

October 28, 2020

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a special virtual meeting on this date at 5:30 p.m. This meeting was also streamed on Facebook live and was available via audio on a conference line. First Selectman Danielle Chesebrough, Selectwoman June Strunk and Selectwoman Debbie Motycka Downie were in attendance. No public or press were present in the room. Public and press were able to view via Facebook live as well as audio through a conference call.

(1) Call to Order

Ms. Chesebrough called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

(2) Pledge of Allegiance

(3) Public Hearing – 2021 Community Development Block Grant

Ms. Chesebrough called the Public Hearing to order at 5:32 p.m. Ms. Chesebrough asked if anyone wished to speak regarding the 2021 Community Development Block Grant.

Ms. Susan Cullen, Director of Economic and Community Development gave a brief overview of the grant stating the Town will be seeking funds through the Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) program in the amount of one million dollars to support the infrastructure of the Campbell Grain Redevelopment project. The Town has supported the regional homelessness initiative and the housing authority with funding from prior CDBG competitive grant rounds.

She added that for this CDBG application, WinnDevelopment has proposed an 82-unit mixed income rental housing project on the site. The project will consist of a single five-story structure, with one level of garage podium parking and four stories of residential units and amenity space. The project will consist of a mix of studio, one, two, and three-bedroom units. The building will feature a leasing and management office, a community lounge, a fitness room, and common laundry. The site will additionally feature a public-access easement along the Pawcatuck River with a walking path.

The project will create a true mixed-income and inclusive community, creating diverse housing options in Pawcatuck. The units at the Campbell Grain site will be affordable to a mix of incomes at 30%, 50%, and 80% area median income (AMI). The project will also contain several unrestricted market rate units. Approximately 70% of the units will be income restricted. Both the Stonington Plan of Conservation and Development and the State's Plan of Conservation and Development discuss the need for housing choice and economic diversity in housing stock.

Mr. Matthew Robayna, Assistant Project Director for WinnDevelopment, gave an overview of WinnCompanies stating that they are a fifty-year-old family owned company with a focus on building and managing affordable and workforce housing. They have been active in CT for over forty years owning and managing over three thousand homes in the State while still owning projects that they built fifty years ago.

He noted that they were approached by the Economic Development Commission at the end of 2019 about the property. He added that in addition to constructing the new building on the former Campbell Grain site, they plan to own and maintain it for the long term, with onsite property management and maintenance staff.

In addition, he stated that they have encouraged local participation as much as possible given COVID-19, including meetings with abutters and the Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce, as well as a large public meeting held with residents in advance of formal zoning process. The project has completed zoning, and is submitting its funding applications in several weeks.

Ms. Cullen stated that they had not received any written testimony in advance of the Public Hearing for or against the Community Development Block Grant.

No members of the public wished to speak for or against the grant. With no further discussion, Ms. Chesebrough adjourned the Public Hearing at 5:44 p.m.

(4) Discussion – Items Related to 2021 Community Development Block Grant

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the 2021 Community Development Block Grant including the following:

- Citizen Participation Plan
- Fair Housing Resolution
- Resolution - Authorizing the Submission of a Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Application for Campbell Grain Redevelopment.

In discussion, Ms. Strunk noted that many boards/commissions have met regarding this project such as Planning and Zoning Commission, Economic Development Commission and Board of Police Commission. The videos of those meetings are available on the Town's YouTube page. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

(5) Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the special meeting minutes of October 14, 2020.

(6) Correspondence

- Ms. Chesebrough took in correspondence from John Godin in the form of an application for the alternate seat on the Economic Development Commission.
- Ms. Chesebrough took in correspondence from Dave Hammond, Economic Development Commission Chairperson, in support of the WinnDevelopment project at the Campbell Grain site as well as their request for a fixed assessment.

(7) Appointment/Reappointment/Resignation

Reappointment – Commission on Aging

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to reappoint Stacy Cassata to the Commission on Aging.

(8) Old Business

Update on COVID-19

A reminder to check the Town's website for weekly updates regarding COVID-19. Further, a reminder to review the information regarding Halloween as it is considered a high-risk activity. It was noted that there are many lower risk activities taking place within Town which can be found on our website.

(9) New Business

Request – Letter of Support for WinnDevelopment Company LP Project Application

Ms. Chesebrough gave an overview stating that the letter of support is for the WinnDevelopment application(s) to the Dept of Housing and CT Housing Finance Authority.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve providing the letter of support for the WinnDevelopments project application(s).

Resolution – Supporting a Future Special Town Meeting Regarding a Tax Abatement Request from WinnDevelopment Company LP

The resolution addresses the request from WinnDevelopment Company LP for a tax abatement on their proposed development on Coggeswell Street and the Board of Selectmen supporting moving the item to

the legal voters in the Town to consider at a future Special Town Meeting. Ms. Chesebrough noted that we are working to come up with a plan for how we will hold the virtual meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the resolution.

(10) Comments from the Public

None

(11) Comments from the Selectmen

- Ms. Downie thanked Dave Hammond and Susan Cullen for reviewing the Campbell Grain project with her and added additional thanks to Susan Cullen for her work on the ongoing grant application for the Boathouse property.
- Ms. Strunk stated that the Climate Change Task Force are now meeting on a monthly basis with a goal of compiling information to distribute to residents and the Board of Finance about the Town's vulnerabilities in regards to Climate Change.
- Ms. Chesebrough stated that the Town has been awarded Bronze Certification in the Sustainable CT program. She thanked Susan Cullen and Ian Timmons for their work compiling information needed to apply to the program. She noted that the dollar for dollar match in regards to the Community Garden at Town Hall has been fully funded. She thanked Susan Cullen and those who have been volunteering setting up the garden at Town Hall.
- Ms. Chesebrough noted that candles have been placed in the windows at Town Hall which will shine throughout the night in support of Safe Futures who are holding a vigil to honor those within the community who we have lost due to domestic violence homicide. She asked for a moment of silence to reflect on those we have lost.

(12) Adjourn

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.



Stacey Haskell
Recording Secretary