in attendance: V. McDermott and Gary Fontanella (Milone & MacBroom), B. Baxter, S. Nocera, J. Scharnberg.

Quorum present.

8:00 a.m. Meeting called to order by President Baer.

Prior Minutes

Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting 8/25/10. Motion to approve – V. Muschell; 2nd – J. Lalonde;
Approved.

Minutes of Project Committee Meeting 6/9/10. Motion to approve – G. Perosino, 2nd – P. Herbst;
Approved.

Project Committee Overview: P. Herbst reported that the committee is awaiting the parking committee's report and recommendations.

Project Summary: G. Fontanella briefed the members about the various alternative small project alternatives previously submitted, and reviewed the additional alternative scenario authorized at the Executive Committee meeting of 08-25-10 regarding the sidewalks only on the west side of Main Street. The parameters were described as: 1st Phase - Water Street to Maiden Lane, 345 feet of sidewalk (estimate \$640,000), 2nd Phase – Maiden Lane to Mason Street, 260 feet of sidewalk (estimate \$470,000), 3rd Phase – Water Street to the bridge, 195 feet (estimate \$270,000), a total of about 800 feet of sidewalk. This alternative can be done in a way to only require minor tie-ins later on (i.e., no significant throw-away work); very conservatively, the cost is estimated at \$1.38M. The estimate includes a 10% contingency and 23% state administrative and engineering “add-ons” to a typical project. The final drainage plan would need to be designed per DOT even though only a portion would be actually done. Any final design process will need to be done to minimize throw-aways in the future.

S. Nocera reported that there is a tentative agreement for the use of the street from the intersection at Water Street to Mason Street, but not ownership of the street. G. Fontanella said this plan would include all amenities, landscaping, etc. and would actually be a complete project;

one that would provide a very nice view entering into the area and that would give a good sense of the overall project. As a cost comparison, J. Baer asked E. Fabbri to compare the cost of this alternative to the work done on Water Street. According to Fabbri, per square foot the costs are approximately the same.

G. Fontanella advised that it will be necessary to evaluate utility upgrades from the curb line to the buildings. E. Fabbri noted that Yankee Gas is off Main Street, the water company believes they have only two or three service lines that come from Main Street (currently, some of them run from Water Street and Maiden Lane through the back) so there is minimal water service work on Main Street. Water Pollution does have some service lateral upgrades that would need to be done and their lines are about 13 feet underneath the sidewalk. It was also noted that the building owners do have a few things that fall to their responsibility such as hatchway fill-ins. It costs about \$2,500 per business and some hatchways still need to be filled in. The utilities will not take on that work as part of any job they do. S. Nocera pointed out that there are new owners in place in a number of the buildings and now would be a good time to discuss some of these items.

There was a brief discussion about considerations for putting this scenario out to bid as a base bid with alternatives.

V. McDermott asked E. Fabbri about his experience with DOT allowing in-kind matches for their funded projects. M&M's recent experience with similar projects has shown that some of these grants have not allowed in-kind matches, however, the design component can be carried by the municipality so that the grant money is only used for actual construction costs. TDC will have to go through the STP design process. Unless City staff can be actively engaged and can do the documentation, great care will be necessary to not assume that in-kind matches are allowed before opting to proceed.

S. Nocera is attempting to get the exact requirements of the grant funding, to determine whether it is \$750,000 plus a 20% match or whether the \$750,000 is inclusive of the 20% match, and whether or not it is a reimbursement. If so, then the \$750,000 needs to be appropriated as a rolling reimbursement. The grant application was submitted with the intention of working on the multi-leg intersection. S. Nocera said that it could be translated into the current proposal as opposed to working on Maiden Lane to completion which was briefly discussed. The City is working closely with Sen. Lieberman's office regarding clarification and support. V. McDermott noted that this project would need a project number from DOT to undertake this scenario, however, care needed to be exercised to ensure that the entire project was encompassed by the DOT project number.

Motion to proceed with the alternative scenario for the sidewalks on the west side of Main Street by V. Muschell; 2nd by P. Herbst.
Approved.

G. Perosino asked about investigating combining the \$750,000 grant money with a block grant and whether the work on Maiden Lane can be used toward the funding match. J. Lalonde said that for years the City has been trying to own Main Street and asked S. Nocera for an update on

that issue. Per Nocera, the City and DOT agreed to use rights for plowing and some construction with clearance from DOT – the arrangement is akin to a lease. Lalonde is concerned due to the amount of DOT inspections associated with state managed programs. Nocera stated that there is no real benefit to owning the street. Because the money moves from the federal government to the DOT and then to the City, there is no way to avoid DOT oversight even with ownership according to V. McDermott. Nocera believes the lease is economically advantageous because the City saves on maintenance costs. The City can do the work it needs, and DOT is not burdened by this segment of the highway.

G. Fontanella suggested formal submission of the preliminary design documents to the necessary state agencies. It was agreed that the proposal will be brought to the full Board of Directors at the October 5, 2010 meeting.

Motion by J. Lalonde to put the submission of the preliminary design documents to the necessary state agencies on the Board of Directors' next meeting agenda; 2nd by G. Perosino.

Approved.

Parking Committee Presentation: J. Paganini reviewed the various proposals and the items that were taken into consideration by the committee. Their proposal addresses parking for the MDP Plan 1 only and does not include the expanded parking behind restaurant row and other areas that were not originally in MDP Plan 1. They hope that any parking commission would be self-sustaining via collection of parking revenue, leasing and meters, and that the organization will provide continuous upgrades to the infrastructure. Main Street and Water Street snow removal information was collected and integrated into the budget. At this time, the City has the responsibility for parking shared between Parks & Recreation and Traffic, and the arrangement is not too well formalized at present. If the proposal expands the number of lots the City is to maintain, then they will need to consider all costs including sidewalk clearing, currently the building owner's responsibility.

J. Lalonde asked about revenue from fines and it was confirmed that at this time revenues go into the City general revenue. A concern was expressed about the lost revenue to the City. There was a suggestion for an assessment on Main Street and Water Street building owners for sidewalk snow removal. The present parking professional manager reports to the Mayor and is not a union position. S. Nocera noted that the Traffic Department is unionized and there could be an issue if the perception is that work is being taken away. If traffic employees were shifted to a parking commission, they would still be union members.

The members of both the Executive and the Project Committees agreed that at this time, more work is needed to understand the role and responsibilities of property owners in other towns as a comparison. In West Hartford, for example, parking is under Public Works with the intention of breaking down the barriers between the City and the property owners there. The City provided incentives back to the property owners such as tax relief in exchange for taking on trash/snow removal, sanding etc.

J. Lalonde asked whether the parking proposal was ready yet to go to the full board. It was concluded that it is a very good outline but more work needs to be done in terms of filling out the

details. There is consensus that the Parking Committee project and proposal be tabled for the foreseeable short term until full project funding support is determined. The committee members thanked J. Paganini specifically and the Parking Committee members in general for the quality work done to date.

Executive Director's Report: B. Baxter requested a sum up to \$1,500 to upgrade the website. He noted that this will be the best vehicle to disseminate information to the public and monitor public response. The monies would come out of the TDC operating budget. S. Nocera noted that the total sum should be sufficient to ensure maintenance and management of the website be covered as well.

Motion by J. Lalonde to authorize a sum not to exceed \$1,500 to the TDC out of its operating budget in order to upgrade the website; 2nd by G. Perosino. Discussion ensued and it was determined that such an expenditure needed approval by the full board. The initiative will go back to the Website Committee for review and opinion prior to the next full Board meeting. No vote was taken.

The next full Board of Directors meeting date is set for October 5. B. Baxter is working with the Phase I stakeholders to get their releases. One property is in foreclosure right now. He would like to present a site plan application to Planning & Zoning in October assuming all stakeholders have signed their releases. Application for a special exception and site plan approval will require a public hearing. He will have a discussion with Planning Officer Marty Connor as to the best way to proceed.

Motion was by G. Perosino to go into Executive Session; 2nd by P. Herbst.

Approved.

8:56 a.m.

An invitation was extended to E. Fabbri, G. Fontanella, V. McDermott and S. Nocera to remain.

A motion was made by G. Perosino to exit Executive Session. 2nd by J. Baer.

Approved.

9:05 a.m.

M. McEachern discussed a recent State Historic Preservation Commission request to participate in the overall project. Baxter, Baer and Herbst are to attend the Historic Preservation Committee meeting on Thursday, September 23, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.

E. Fabbri discussed the logistics and how to package the projects for approval along with the best approach with DOT since there will not be enough money to do the entire project. Members agreed that the best approach is to proceed on the west side of Main Street sub-project.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn; P. Herbst; 2nd – M. Muskovsky.

Approved. 9:09 a.m.