

Meeting Minutes
 April 27th, 2022
 5 Auburn Street RFP Committee

Present:

Martin Kessel, 5 Auburn Street Committee Member
 Geoffrey Lewis, 5 Auburn Street Committee Member
 Jon Marshal, Deputy Town Administrator, Operations
 Andy Meyer, 5 Auburn Street Committee Member
 Amy Mistrot, 5 Auburn Street Committee Member

Andy Meyer convened the Zoom meeting at 6:31 with Martin Kessel, Geoffrey Lewis, and Amy Mistrot present for the RFP Committee and Jon Marshall as the Deputy Town Administrator, Operations. Andy Meyer stated that he will need to leave the meeting at 7:00 to attend the Planning Board meeting.

Randy Johnson asked if the meeting will be recorded. Jon Marshall started the recording and Andy invited public comment from the many stakeholders in attendance. The public comments are captured here:

Name	Address	Comments	Question	Answer
Brad Colman	Auburn Street		What is the current status of the property?	Building has been unoccupied since the Riverbend Montessori School stopped leasing the property. Not ADA compliant. Needs work. Expensive to maintain. Currently being used as storage. Town Meeting is comfortable with the Selectboard selling the property.
Rose Coyman	Auburn Street		Can the RFP require the building to be maintained?	Yes; however, one interest for the RFP is attractability of offers. An overly conditioned RFP would more than likely limit participation.
Jennifer Dimmick	Sassamon Road	Alum of Eliot School (original 5 Auburn Street use), part of the adjacent church community. Requests the façade be maintained and the green space/frontage.		
Martin Kessel	5 Auburn St RFP Committee member	Serves on the Open Space Advisory Committee - Possible actions available to the Town are to 1) Retain ownership of some portion of the front of the property to maintain open space 2) Establish a conservation designation for the property 3) Create a deed restriction.		

Randy Johnson	Chair of the Affordable Housing Trust Committee	The Affordable Housing Trust Committee is very interested in the site and feels that there is historic tax credit financing possible given the property is located in an historic district. He would like the RFP responsibility transferred to the Affordable Housing Trust Committee .	Are there any 21E issues on the property?	There was a storage tank leak with no closure.
Susan Shagory Ed Shagory	Auburn Street Auburn Street	Keep facade and open space	What are the marching orders given to the RFP Committee? Are there any current offers being considered?	Prepare the RFP for Selectboard review There are no current offers. The RFP needs to be created first.
Mike Balcom	Water Street	Concern over the RFP with the mandate to sell. A sale eliminates Town control of the property. Thinks the Town should hold the property.		
Geoff Lews	5 Auburn St RFP Committee member	If an RFP is issued and accepted, the sale can be conditioned to protect the Town.		
Robin Wood	South Lincoln Street	Maintain the façade and open space. Develop for affordable housing for seniors who want to stay in Natick. Envisions 10 high-end units for seniors.		
Antonio Viva	Highland Street	Head of Walnut Hill School. He has toured the building. Beautiful building. Rich history. Sees preserving the façade as a priority. Sees an opportunity for extended community programming using the site. Open to partnering with other community partners for development/use.		
Marco Kallofen	Water Street	Unique building. Jewel in Natick. Preserve look is a priority. Open to separating the parcel to maintain open space.	Asked Randy Johnson - could there be market-rate housing if the Affordable Housing Trust developed the property?	Possibly

Rose Coyman	Auburn Street	Wants to see the façade and open space maintained. Sees the parcel as an opportunity to tie the community together. Would like to see if there is a possibility of a community garden.		
Brad Coyman	Auburn Street	Site would be expensive to develop and would require expensive market pricing. Road does not support heavy machinery. Single family residential would be the most financially viable given the realities of the parcel and street.		
Christine Schell	Water Street	Preserve façade and open space. Concerned about impact on traffic for additional development. Riverbend and the circus school have increased traffic on Rte. 16.		
Robin Wood	South Lincoln Street	Preserving the neighborhood is extremely important.		
Ed Shagory	Auburn Street		Who owns the parcel currently? What happens if a buyer defaults?	Town of Natick The RFP should be crafted with a buy-back clause in the case of default.
Beverly Rich	Water Street		Who decides a non-conforming use if outside of the allowable RG zoning?	Natick's Zoning Board of Appeals
Randy Johnson	Chair of the Affordable Housing Trust Committee		Are there any Article 97 issues? If unknown, the RFP should know up front.	

At the end of community members' comments, Jon Marshall said he would work on getting the meeting video posted, more than likely on the 5 Auburn Street page on the Town of Natick website.

Amy Mistrot thanked the public for their participation and shared the 5auburn@natickma.org email address to reach the RFP Committee if anyone had additional questions or comments. She also reminded all attendees about the on-site forum on Saturday, 4/30 at 3:00.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Approved 5.4.22 – submitted by Amy Mistrot