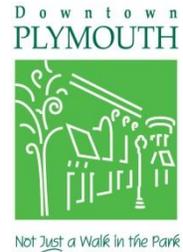


Wednesday, February 8, 2017 Subcommittee Meeting Minutes



**CITY OF PLYMOUTH
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
SAXTON'S RFP COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
PLYMOUTH CITY HALL**

Wednesday, February 8, 2017, 4:30 p.m.



CITY OF PLYMOUTH
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Saxton's RFP Subcommittee

Wednesday, February 8, 2017
Special Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 4:30 p.m. by DDA Vice Chairperson Jason Smith.

1. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dan Dwyer, Mayor
Oliver Wolcott, DDA Chairperson
Jason Smith, DDA Vice Chairperson
Jim Mulhern, Planning Commission
Mike Devine, Zoning Board of Appeals
Colleen Polin, Historic District Commission

2. Citizen Comments:

Ellen Elliott, Penn Theatre, said that she was impressed by subcommittee's attention to detail during the last meeting and the data reflected her feelings about the developers.

Resident Dave Rucinski said he commended the process and believes the subcommittee will find a design that is in the traditional character of the city.

Resident Patrick Kehoe said that he appreciated that the developer interviews were filmed. Kehoe said that he is concerned about moving forward with one developer without more information.

Resident John Townsend said he believes it would be best from a competitive

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standpoint to move forward with the two developers still being considered.

Resident Ed Kroll said there were more than 500 hits on the videos and asked if every meeting was recorded.

DDA Staff Director Tony Bruscato said that not every meeting is filmed.

Resident Tim Tingsted said that he believed that most Maple Street residents felt that the Union Street Developers addressed the concerns of the neighborhood best.

Resident Jason Findland said that he echoed resident Tingsted's comments.

3. Subcommittee Comments:

DDA Vice Chairperson Jason Smith said that the current meeting is being held to choose a developer and not a specific design. Smith said that the subcommittee is trying to make a quality selection and will make adjustments along the way.

DDA Chairperson Oliver Wolcott said that it is great to see a large community turnout again for this meeting.

4. Developer Evaluations

- a. Harmonie Park Development
- b. Union Street Development

City Planner Sally Elmiger led the subcommittee on developing a list of pros/cons for each developer.

Saxton's Subcommittee Meeting Results

City of Plymouth Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

The Plymouth DDA Saxton's Subcommittee had previously interviewed three project teams and their concept proposals to re-develop the area referred to as the "Saxton's property," located at the southeast corner of Ann Arbor Trail and Deer Street. The sub-committee ranked the project teams after each interview, using pre-determined criteria, to come up with a total score. These results are available on the DDA's website (www.downtownplymouth.org).

The Sub-committee then met a few weeks later on Wednesday, February 8, 2017 to discuss the "pros" and "cons" of the two, top-ranked project teams and determine the next step in the selection process. Both the interviews and the follow-up meeting were held as public meetings that allowed residents to observe the proceedings and provide comments.

The information below reflects the results of this post-interview discussion. The information is categorized by project team. The sub-committee concluded their discussion by creating a list of additional questions they would like to ask the two top-ranked teams.

Discussion Results

1. Project Team: Harmonie Park (Ranked #1 with total score of 35.1)

Pros:

- One word that illustrates overall impression of project team: "Opportunity" – Expanding project beyond Saxton's site
- Good Team – Has all required disciplines for proposed scope
- Concept plan may be less detailed, but what was provided shows an imaginative expansion of project – offers opportunity
- Team seems to have a strong willingness to work w/city to achieve goals
 - Past projects are beautiful
 - Seems that team has the ability to accomplish the project
- Team seems a couple steps ahead of the project goals – they did their homework
- Team thought through all important elements
- Flexibility offered during the interview was impressive
- Presented themselves as professionals *
 - Great track record bringing large projects to completion *
- Inspired/creative response
- Ambitious
- Concept's focus on maintaining historic building (esp. Jewell/Blaich) was positive

* This idea/concept was repeated in the comments of several sub-committee members.

- Scale offers opportunities
 - But could the project be staged/phased?
- Liked the idea of drafting a memorandum of understanding with residents on Maple St.
- The proposed surrounding development brings more to downtown Plymouth
 - Need for more parking/retail/residential -- Provides these opportunities
- New development may coordinate with new transportation technologies
- Scope of development may be more appropriate vs. providing parking as envisioned by the City.

Cons:

- This team's vision of the Saxton's site is not desirable because:
 - The concept is significantly deficient in public parking and needed parking for additional proposed uses. Appears that the concept expands on commercial and residential uses at the expense of the City's primary goal of providing public parking – striking deficiency.*
 - Locating vehicular access off of Maple St. is very concerning. So missed the mark on the concerns of Maple Street residents that this development not negatively affect their neighborhood. *
- Developer did recognize these deficiencies during the interviews.
- Because this concept is so all-encompassing at this end of downtown, it feels like putting all the City's "eggs in one basket" – Concerned about working with just one entity to develop a very large part of downtown – risky*
- Size of project a negative
- Can this proposal be successfully implemented? Can the deficiencies be overcome?
- This concept assumes that all the property is available. This may not be the case. Can proposal be achieved without owning all the land?
- Is this a financially viable vision?
- Outstanding issues with Historic District Commission and ability to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (approval) – could they be addressed?

* This idea/concept was repeated in the comments of several sub-committee members.

Discussion Results

2. Project Team: Union Street Development, LLC (Ranked #2 with total score of 33.2)

Pros:

- One word that illustrates overall impression of project team: “Respect” – Concept coordinates well with downtown, and ties this area to:
 - Kellogg Park
 - Maple St. – This residential townhouse concept is what was asked for and keeps traffic away from this neighborhood, meeting residents’ concerns **
 - Jewell/Blaich building (Not so much Saxton’s building) ***
 - This design concept made the Jewell/Blaich building special*
 - The concept honors the Jewell/Blaich building
 - Alley concept was very imaginative and positive. Pleasant surprise *
- This was an artist’s approach to the project – the vision was right on (if feasible \$)
- Like the breadth of experience and expertise offered by the team members *
 - Esp. like the Historic Architect
- The team also includes a retail expert that can help market the development and businesses – provides the “next step” to ensure the project is a success.
- Concept focuses on walkability – creating a “people” place *
- The concept provides sufficient parking *
- Proposed building height is appropriate
- The concept hides the parking structure from view- especially to Maple St.
- The concept is an appealing vision

Cons:

- Is the scale of this vision as proposed financially possible?
- This team provided no sense of how this project could be paid for – interview response to this question was too soft. Appears that not enough thought was given to how the project could be accomplished financially***
- The team members had no experience in working together as a team
- Will finances require a higher/more dense project?
- As the other team, this team assumed that all the property at this corner is available
- Feasibility drives what can happen; not much feasibility/financing information
 - Not much background

* This idea/concept was repeated in the comments of several sub-committee members.

During the discussion, the committee decided on the project elements that must be accomplished by the project, and to communicate this back to each project team. The project teams will be asked if these elements could be worked into a development (if not already), or if they make the project unviable.

Must Haves are:

- Scale; height/mass of proposed buildings must complement the existing buildings downtown and coordinate with single-family residential uses along Maple Street*
- Provide a minimum of 150 public parking spaces*
- Maintain the Jewell/Blaich Hall building (not just the façade)*
- No ingress/egress on Maple Street*
- Design a residential townhouse product on Maple Street*

Questions to the project teams:

- How much retail can be absorbed?
- What does the proposed concept require of the City? What can the City offer?
- Provide some financing/feasibility information on the proposed concept
 - Timing of other projects?
 - Were they sufficiently financed?

Next Steps:

- The City will check references/and example projects provided by each team through the proposals/interviews
- The City will frame the questions brought up in this round of discussion as the "last ask," coupled with a second round of interviews to discuss the new information provided. Once this second round is complete, the DDA sub-committee will make a recommendation to the DDA Board.

* This idea/concept was repeated in the comments of several sub-committee members.