

Minutes

SACRED HEART REUSE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, June 4, 2008

The Sacred Heart Reuse Committee (“SHRC”) held its seventh meeting on May 21, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Members present were: Stephen Carter, John Davis, Rita Fontes, Ed Keenan and Irene McCarthy.

John Davis reported on his recent telephone conversation with Genna Vurakovsky. Mr. Vurakovsky is originally from Sharon and his parents still live on Beach Street. He requests the opportunity to address the SHRC regarding his proposal to erect a bubble over the tennis courts and, perhaps, over the basketball court as well in order to convert them to year-round facilities. Sharon currently has 17 “public” outdoor tennis courts – four at the High School; four at the Middle School; four at Deborah Sampson; and five at the Sharon Tennis Club – but *zero* indoor courts. He believes there is a genuine need for indoor courts within Town. The Committee will invite Mr. Vurakovsky to attend a future meeting when we begin soliciting input from private developers and entrepreneurs.

Eli Hauser, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee (“EDC”) and member of the Planning Board, met with the Committee. The EDC is studying the revitalization of Post Office Square in terms of both economic growth and wastewater management. Several expressed goals include increased tax revenue and “fun-ness,” and decreased traffic and water impacts. The EDC obtained grant monies to hire three consultants – one to evaluate growth scenarios and land strategies; a second to study wastewater management issues; and a third to provide advice on facilitation of the permitting and public communications process. Town centers, explained Mr. Hauser, either degrade or improve over time. This process is generally a slow one, with each cycle lasting from 20-30 years. The EDC would like to ensure that Post Office Square is improving (not degrading) with time.

Presently, the EDC would prefer to see the library and Town Hall remain in the Town center. These uses are vital to a healthy “downtown” area. In the long run, the Police and Fire Departments should most likely be housed together.

Mr. Hauser was asked for his thoughts regarding potential future uses of the Sacred Heart property. He suggested the SHRC may wish to consider a swimming pool and/or a Holocaust Memorial Park. He also believes open space for use as gardens or parkland would be welcomed by the Town. Once Brickstone obtains its permitting, grant monies may be available should the SHRC wish to conduct a user study. Mr. Hauser invited the SHRC to speak with the EDC if we believe such a study could aid in our analysis.

At our next meeting, the SHRC will brainstorm to identify the community needs and concerns raised to date, and to review the status of our process.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.