

Tuesday, December 6, 2022
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Gala Room, Town Hall
7:30 p.m.

Members Present: Leah Gibson, Chair
Stephanie McGowan, Vice Chair
Dennis Keefe, Clerk*
Seth Ferguson
Mark S. Elfman

Also Present:
William Keegan Jr. Town Manager
Christina Metcalf, Communications Specialist
Katie Lang*, Executive Assistant
*Attended remotely

1. 7:30pm - Citizen's Input

2. 7:35pm INTERFACE Program - Community Social Worker Pam McGuire and Human Services Director Marc Craig to present the INTERFACE Referral Program to Select Board

LG – Before we get started I just wanted to say how great Light Uptown event was and that is the work of many people in your various groups, thank you. Thank you to Christina for being there taking photos.

MC – Thank you, many, many people all came together for a really fun night with perfect weather.

A few years ago, Brigham and Women's did meetings to determine community needs. It was determined that mental health and transportation were two needs and Human Services department benefited from both, so we entered the grant program to address those needs. Pam pitched the idea for INTERFACE from William James College. This program works to increase awareness of mental health issues impacting children, family and adults and to facilitate access to appropriate outpatient services. It's a referral service to residents of Foxborough and children who attend Foxborough Schools. Anyone who is in need, a counselor will answer and connect the client with counselors in the area. From when we signed the contract to when the service was up and running was about a month. This gave William James College the time to do research and make sure they had the resources for Foxborough ready before launching. We have been doing this for about a month now and we've got reports from the school guidance counselors that there has been a 5 day turnaround in finding a provider. This is not a crisis prevention; this is before the crisis hopefully happens. The program costs about \$16,000 and the grant covers us until of August of 2025. At the same time we are collecting data to see how it's being used, who is using it and how often. William James College is based out of Newton and 4/5 of the towns in Massachusetts use this service.

LG – This refers them but they still pay for the services through their own insurance

MC – Yes, the connection service is free and INTERFACE will follow up. It's a constant referral service. Its not replacing staff in our building and adds to our staff and school staff.

DK – How do you deal with people who don't have the means or resources even if a connection is made?

MC – We have two great social workers at Human Service and they work with a large number of clients to connect clients to resources and find funding sources as well. Since Covid, we've seen a lot of younger people coming to us, whereas pre-Covid it was a lot of seniors, now it's about 25% of people under 60 coming to the senior center.

3. 7:45pm Common Victualler Application - Everything Bagel

3.1 Review and vote on Everything Bagel Common Victualler Application – Melissa and Ted owners

Melissa – We will be in the former D'Angelo's space. This is our 3rd store, we've had shops previously in Norton and North Attleboro. We are hoping to open on December 15th, but are waiting for inspections to be completed.

SF – The document references 211 Main Street and its actually 211 North Street.

LG – If Katie is watching, we just need that corrected.

Ted – You can follow us at Everything Bagel Foxborough on Facebook.

ME – What are your hours of operation going to be?

Melissa – We will be open 6am to 3pm to start and then extend our hours to 7pm, as it is a high traffic area and want to be able to offer coffee later in the day.

Motion to approve the Common Victualler application for Everything Bagel Inc. by S. Ferguson 2nd by M. Elfman.

Roll Call: ME- Yes, LG – Yes, SM- Yes, SF – Yes, DK – Yes. Approved, 5-0.

4. 7:55pm Uptown Parking Discussion - 10 Minute Parking Spots

4.1 Presentation of proposed 10 Minute Parking Spots Uptown

LG – Before we get into this I wanted to say that this is one part of a bigger plan that we are working on regarding Uptown. For these 10 minute spaces we wanted to look at all the spaces and the bigger picture.

PD – With Station One Shovel Town opening and with the theater we expect some challenges. I think we can agree that it has calmed down from the initial growing pains. The theater is booming as well as Shovel Town which are good things. We did hear comments that there is no parking for the theater but there never has been. There are two maps and one is more commercial that we sent to businesses Uptown. We wanted to show the on street and Uptown Schneider lot as well. There is a lot of parking in town, but it might not be right in front of where you want to be. As we get busier, we want to be fair and acknowledge the need for pickup and we took a look at that. The second map we have is our proposes a 10-minute spot in front of Primo's, South Street Pizza, and Foxborough Nutrition. In regards to accessible parking, we heard from FCOD about the spots in the Central Veterans that weren't really compliant and asked for a spot on Central Street on the FCA side. There is a proposal to add the first spot on Central Street to be accessible as well.

CG – We just striped 7-8 spots on Rockhill Street. There is a spot that is close, but it's not quite the right grade to be an accessible space. We are looking at the top of the Common on School Street for accessible spots as well. We are limited with that parking and doing our best to accommodate them the best we can.

PD – Another question that comes up is why don't we have a crosswalk from the Common directly to Station One/the theater. At Light Uptown people are crossing wherever and cutting straight across

CG – When you look at where people want to cross isn't always the safest place to cross. It is not a safe spot to cross due to its line of sight and drivers. At that point drivers are also looking to merge as well and it's very wide as well. We have the activated pedestrian signs and waiting for them to come in.

LG – There is nothing that we can put there to deter that.

PD – I was thinking about that as well, but if we did wayfinding it would be too many signs.

LG – We just need people to be good citizen's.

CG – You can put the safety measures out there but people will just do what they want.

PD – We'd like the Select Board to adopt this policy. In order for police to enforce the 10 minute spaces we need you to make this a policy.

KF – There is a section on the ticket that says overtime and there is no defined amount of time. Five minutes was too short and 15 minutes was too long. Ten minutes made the most sense as a happy medium.

PD – We did talk about the hours and have language for this policy. "Effective December 7, 2022, Foxborough will begin right-sizing the number of short term curbside spaces in the Uptown and return some spaces back to standard parking. Foxborough will allow 10-minute parking spaces in strategic but limited areas designated by the Uptown

Foxboro parking police map, effective date of December 7th. Ten minute parking spaces may be used for pickup and drop off of passengers, retail and restaurant pickups and short-term loading and unloading needs. Vehicles may be parked in the zones for no more than 10 minutes. The 10-minute parking spaces will be in effect from 7:00am to 7:00pm unless otherwise noted by signage.” This will be official signs from the Town, not something from a restaurant. We’ve had numerous requests for these 10 minute spaces. We could also come back if there are problems and changes needs. We did hold off on Station One as they are designating 2 spaces as pickup. We are waiting to see how the traffic with Station One pans out.

LG – For the restaurant and the theater that is not the 10-minutes to do drop offs. We want to make sure people aren’t idling in those spots.

Jim McSherry – There are 2 spots for pickup and 1 accessible in the back Station One parking lot.

PD – We should note that Station One has worked with Bethany Church for parking for their patrons. They’ve stepped up on their end to address the parking.

SM – How many spots are behind Station One?

PD – There are 11, with 2 pickup, 1 accessible and 4 for resident parking. The net is 4 spaces.

LG – They are paying monthly with Bethany as overflow.

SM – Isn’t there an equation for that?

PD – Yes, they are ADA compliant. Another question was asked about Rockhill further down.

CG – The only reason we were striping parking spaces is because we made that one way.

LG – The signs have helped to alleviate that issues. There is an opportunity for business to work together on the Common and provide your patrons with directions on where to park and pick up.

PD – We encourage people on Central to use the central street lot and for Station One to encourage your patrons to go back to that parking lot.

LG – There is work to be done on the sidewalk on Market Street and DPW is working on that plan. We’ll have to further address overnight parking and such.

PD – We are planning a stakeholder meeting in January to discuss the Central Veterans Lot with those stakeholders.

KF – The one thing we learned from Union Straw, was the employee parking. They ended up in front of other businesses that caused complaints

JM – We did address the employee parking with our agreement with Bethany Church.

Catherine Miller – I wanted to thank Paige, Chris, and the team. I’m very excited about the Schneider Lot. In terms of that crosswalk area, the Common has exit points and one of those is right there, maybe if the fence was closed it might prevent that. I also think there is enough parking.

LG – With the Central Street Lot, that was always one way and we should look at that as well.

PD – We have to give Catherine credit for the map who asked to have a bit more added to the basic map

Motion to approve the three Uptown 10-Minute Parking Spots as proposed by M. Elfman.

Roll Call: ME- Yes, LG – Yes, SM- Yes, SF – Yes, DK – Yes. Approved, 5-0.

PD – You’re good with the proposed accessible spot as well?

5. 8:15pm Special Town Meeting Warrant Article #9 - Citizen Petition Review

5.1 Attorney Frank Spillane and Attorney Robert Burr to present Special Town Meeting Warrant Article #9 - Citizen Petition for Billboard Zoning Amendment for Select Board review

FS – We are representing the Rounds family and American Outdoor Advertising. We filed the Citizen’s petition with 175 signature and 167 certified by the Town Clerks. With the map we have is what the proposed sign bylaw and what effect it would have. That bylaw was put together with the town and our help backing it, in order to put on 495 and 95 with 495 eventually eliminated. One of the objectives was to locate a billboard on the Elm Street DPW site. Once the article failed in May, we put one together that eliminate the Elm Street location. We put together a revised bylaw amendment. It remains the same as the previous proposed amendment with the exception of Section 213-6B(2)[5] and now reads no billboard may be placed within one thousand feet of an existing residential unit on the same side of Interstate 95 or within 500 feet of an existing residential unit on the opposite side of Interstate 95. This language is similar to the state’s guidelines. We came up with that to keep it as far away from residence as we can. We also changed the language to #7 as well to “at least two separate businesses industrial or commercial activities must be conducted within a distance of 500 feet from the proposed location of the billboard, measured from such proposed location to the building or parking lot or other places of actual business industrial commercial activities as required under 700 CMR 3.073a. In the original plan we showed you places they could be located under the state bylaw. By adding it to this part of the bylaw it makes it clear what can be done and how close it can be to an interchange or off ramp. I gave you two plans that show you where billboards can be located. It significantly reduces it down to certain areas on East Belcher, Belcher Road with only one billboard located in this area.

LG – Which parcel here, are the petitioners looking at? Is it between Auto Tech and the roller rink?

FS – Yes

LG – We are talking double sided billboard, as I believe that is where it went south at the last town meeting.

FS – Our intent would be double sided at this time, but would be whatever the ZBA approves.

ME – What is the distance from the highway to the homes?

FS – The distance is 527 feet and includes an elevation distance.

LG – Would you bring it up higher?

FS – There is no limit on height and we would work with the ZBA on the height.

LG – I think there should be more education and you could even go to the Special Town Meeting review here on January 25th.

Mark Powers – Right now we don’t know the height these would be? [No] Is it 672 square feet per side? [Yes]. At what distance can the billboard be seen?

Bob Burr - The largest number of signs in this area is (this is considered industrial than residential) could be is two and more than likely will be only one. The proposal would be possible for a 2-sided signs. The bylaw doesn’t allow 1 or 2 sided sign, just allowing electronic signs. It may only be a 1-sided sign. With the current technology it is for highway traffic and not to annoy the residents. With the angling of the sign and the tree cover it shouldn’t impact the resident. The intent is for the signs to be seen by drivers, not residents.

MP – How much electricity do these signs use in a year?

RB – It can be as much as a \$100 a month. I don’t know in kilowatts what that amount to.

MP – My concern and personal opinion is that billboards are a blight and take away from the image of the Town. Come January we’ll be facing sports betting, and I don’t want to see that.

Deena Rounds – Are there not already billboards allowed on Route in Foxborough? We're not asking something that is new

LG – Yes. We are here to here to get the presentation, debate will happen on town meeting floor.

FS – There are a number of billboards on route 1, they eventually added static and then electronic. It is an evolving industry. I understand that it might be too soon. When we presented it at Annual Town Meeting it was for the Elm Street Project and now we want to present this with minimal impact on the residents and the mitigation possibility.

SF – Do we think that residents will see it from their place of residence?

FS – I wouldn't want to tell you, but some will not, depending on the angle will determine who can see it.

LG – Who is the best point of contact for this issue, you?

FS – Yes.

RB – There is the mitigation will be a part of this as well. There are signs up and down I-95 and people do get used to them. The intent is to attract the cars and not the home. We will get the answers. We're not here to convince those who don't want billboards.

SM – At last Town Meeting, the Board didn't know that it would be double sided as well as the mitigation.

BB – This bylaw will allow signs on 95 and then it will have to go through the ZBA process and then to the Board for the mitigation process.

FS – It will be decided if it's one or two when the application is submitted.

SM – Can the billboards on Route 1 be seen by residents?

FS – I couldn't tell you but we would bring information for those closest residents. There are only a couple of electronic signs. One of the things that is concerning and that we learned about is there is light spillage. There will not be light spillage onto other properties. It would be similar to what you see at the stadium.

LG – It's good you started early but be careful about going to quiet with educating residents.

BB - In other communities that I've represented, there have been no complaints about the sign. I would imaging you haven't received complaints, that's not because there is cannabis or other products that you find offensive. It doesn't not rise to the level of complaints.

SM – So the Rounds own the piece of property and the advertising company will rent the space from them?

RB – Yes, that's correct.

6. 8:30pm Town Manager's Update

6.1 Recruitment and New Hire Update - Fire Fighter/Paramedic, Community Response Social Worker, Senior Youth Services Librarian, Substitute Library Assistant and Library Page. Happy to report that we have a new HR Director, Elizabeth Buetow, and she will be starting January 3. She comes to us with quite a bit of experience and worked with Leah and Mary Beth Bernard on this recruitment. She's been an HR Director for the last 6-7 years and will fit in nicely with the staff.

LG – She is really qualified and a great cultural fit for the Town.

BK – She will be at the holiday breakfast. We will open at 10:00am that day, on December 15th.

6.2 General Updates on Town business and operations

BK - I was able to go to Boston with Rep. Barrows and meet with the Lt. Governor to receive the Community Compact Award to get the next generation of our permitting software. We also have the Town Asset Review committee meeting.

LG – Can you tell me what changed?

CM – There was no guidelines before, these are new.

LG – Can you add that they need to meet annually?

7. 8:40pm - Selectmen's Update

7.1 New Business - Town Asset Review Committee

Motion to approve the revised duties and formation of Town Asset Review Committee as proposed by M. Elfman.

Roll Call: ME- Yes, LG – Yes, SM- Yes, SF – Yes, DK – Yes. Approved, 5-0.

Motion to appoint Kevin Weinfeld, Lorraine Brue, Barney Ovrut, Gary Whitehouse and Seth Ferguson to the Town Asset Review Committee for a term to end 5/31/23 by M. Elfman.

Roll Call: ME- Yes, LG – Yes, SM- Yes, SF – Yes, DK – Yes. Approved, 5-0.

There will be the Deb Giardino Pavilion, renamed in the spring and thank her for the decades of service in the spring.

7.2 Old Business - Town Manager Search Update – There were 29 applicants.

CM – The interviews are December 12th and 15th. Bernie and his team will be able to do background checks once the committee has chosen the finalists. We will make the announcement on January 5th to be scheduled. Finalists interviews would be the January 10th and January 12th depending the number of candidates. The board is then scheduled to make a decision on January 17th. This will leave a few weeks for negotiation and once finalized then Bill and start his retirement.

ME – Are the meetings on the 12th and 15th Executive session?

LG – Yes.

8. Action Items

8.1 Historical Commission - Accept \$680 in donations for the new Veterans' Town Square Markers

Motion to accept \$680 in donations for the new Veterans' Town Square Markers by M. Elfman.

Roll Call: ME- Yes, LG – Yes, SM- Yes, SF – Yes, DK – Yes. Approved, 5-0.

9. Adjourn – 9:11pm

Motion to adjourn by M. Elfman.

Roll Call: ME- Yes, LG – Yes, SM- Yes, SF – Yes, DK – Yes. Approved, 5-0.