

**Town of Preston
Norwich Hospital Advisory Committee
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 11, 2009
Preston Town Hall
7:00 pm**

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Mike Sinko called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm

Joseph Biber
Michael Sinko
Roy Beauregard
Kent Borner
Allyn Brown III
Bob Congdon
Sandy Ewing
Merrill Gerber
Gerald Grabarek – arrived at 7:20 pm
Dan Kulesza

2. Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes – March 4, 2009 Regular Meeting

A motion was made by Merrill Gerber and seconded by Dan Kulesza to approve the minutes of the Norwich Hospital Advisory Committee (NHAC) March 4, 2009 Regular Meeting as amended. All in favor. So voted.

*a. Under Communications; Mike Sinko should read Mike Sinko
Throughout the minutes David Frommer should read Robert Frommer
page 7, 18 lines down from the top; Bob Congdon noted that the development commission would come
back with a recommendation from the Board of Selectmen , should read Bob Congdon noted that the
development commission would make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.*

3. Communications

- a.** The Town was able to secure insurance on the hospital property for \$60,109.00
- b.** Weston Solutions will have the Phase I environmental review done by Thursday morning.
- c.** First Selectman Congdon met with Thames River Landing; they are still interested in developing the hospital property.
- d.** Letter from Douglas Philipp requesting to be considered as a Norwich Hospital Development commission member.
- e.** Letter from L. Michael Clancy requesting to be appointed to the Preston Development Commission.
- f.** Letter from Walter E. Kornosewicz requesting a seat on the Economic Development Commission.
- g.** The State requested a closing on the hospital property for Thursday March 12, 2009 at 3:30 pm.
- h.** Bill Penn informed First Selectman Congdon that he received a call from EPA; there is potential for Remedial Action Plan (RAP) money if an application is submitted by Monday. Bill Penn offered to fill out the application for \$500,000.00 of EPA money pro bono.

4. City of Norwich - Regional Cooperation

Robert Mills, Executive Director of the Norwich Community Development Corporation

Robert Mills stated that he, Norwich planner, Peter Davis and the mayor of Norwich, welcome the opportunity to see if there are ways to work together regarding the Norwich hospital property.

Robert Mills stated that he went to Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to inquire about the idea of doing inter-municipal agreements (a couple of communities working together) they were interested in the concept and gave a couple of models of agreements to use.

He would welcome the opportunity to start the process of mapping out and what we could bring to the table to help.

Bob Congdon asked how he would see a collaboration working.

Robert Mills answered that he does not have a view on how it would best work, he just wants to see something happen.

Bob Congdon asked if the city of Norwich would work jointly with Preston because the likelihood of success would be greater that way, versus a newly appointed committee of volunteers that may not have the same investment.

Robert Mills said he would like to take that message back to Norwich and have that dialogue. Norwich has a strong signal from the community and amongst the council, to go forward and acquire the sixty one acres that resides in the Norwich side of the property and look for development opportunities. It makes sense to go forward in lockstep.

Kent Borner asked if it was accurate to state that the only decision making authority the Mayor has is economic development which would alleviate going to the town council.

Robert Mills answered that was fairly accurate.

Bob Congdon asked where we should go from here.

Robert Mills thought he should be a regular fixture at these meetings and also review this meeting with the mayor, call the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to explore further the state's interest in regionalization.

Bob Congdon thought it would be best to act sooner rather than later in case there is opportunity to access stimulus money jointly.

Robert Mills aid he would attend next week's meeting with an interim report.

Bob Congdon asked if other "players" should be talked to, like the Mohegan tribe or the town of Montville.

Robert Mills stated that if there is opportunity with other partners, we should present them with an outline of what we think this is going to look like.

5. Val Ferro with Weston Solutions – Master Planning

Val Ferro stated that she spoke with Jim Byrne, a member of the EPA's New England Brownfields team and he is very excited about the Town taking over the property and using EPA funds.

Val Ferro said John Meyer has prepared the application for a targeted brown fields assessment grant, which was the first thing Mr. Byrne suggested you apply for.

Bob Congdon asked if it would make sense for him to speak with Jim Byrne and ask how to move forward rather than fifteen people calling him.

Val Ferro answered absolutely, when pursuing EPA funding it is great to have them come to the community or have a direct conversation.

Allyn Brown asked for the reason an up-to-date Phase I is needed when there is already a more up-to-date phase II and Phase III.

Val Ferro said it does not matter, it is the way the regulations are written and interpreted.

Bob Congdon said he has found out that a Phase I has to do with uses on the property, ownership, and changes in ownership. A phase III could address areas of concern but you still could have had a change of ownership or use.

Val Ferro commented that since they write the regs and give the money; you do what they say.

Val Ferro passed out a flow chart titled: Norwich State Hospital Strategic Redevelopment Approach Preston, Connecticut.

- Val Ferro said this committee needs focus and organization and to put it on paper in order to develop an evolving list.
- Establish communication protocols in order to have a transparent process.

Mike Sinko noted that, protocol had already been established a long time ago; everything goes through the First Selectman's office.

- Engage EPA
- Formalize relationship with Norwich
- Develop initial outreach plan
- Pursuing Initial Funding; this needs to be chased as soon as possible.

6. Discussion pursuant to development of the Norwich State Hospital

Bob Congdon didn't think anything should be submitted to EPA until he spoke with Jim Byrne. Kent Borner suggested putting a call in to Congressman Joe Courtney and Senator Chris Dodd's offices.

Jerry Grabarek said that he would call Courtney's office.

7. Public Comment

Norm Gauthier, Preston resident noted that he came to the meeting late and asked if the closing on the hospital property was tomorrow.

Mike Sinko answered yes.

8. Adjournment

A motion was made by Sandy Ewing and seconded by Merrill Gerber to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 pm. All in favor. So voted

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta Charpentier
recorder