

Town of Farmington  
Farmington Village Center Committee  
September 17, 2018

**Present**

Bruce Charette  
Michael Gurski  
Sarah Willett  
Liz Sanford  
Ruth Grobe  
John Renehan

Kevin Ray  
Nancy Nickerson  
Portia Corbett  
Betty Coykendall  
Brian Connolly

**Staff**

Kathy Eagen  
Bill Warner  
Rose Ponte  
Anna Savastano

**A. Call to Order**

Chairman Charette called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

**B. Reading of the minutes**

- 1) To approve the attached September 4, 2018 minutes  
A motion was made and seconded (Sanford/Nickerson)
  - a. **Motion carried unanimously**

**C. Public Comment**

Henry Maresh, Mountain Spring Road, see attached letter

**D. New Business**

- 1) To create a resolution for the Town Council consideration regarding taking ownership of the former Parson Property from the State of Connecticut.**

Bill Warner gave an overview of the steps necessary to acquire the Parson's Property. The PowerPoint is attached. **(See Attachment 1)**

Chairman Charette reminded the Committee of their charge; which is whether they should make a recommendation to the Town Council to purchase the Parson's property.

Discussions ensued among the committee members and topics discussed included:

1. The environmental issues that may exist with the property
2. The environmental investigations that must be completed in order to understand the extent of the environmental issues
3. The costs of the necessary environmental remediation
4. What is the timeframe that the Town can back out of the purchase if they environmental issues deem the project unattainable?

Since the Town's purchase would be contingent on the results of the environmental tests; the consensus of the committee was to direct the staff to continue conducting

due diligence on the property. Committee members expressed that time was of the essence and it was important to at least get the process moving forward.

The Town Manager asked if the Committee felt comfortable presenting the resolution to the Town Council at the October 9, 2018 Town Council Meeting instead of the originally scheduled October 23, 2018 Town Council Workshop Meeting. The Committee members agreed. Committee members were encouraged to attend the meeting.

A motion was made and seconded (Nickerson/ Connolly) to direct the Town Manager to create a resolution for the Town Council's consideration regarding taking ownership of the former Parson's Property from the State of Connecticut. As a starting point, the staff has recommended that the resolution include the following points:

- The Committee recommends that the Town Council begin the process of acquiring the Parsons Property from the State of Connecticut subject to a full environmental review and all other due diligence.
- The Town Manager notifies the State Department of Transportation (DOT) of Farmington's interest in purchasing the property.
- Upon receiving the price of the property, the Town Manager works with the Farmington Village Center Committee and the Licensed Environmental Professional to begin to negotiate the purchase price based on the Environmental Study and Title Search.

The committee wanted to confirm that a letter of interest does not legally bind the Town of Farmington to take ownership of the property. The Town Manager stated that her understanding is that it would not, but she will confirm with the Town Attorney.

**a. Motion carried unanimously**

**2) Update from the Quality of Life Committee**

The Quality of Life Committee met on September 17 at 5:00 PM. They held a brainstorming session in which they discussed components that need to be addressed in the Study Area. Those components include signage, sidewalks, crosswalks, and landscaping.

Several committee members requested that access to the Farmington River, public parking, and extending the village zone be added to list of items that the Quality of Life Sub-Committee will tackle. Kathy Eagen explained that the staff will develop a matrix and each enhancement will be prioritized. The Committee was cautioned to consider the funding component of each enhancement and the importance of keeping focus on the committee's main charge which is to determine if the Town should purchase the former Parson's property.

## **E. Public Comment**

Katie Bradley, Waterville Road, thanked the committee for their hard work. She expressed that this is a wonderful opportunity to make something that is not currently so great and make it wonderful for a long time to come.

She expressed concern over the discussions of extending the Village Zone. Ms. Bradley commented that the Village Zone has zero setbacks and allows for 4 story buildings. Potentially this would allow several very tall buildings to be located at the entrance of the village. Currently in Farmington, there aren't any buildings which are 4 stories high. Since developers are usually inclined to build as much as possible they will always try to build as much as the zone allows. The Town must consider the consequences of enlarging this zone.

Chairman Charette said he appreciated Ms. Bradley's comments and assured her that this committee is very concerned about the future of the Village. In Chairman Charette's opinion this is one of the primary reasons why it's so important for the Town to own and control Parson's.

Mr. Warner pointed out that the Village Zone allows the town to maintain much more control than other zones.

## **F. Executive Session – A motion was made and seconded (Nickerson/Connolly) to go into Executive Session to discuss land acquisition.**

### **a. Motion carried.**

1. No action taken – Executive Session ended at 8:27 PM.

## **G. Adjournment**

A motion was made and seconded (Nickerson/ Coykendall) to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM.

### **a. Motion carried.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Rose Ponte**

# Road to Acquisition

## Step 1

- Town decides to purchase Parson's property
- Town notifies DOT of interest in purchasing the property
- DOT Commissioner declares Parson's surplus property

## Step 2 DOT

- DOT Property Division completes two appraisals. (Average of the two appraisals is the price)
- DOT Offers to Town
- Survey is updated

## Step 3 - Negotiation

- Town Manager begins negotiation with State
- Using environmental and title search
- Agreement is reached

# Road to Acquisition

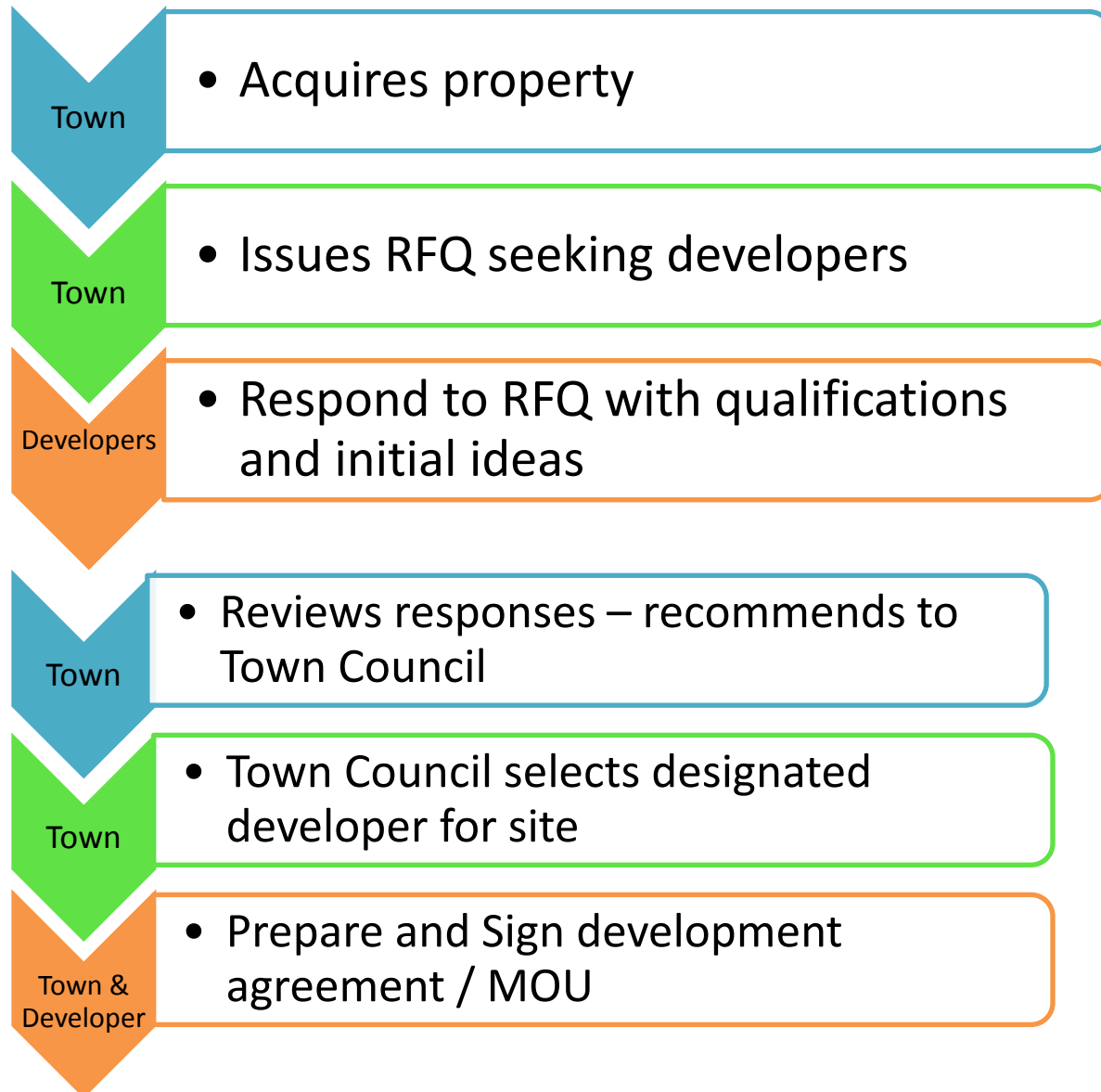
## Step 4 Legal Review

- Agreement sent to Attorney Generals Office for review and approval
- Agreement is sent to the State Properties Review Board. (30 day turn around)

## Step 5 - Close

- Town Council determines source of funding
- PZC CGS 8-24 review
- Town Council formal vote to acquire
- Closing

# Development Process once Town Acquires



# Development Process once Town Acquires





- Town transfers property to developer
- Groundbreaking
- Developer constructs project which:
  - Creates an attractive gateway into town
  - Fosters a sense of place
  - Enhances quality of life in the Village
  - Adds significantly to the grand list