

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
PROPOSAL OF REUSE OF THE NAVAL AIR STATION
Abigail Adams Intermediate School Auditorium
February 24, 2005**

Present: Michael Smart, Vice-President
Paul Leary
Colin McPherson
Kenneth DiFazio
Susan Kay
Michael Molisse
Arthur Mathews
Gregory Shanahan

Absent: T.J. Lacey, President
Gregory Hargadon
Joseph Connolly

Recording Secretary: Janet Murray

Vice-President Smart made a MOTION to CONTINUE Public Hearing #3 (rescheduled from February 10, 2005) on the proposed reuse of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station to order at 7:30pm and was seconded by Councilor Leary and was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

OPENING REMARKS – Michael Smart – Town Council Vice-President

Councilor Smart noted that Councilor Lacey could not be present tonight because of a family obligation and Councilors Hargadon and Connolly were ill.

FOLLOW-UP BY LENNAR PARTNERS FROM PRIOR PUBLIC HEARING

David Hall from Lennar stated that the eastern access from the base will be onto Weymouth Street. Union Street will remain closed. However, there will be emergency vehicle access through a locked gate.

There will be mitigation at the intersections to keep their rating the same (no worse) or improve the intersection.

He also stated that they would be making contact with the MBTA regarding the current performance of the South Weymouth train station and possible upgrades.

ON-SITE TRANSPORTATION, ON/OFF-SITE ACCESS, AND TRAFFIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Chris Squires from KHA discussed mixed land use and the grid layout with the housing near village centers, as well as transportation issues. He stated that the traffic study area will include 40 intersections and 30 different road segments.

Improvements to be made will include shuttles, the east-west parkway, bike lanes and pathways, sidewalk and pedestrian connectivity.

A multi-modal transit center is an integral part of the project. The MBTA will need to be involved in this part of the project.

It was noted that there is an extensive approval process which includes a vote by Rockland and Abington Town Meetings, and Weymouth Town Council. There will also be a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) filed and ultimately a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). A number of reviews will also be done by the three towns, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Massachusetts Highway Department, South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation, and several area planning councils and other outside consultants.

TOWN SERVICES REQUIRED TO SUPPORT PROJECT

No specific comments were offered on this topic.

TAX RATES/FISCAL BENEFITS TO THE TOWN OF WEYMOUTH

No specific comments were offered on this topic.

IMPACT ON EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

No specific comments were offered on this topic.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Stephen Bergforg, 46 Mount Vernon Road West, stated that “what is best for all three towns” is what matters most.

He noted that biotech requires clean air facilities, which are not allowed in Weymouth, so research can not be done. Mr. Squires noted that the biotech industry being referred to for the base is manufacturing not research and development. This area of commercial activity will be highly regulated through the zoning document.

Mr. Bergforg asked if there was consideration of buildings over the highway. There will not be. It was noted that 381 acres of land will be developed, with over 1000 acres of wetlands left intact.

Dr. Rogers noted that the base closed in 1995 and South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation (SSTTDC) was formed in 1998. He also noted that Mills Corporation, Mass. Development and Lennar were the three finalists to develop the base property. The Mills Corporation did not survive the MEPA process. He also noted that if Mass. Development were to develop the base, the revenue would go to the state and there would be no local control.

Anne Hilbert, 45 Doris Drive, stated that MBTA money is part of our taxes. It would not be Lennar's money used. Mr. Hall stated that any work done on the base side of the station will be paid for by Lennar.

Henry Dunker, 44 Bradmere Way, stated that this is still a conceptual plan and that in a critical review of Lennar, this is a bad plan for Weymouth. He stated that more than 80% of the housing is in Weymouth, the two entrances are in Weymouth, and that Weymouth will bear the most stain on its roadways. He also stated that this plan violates the key objectives of job generation as put forth in the re-use plan. He noted that he is in favor of a small executive air facility. He asked what will happen when the SSTTDC dissolves.

Mr. Hall stated that air use is not in Lennar's plans. He also stated that the three towns will draw up an agreement prior to the dissolution of SSTTDC.

Dave Wight, 247 Union Street, stated that he had not received any response back from two emails he had sent to feedback@thevillagecenterplan.com. Mr. Hall apologized for this oversight. Mr. Wight had questions regarding item #6 and services to be provided by Weymouth, such as fire, police, public works, schools, and other services. Mr. Hall stated that a mitigation plan will be provided by Lennar before town meetings/council.

As a retired Weymouth firefighter, Mr. Wight expressed concern regarding fire protection in South Weymouth.

Mr. Wight noted that although the base will build senior housing and other residential property that does not generate school age children, the people who move into these new units could well be a Weymouth resident who sells his home, which is then in turn bought by a family with children. Mr. Hall stated that this situation would likely happen even if the base were not developed.

In response to a question regarding a source of water, Mr. Hall stated that the project can not and will not go forward without a source of water. The MEPA process will investigate all possible sources of water and determine which source to use.

Dr. Rogers stated that no costs from the development of the base can be passed along to any of the towns.

George Cataldo, 29 MacDougall Court, noted that the state has proposed widening Route 18 to four lanes but this has yet to be done and there doesn't appear to be any room for it anyway. He noted that the state has only just begun to upgrade the intersections. He also stated that there is a bio-tech building in Allston that is currently empty. It was noted that this building in Allston is for Research and Development, not manufacturing.

In response to a question regarding a source of water, Mr. Hall stated that the exact source of the water will ultimately be decided by state regulators and the legislature.

Dominick Galluzzo, 86 Candia Street, questioned how SSTTDC can sign an agreement to pay Lennar if the project fails before Lennar takes ownership. Dr. Rogers stated that FOST 1 and 2 for a total of 550 acres has already been transferred to SSTTDC. It is worth \$16 million and is what is used for collateral. Once the Navy transfers the land to SSTTDC and they in turn transfer the land to Lennar, these transfers are not reversible.

Mr. Galluzzo stated that he has read that Singapore alone is looking to increase its bio-tech manufacturing.

Sarah Rogers, 19 Pasteur Street, stated that she was glad to hear that Union Street will remain closed. She asked what would happen if the parkway was not built. Mr. Hall stated that 2/3 of the project can not be built without the parkway. Dr. Rogers stated that there is \$7 million available through the TIP. He emphasized that the parkway will be built.

John Noyes, 77 Groveland Avenue, questioned the Union Street access. It was noted that police, ambulance, and fire vehicles would have access through a keyed gate.

Douglas Rakers, 126 West Street, asked what happens with water and sewer services once SSTTDC dissolves. It was noted that two years before dissolution an agreement would need to be worked out between the towns.

Edward D. MacDonald, Jr., 17 Granite Street, stated that there are differences in the revenue projections put forth by Lennar and other consultants. He also stated that this conceptual plan is not complete.

Jim Hailey, 1273 Pleasant Street stated that he is in favor of this plan. He thinks that it is a good use for the property.

Donald Sheehan, Bald Eagle Road, stated that the project must go forward, but every issue needs to be addressed and revenue and job generation is vital.

Bob Casimiro, 617 Broad Street, questioned zoning. It was noted that the original land use plan was developed in 1998. This plan is not being developed by Lennar.

Bob Loring, 640 Union Street, stated that there should be documentation of potential water sources. It was noted that 150,000 gallons per day have already been permitted. This water is supplied by the Town of Weymouth. Mr. Loring stated that airports don't pay taxes and can not be restricted.

Tom Goodwin, 462 Union Street, stated that he is concerned by the process. He also stated that he didn't want to see any more housing. In response to his concerns about the process, it was noted that the land was sold to the Navy in 1939. The Navy is in the process of transferring the land to SSTTDC. SSTTDC has an agreement with Lennar. Lennar intends to develop the land.

Mr. Goodwin asked if there would be more opportunity to express opinions in the future. Mr. Hall stated that yes there would be more opportunities.

At 10:15pm, there being no further business, a MOTION was made by Councilor Leary to CLOSE the Public Hearing and was seconded by Councilor DiFazio and was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.