

Mill Site Study Committee

Meeting minutes - September 24, 2008

Present: **Committee Members:** Kurtis Amidon, Albert Harris, Michael Landino, Matt Nesbit, Jeff Sauer, Joseph Sergi, and Stephen Themelis.
Members absent: Jerrilyn Bozicas, Jeffrey Chabot, Stephanie Cronin, Gary Giguere, Roger Goscombe, and Ronald Karr
Also present: Jay Donovan (Assistant Director NMCOG) and Georgette Rogers

Mr. Sergi called the meeting to order at 7:12pm. Mr. Landino joined the meeting at approximately 7:25 and Mr. Harris joined the meeting at approximately 7:30.

Approval of Minutes from August 27, 2008: Tabled until next meeting.

Engineering Report: Mr. Nesbit had reviewed the 2003 Phase I study and reported that the authors do not consider the Mill Site to have a high danger of contamination as long as it continues to be used as commercial/industrial property. However, Mr. Nesbit notes that the depth of the report prohibits any conclusion regarding possible contamination if the site is to be used for residential purposes.

Mr. Nesbit also reported that the current DEP position is that the site is not considered a contamination risk.

No information is yet available on the possible existence of a defuser pipe raised at the August 27 meeting.

Visioning Session: After some discussion, the Visioning Session was confirmed for Saturday, October 25, from 10:00am – 12:00 noon. The Senior Center was the first choice for location. Mr. Themelis will contact the Senior Center to inquire about availability.

NMCOG will facilitate the Visioning Session. Mr. Donovan outlined the anatomy of such a meeting. It will be a two-hour meeting beginning with introductions of Mill Site Committee members and a brief presentation of maps and photographs to would help familiarize attendees of the site. Then, it would comprise of a facilitator-led discussion oriented to gain input from the Town.

Mr. Donovan also suggested that the Committee might encourage certain attendees to join particular Mill Site Study Committee Sub-Committees, thereby leveraging expertise and enthusiasm. Mr. Sergi questioned whether the Committee would have the authority to assign people to sub-committees without the direct involvement of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Donovan and Mr. Sergi ultimately agreed that Sub-Committee members would only be reporting to a Committee that must itself report to the Selectmen and, thus, not requiring formal Board of Selectmen assignment.

Mr. Nesbit asked what we will get out of meeting and whether there might be statistical data that could help make a case for specific development options. Mr. Donovan suggested that the session would primarily hope to gain an understanding of public perceptions of strengths and weakness of the site, as well as a sense of possible opportunities, but that statistical data may be a result as well. Mr. Sergi noted that such a meeting could provide more validation of the process itself, that the town meeting's unanimous approval of 43D and ETA are validations, and that input from the public will be more validation.

Upon further discussion, several Committee members proposed concluding the session by generating a hierarchy of ideas and suggestions for the site, possibly using a system of dots to highlight the broadest interest in specific proposals for the site or part of the site.

Subcommittees: The Committee discussed the formation of several sub-committees to be presented as participatory opportunities at the visioning session. No sub-committee chairs were nominated at this time, but five specific sub-committees were established:

Environmental Engineering – Investigate and evaluate site environmental issues, past present and future

Finance/Grants – Explore funding opportunities for site planning and assessment and re-development, including possible grant support

Marketing-Communications – Identify benefits to the community, interface with regional organizations, develop marketing, advertising, and promotion for the activities and goals of the Mill Site Study Committee

Conceptual Design – Develop an overall vision for the site, including construction design goals

Business Opportunities - Evaluate local and regional business opportunities presented by Mill Site development

General Business:

Mr. Sergi inquired about hiring a consultant to help with an EPA Brownfield Grant. Mr. Donovan, Mr. Nesbit, and Mr. Amidon all offered to contact business acquaintances who might have experience with this type of grant application.

Mr. Sergi reported that the Board of Selectmen had signed memorandum of understand with PerryVidex to provide up to \$25,000 for market study and are now soliciting proposals for market study. Scope for market study,

Mr. Donovan distributed a Memorandum on Chapter 43D. He reported that potential state funding has dropped from \$100,000 to \$60,000. Further, the state will be looking for some form of financial commitment from community. A copy of the Memorandum will be placed on the Mill Site Committee webpage. Mr. Donovan noted that 48 communities are currently in the queue for this funding assistance, and that 6-7 communities currently have scheduled hearings.

Action Items:

Item #1 – Visioning Session:

1. Mr. Themelis will contact the Senior Center about using the hall for the meeting.
2. Mr. Sergi will look into the possibility of Community Cable Access and Charter Communications recording the meeting.
3. Mr. Themelis will prepare an overview of the site.
4. Mr. Sergi will contact the Pepperell Free Press with a letter to the editor and inquire about advertising space for the visioning meeting for the Visioning Meeting.
5. Ms. Rogers will prepare a flyer for the Visioning Session to be handed out at the Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Themelis will work with Ms. Rogers on promotions
6. Mr. Landino will hand out flyers at Fall Town Meeting, Mr. Nesbit and Mr. Amidon will possibly assist

Item #2 – Review of Mill Site Timetable: Mr. Landino .

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 15, 2008, at 7:00pm.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Sauer, Mill Site Study Committee Secretary