

LAND AND BUILDING USAGE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 18, 2024

Present: Kirsten Furtak, Brian Walsh (zoom), Dave Murphy-BOE, Angela Aresco, Shaun Manning-BOS, Warren Breece, Ken Woodward

1. Committee chair Kristen Furtak called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.
2. Roll Call of Members:
3. Approve previous meeting minutes

Shaun Manning made a motion to approve the 2/27/24 meeting minutes, seconded by Ken Woodward. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

4. Recap Tours of Gildersleeve School and Brownstone Intermediate School
 - a. Gildersleeve School
 - i. Ken Woodward mentioned that although there is no seating in the gym area, over all the school appeared to be in good shape.
 - ii. Shaun Manning indicated the school was in better shape than he anticipated, some stained acoustical ceiling tiles, a floor leak in the gym.
 - iii. Dave Murphy mentioned the existing steam system that would need to be maintained if the facility is kept, and some other code related items that may need updating and questioned what the building could be used for.
 - iv. Sean Manning indicated he was thinking about the use of the facility if it were not used as a school.
 - v. Warren Breece indicated all of the upgrades do not have to be done right now, and that Park and Rec needs two gyms.
 - vi. Kirsten Furtek discussed the property could be sold as is.
 - vii. Brian Walsh asked if the Sight Line report needs to be updated with a current assessment of hazardous materials, then a current

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abatement cost could be investigated. This would allow for a better understanding of the true value of the building.

viii. Angela Aresco discussed selling as is option.

ix. Ken Woodward suggested creating a matrix of the schools to show some suggestions, pros and cons of those suggestions, and potation costs or cost ranges of those options (if possible).

5. Brownstone Intermediate School (BIS)

- a. Ken Woodward discussed the existing facility and some pros and cons.
- b. Angela Aresco discussed the thoughts that the town needs space and that there is an option for the Town to become the landlord and funds raised by selling Gildersleeve School could be used to make some updates at BIS.
- c. Dave Murphy mentioned the option of building a pre-engineered metal building to use as swing space for a gym if both schools were out of use.
- d. Brian Walsh mentioned a swing space could be used while work is being done at one or the other building. Berlin did this. They used the space as an investment, and it solved multiple issues while they were completing other work in different facilities.
- e. Shaun Manning mentioned a centralized infrastructure, we have to figure out how much of the BIS space is usable, can we rent to other Oak Hill, and can we still use some ware for Town use.
- f. Bran Walsh commented that in any configuration it will cost \$8m to upgrade.
- g. Angela Aresco commented that she wondered if the new Spa facility would be interested in purchasing the building.
- h. Ken Woodward indicated BIS is a wonderful connection point between the coming Spa and Brainard Place and that this a great opportunity to create an attractive, usable, and thriving downtown area.
- i. Kirsten Furtek asked if a hotel makes sense on this property.
- j. Ken Woodward mentioned that it would be useful to have a developer come in to talk to us about what makes a property attractive to them, do

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they think BIS is viable as a mutli-family, hotel, or something else. What makes sense?

- k. Kirsten Furtek mentioned Winn Development worked on a similar project called The Tyler in East Haven which renovated East Haven's old High School into a 55 and up community. Kristen will share the link to the facility.
- l. Kirsten Furtek asked if there are any requests to the Town for rentable square footage. Dan Bourret indicated there are no specific requests at the moment.
- m. Brian Walsh mentioned the point about the solar panels on BIS and that may be a cost issue to break that lease or that a buyer would have to take on the lease.
- n. Shaun Manning mentioned we have our work cut out for us. None of the options are easy decisions. Especially the fact that BIS is a very sentimental structure to many of the residents of Portland a sell as is will be a challenge.
- o. We discussed the assessed values of the properties.
- p. Brian Murphy asked, do we really ready to be a landlord? We need discussions with developer or real estate brokers.

6. To do

- a. First Selectman Ryan Curley is going to follow up with Friar Architecture Inc on the updated abatement report or cost.
- b. Angela Aresco is going to follow up with a real estate broker to get an idea of potential for sale costs.
- c. Ken Woodward is going to draft a format of a matrix for each school showing sections for options, pros and cons, costs.
- d. Kirsten Furtak is going to send the link to The Tyler in East Haven.
- e. Developer that has done this
- f. Ryan to contact Del

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7. Kristen Furtek mentioned reaching out to Wesleyan University.
 8. Brian Murphy will reach out to Oak Hill to see how many square feet they are interested in.
 9. Discussed looking for people/experts to come in and discuss with us.
 10. If tours of the facilities are needed, we can contact Bob Shea- Director of Building and Grounds directly.
 11. Discussion regarding whether meeting once a month is enough.
 - a. Shaun Manning suggested we need to add a meeting per month.
 - b. Possible next meetings could be 4/1 or 4/8.
 12. Dan Bourret – Land Use Development Planner mentioned we can have 4/1 and 4/8 penciled in and that the agenda needs to be posted 24hrs in advance.
 13. Public comment:
 - a. First Selectman Ryan Curley: it was good to tour and see the schools and the conditions they are in. First Selectman Ryan Curly will check with Friar on the abatement. Ryan will also check with Greenbank on the solar panel lease issue.
 - b. Land Use Development Planner Dan Bourret: reached out to Middletown regarding the old Wilson Middle School that was renovated into apartments back in the 80's or 90's. Dan will follow up.
 - c. Bob Shea comments, Director of Buildings and Grounds: Gildersleeve has a lot less abatement, roof issues, 25-year roof at Gildersleeve.
 - d. Meg Scata (BOE) comments: reached out to Ivoryton BOE, Oldsaybrook, and Essex affordable housing, Ms Scata will provide the name to contact.
 14. Adjournment
 - a. Shaun Manning made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ken Woodward. Vote unanimous, motion carried.
- Meeting Adjourned 8:15pm

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