

General DPW Discussion on Proposed Southfield Legislation

Meeting, February 3, 2014

Town Hall, Mayor's Office

75 Middle Street, Weymouth, MA 02189

5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Sue Kay; George Lane; Ken DiFazio; Jane Hackett; Kenan Connell; David Tower; Bob O'Connor

Late Attendee(s): Ed Harrington

The Meeting was called to order at 5:36 p.m. by Mayor Kay.

DPW Director Kenan Connell composed a Power Point Presentation of information representing each division in DPW.

Mayor Kay reminded everyone that this meeting does not include Water and Sewer.

Mayor Kay shared how she asked each department to explain the impacts, any benefits and detriments to the proposed Legislation from Starwood.

Kenan displayed the attached PowerPoint presentation and components of the Department. He encouraged everyone to ask questions at anytime throughout his presentation.

There was discussion on how Southfield is not a conventional development. Mayor Kay inquired about the size of the streets compared to an average street. Kenan responded that usually in developments he is used to, they are a minimum of 24-28 feet. Solicitor Lane also mentioned the houses are jammed together and create small alley ways.

Discussion continued as to who will take over the maintenance of the beautiful landscaping and entrance roadways? Mayor Kay commented that we have to consider they are a part of Weymouth and pay taxes. They may insist the Town maintain the open areas. She feared we won't be able to keep up with that. David Tower stated that, "It gets complicated. If we are going to assess special fees, who is going to provide those services? Will that fall back on DPW?" Mayor Kay replied, "We could probably get a safeguard that states that the condo units will pay for it and list the amenities." Kenan mentioned that anything along those lines, above typical Town services, would be tied to the homeowners association.

Mayor Kay asked if single family homes are included in homeowners association. Councilor Harrington commented that his daughter lives in a similar community in Arizona and she has a single family homeowners association. The association collects the dues and they pay for the landscaping, maintenance of parks and common places. Kenan confirmed that a homeowners association is a possibility.

Kenan provided a breakdown of the employees and equipment in the Park and Tree division (refer to page 10 of Power Point). Kenan stated that with six employees and 28 fields, it is hard to keep up. If necessary, we will grab employees from other departments, but we are very cautious about doing so.

Mayor Kay inquired if the School Divisions has Park and Tree employees or just maintenance? Bob O'Connor responded that the custodians take care of the outside then school maintenance takes over from there.

Kenan also provided a breakdown of the Highway Division's equipment and vehicles (refer to page 11 of the Power Point). Mayor Kay asked if the equipment we have is sufficient for Weymouth? Kenan answered that we are one of the only Highway Department on the South Shore that does not have their own backhoe. He continued to say that there are definitely pieces missing. David Tower commented that the DPW gets a lot of hand-me-downs from other departments.

There was a discussion on the decorative street lighting in Southfield (refer to page 12 in Power Point) and who is responsible for maintenance of the equipment. In Weymouth, the street lights are owned by National Grid. David Tower brought up the issue of when the decorative lights get hit, they are expensive to fix.

The Town of Weymouth budgets \$320,143.00 for snow removal and the account typically runs deficit expenditures easily reaching \$1million. Currently, this year, Tri Town has spent \$56,000 and Starwood has spent \$100,000 above what their association spends. Mayor Kay inquired as to what Tri Town is responsible for and what Starwood is responsible for. It was confirmed that Starwood is responsible for Parkview and any other public roads, Tri Town is responsible for Memorial Grove and Shea Drive, and the Association is responsible for the alley ways. Kenan made the point that they are spending a significant amount of money for a small area.

Kenan reviewed the current DPW staffing (refer to page 14 in Power Point) , comparing 202 employees in 1974, 139 in 1983, and 77 employees today. Councilor Hackett asked when we stopped doing rubbish removal. Bob O'Connor explained that rubbish removal stopped in 1976 and the employee count that year went from 202 to 166.

It was stated that calls for service are increasing and the DPW office is busy. There will be a high expectation for high level service at SouthField. There was a discussion on who will own the roads for potholes, catch basins and snow plowing. It was confirmed that we will maintain the main roads. However, there is a concern with the amount of complaints DPW will receive with the high volume of people in a concentrated area.

Page 18 from the Power Point compares the number of residential units, population and square miles of Weymouth and SouthField. Councilor Hackett inquired as to where the Southfield population estimation is coming from. Mayor Kay commented that she has seen that number on all Starwood and Tri Town's documents. Councilor DiFazio stated that he believes it comes from previous meetings, MAPC did it a couple years ago, but he was not sure if they are still using those same numbers. Councilor Harrington added that according to Starwood, they are estimating 4,715 people in FY25.

The DPW wants to be fair and realizes that every tax payer is entitled to equality in all DPW functions; however, Mayor Kay mentioned the betterments that the Southfield residents pay go to Tri Town and could go towards extra things that Weymouth cannot provide.

There was a discussion on recreation. Any field or playground, new and nice, will relieve the Town to some degree. However, to Kenan's understanding, the legislation states that the master developer would have a lot of discretion in that regard and may or may not build certain things. Mayor Kay believes that they would go back to what was stated in the DDA and not go by those standards. Councilor Hackett shared what she's been told, "It is our decision, whether we want, in the legislation, that they showed last week, it should be generally the same as in the master plan, which provides some flexibility or they will copy and paste what was in the master plan and put it into the enabling legislation; however, that means we are then married to it." Councilor Hackett's opinion is that we go with the copy and paste option then say it cannot be deviated from without a vote of the Town Council. Councilor DiFazio asked who would maintain the fields if they (the developer) are going to charge us to use them. Kenan understood that we would maintain the fields so there is no middle man.

Mayor Kay mentioned that there has been a lot of money put down for permitting on projects that have not begun yet. If we take on the new legislation, there are no phases. We will be paying for inspectors to inspect but won't be getting paid for it. There should be some type of arrangement worked out.

Kenan stated that there is a great need to have a complete evaluation done professionally and hire a consultant at the developer's expense.

Councilor Hackett asked Mayor Kay if she intended to bring Starwood in with Department heads; because it seems like there are a lot of questions with no one to answer them. Mayor Kay replied that she hears that Starwood will be holding a Public Hearing and maybe that would be the time. We are getting a final report together. We will send it to Starwood and Tri Town and get the answers. We are raising issues and we will ask for their comments after they receive the final report.

Trash was not brought up in the presentation because they are staying with what they have now. There was a discussion about trash, if they did want Weymouth to pick up their trash, the truck would not be able to fit down the alleys. Councilor Harrington mentioned that it is only 1/5 built out, the rest is going to be built out to our standards, so we don't have to have those little alley ways. Mayor Kay confirmed that that we are not bound to the Master Plan. Jane commented, "the Zoning Bi-Laws will stay and they have to be revamped within X amount of days consistent with the enabling legislation. Master plan and reuse plan eliminated."

Other important points that were made throughout the presentation:

- *Taking time away from the DPW staff*
- *Issues with water and electrical lines in same trench.(refer to pages 5-7 in Power Point)*
 - *If Water line breaks- it is dangerously close to the electrical*
- *Over the years- staff significantly reduced while demand of services has increased*
- *Weymouth has over 141 accepted road miles that are eligible for Ch90 funding.*
- *Including unaccepted roads, the Town is approaching 1,000 streets. Weymouth goes above and beyond with unaccepted roads*
- *Responsibilities of Departments (refer to page 15& 16 in Power Point)*
- *DPW Facility- 53 years old- Rather than building a substation at the base, Kenan would rather fix up and expand our existing building.*
- *Legislation Impact- Concern that taxation with not equal service cost*
- *Legislation is demanding a lot of attention*
- *Facility & Equipment needs (refer to page 29 in Power Point)- Kenan stated that he is not nailed down to the list*

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Casey Maloney