

Meeting Minutes  
April 30<sup>th</sup>, 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

Location: 5 Auburn Street

Andy Meyer, 5 Auburn Street RFP Committee Chair, convened the meeting at 3:00 with Martin Kessel, Geoffrey Lewis, and Amy Mistrot present for the RFP Committee and Jon Marshall as the Deputy Town Administrator, Operations.

Andy started the meeting by reading the charge of the RFP to help frame the committee's responsibility.

*"During the 2021 Fall Annual Town Meeting, the Select Board ("Board") obtained Town Meeting authorization to sell or convey the property. The disposition of the property involves a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. To inform this process, the Board seeks to establish the 5 Auburn Street REFP Committee ("Committee"). The Committee will be charged with assisting and making recommendations regarding the development and issuance of the RFP, and to support the Board's efforts to dispose of the property in a thoughtful, respectful, and professional manner. "*

The Board's interest in the sale is prompted by the fact the building is vacant other than being used for limited storage of Town property. The building is expensive to maintain and is not ADA compliant so its use is currently limited for Town use.

The site's zoning is RG - Residential General. For more specific zoning information, please review [Natick's Zoning By-laws](#).

Jon Marshall shared answers to questions posed during the 4/27 meeting stating that there had been an underground tank removed from the site but here were no residual [21E issues](#) and that there had been a past oil tank leak; however, the site had been cleaned and cleared by Clean Harbors.

The following comments were shared and questions asked by stakeholders in attendance:

Name	Address	Comments	Question	Answer
Robin Wood	South Lincoln Street	Feedback from the 4/27 forum was strongly in favor or preserving the open space and the façade of the building. She has interest in the building being used as affordable housing for seniors. The Montessori School was not a good neighbor initially and has concerns about another outside resource using the building.		
Rob Palmgren	Water Street	Preserve open space and the maintain the building.		

Rose Coyman	Auburn Street	Loves the wildlife that thrive adjacent to the river. Doesn't want to lose the South Natick feel - reason why they bought their house. Worried about traffic on a narrow street.		
Ben King	Pond Street		Could the property be used for elderly or affordable housing?	Yes. There has been interest by the Affordable Housing Trust Committee.
Bob Kaplan	Crest Road		How many units could the building allow? Is there historical funding available?	Geoff Lewis - approximately 10, as is Randy Johnson, Affordable Housing Trust Committee Chair, believes there would be both historical tax credit funding as well as low-income tax credit funding available.
Abby Brown	Broads Avenue	Loves the bell tower. Maintain South Natick as a walkable heart of the community.		
Bill Keezer	Eliot Street	Would like to see the parcel used as community or recreational space and wants the façade preserved.	What is the status of the building?	The building is winterized as the boiler is not operational. Not ADA compliant. Expensive to maintain. Needs several \$100Ks to use.
Carol Keezer	Eliot Street	Would like to see the parcel used as senior living. Feels the town should be supporting seniors more directly.		
Henry Shaller	Shaller Street	Thinks the Town should keep the property, perhaps for open space.	Can a developer do anything they want?	RFP will help condition the sale and determine the outcome.
Kim Shaller Abby Brown	Shaller Street Broads Avenue	Keep community feel	If the CPA passes, when would that take effect? Could funding be used for this project?	If the CPA passes, 2024 is the probably the earliest available funding. However, CPA funds are only available for Town projects and not for private developers. The RFP timing - should be done this summer, posted around Labor Day, allow 60 days to respond, so there would

be a possible award by late fall.

Mark Bugdon	Eliot Street	Open space, building façade, and mitigation of traffic are his priorities		
Nancy Quinlan	Water Street	The building and land are an asset and should be preserved.		
Beverly Rich	Water Street		What are the carrying costs for the property?	The boiler has failed so the building is winterized. Several \$100K to make the building usable as currently not ADA compliant. Electrical costs are \$50-60K/year. Insurance costs. Forgone taxable income from a private entity.
Susan Shagory	Auburn Street		Should a hand vote be taken to check on interest to preserve the property?	VERY clear feedback to preserve the property.
Bill Keezer	Eliot Street	Balance between Town and resident interests and one-time revenue		
Carol Keezer	Eliot Street		Is the plot fully buildable? Can the building footprint expand?	Yes
Robin Wood	South Lincoln Street	Supports a 99-year land lease as an option so Natick retains ownership of the land.		
Beverly Rich	Water Street		What is the existing parking? There were issues with the development of the Sacred Heart church due to parking availability. Would that be an issue on this site?	Quite a bit around back  The Sacred Heart site was conditioned with parking density restrictions that made several proposals not viable. This property does not have the same restrictions.

Andy Meyer shared the Board of Selectmen will ultimately confirm the RFP issued and possible sale of the property. The RFP Committee’s role is to provide recommendations for how the RFP could be crafted to reflect all stakeholder interests. Andy encouraged interested stakeholders to communicate directly with the Select Board as they are the entity that will make the final determination on the property.

Amy Mistrot reminded the participants that they can email the RFP committee with comments or ask questions using the [5auburn@natickma.org](mailto:5auburn@natickma.org) email and to contact the Selectboard at [selectboard@natickma.org](mailto:selectboard@natickma.org). Minutes of the RFP Committee will be shared with the Select Board along the process.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Approved 5.4.22 – submitted by Amy Mistrot