

Town of Sudbury ~ Capital Improvement Planning Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday – November 30, 2006
Flynn Building (Silva Room) – 7:00 pm

Present: Pascal Cleve, Dan Messina, Derek Oram, Kirsten Roopenian, Maureen Valente and Andrea Terkelsen. Also in attendance as presenters: Mark Thompson, Dennis Mannone, and Jody Kablack.

Opening Remarks:

The meeting was opened at 7:18pm. Purpose of the meeting is to hear from 3 various departments/divisions that have capital projects up for consideration for the FY08 budget cycle. While the presentations are regarding specific high-priority items, the committee has been given information regarding all submissions made by staff this year.

Item 1: MIS Department Requests:

Director of MIS, Mark Thompson was asked to present on 2 priority items relating to technologies for FY08. The first item discussed was GIS (geographical information systems) Development for the Town. Over the past two years the Town has contracted with a local GIS expert to develop a long-range plan for implementing GIS. Project development thus far has been paid for with settlement monies from a utility company; earmarked for technology development and to be shared by both the Town and Sudbury Water District. These funds are almost expended. This 5-year plan involves purchasing equipment, developing useful data, training and roll-out across various Town departments. Mark Thompson indicated that he and the GIS consultant conducted several interviews with Department Heads during the planning process. While the Town has some GIS software already only the Engineering and Assessors Departments have been able to utilize some aspects of GIS.

The request as submitted considers a 2-year purchase of required equipment & data development costing \$329,000 in FY08 and \$171,000 in FY09. Given this is a large, multi-year project the staff committee recommends funding and consideration as an article during the April 07 Town Meeting. In addition to new equipment and data development, the project calls for an in-house GIS developer. This is currently under consideration as part of the Town Manager's FY08 budget. Without this additional position the Town will need to continue using consultants to move this project forward.

Pascal Cleve, liaison for technologies projects, led the ensuing discussion. While Mr. Cleve and the others recognize the need (and interest) for GIS in Sudbury, the cost and complexity of such a project is somewhat concerning. Investing \$500K in technology that is still rapidly developing could result in needless expenditure or additional costs. The committee briefly discussed existing "free" GIS technology resources (e.g. data being developed by NASA and other web-based depositories). The committee agreed it would like to review the GIS plan in further detail before rendering an opinion. Mark Thompson will provide the committee with a copy of the plan, DVD on GIS development and will work with Mr. Cleve directly to answer additional questions. Town Manager Valente suggested the committee look at the websites of similar communities to get a sampling of what other Towns are using for GIS. She explained that most like communities have been using GIS extensively with good results and that Sudbury is "behind the curve".

The other item presented for technologies was the purchase of a specialize Ikon printer/scanner to be used for the Town's evolving archives system. The estimated cost of purchase is \$11,500. While the printer would likely be permanently located in the DPW building, the goal is to begin archiving files first in the Town Clerk's Office, followed by Police, Fire, Assessors and Engineering. This printer would also be utilized in the Town's GIS development thereby reducing the future need for separate purchase of like components.

Mr. Thompson provided the committee with a description of existing archiving efforts along with an inventory of existing printing/scanning equipment, complete with pictures. Terkelsen and Valente both mentioned that the staff committee expressed strong support for this new piece of equipment. Followed by some examples of daily use of such equipment (including parcel maps, development plans and parcel details – anywhere from the Selectmen's Office to Tax Collector, Public Safety and Engineering). Archiving technology is meant to increase document availability to the public, enhance communications between departments and better serve the storage needs/capacity within Town buildings.

Item 2: Atkinson Pool Request:

Park & Recreation Director, Dennis Mannone, was asked to present on the one item for the Pool recommended by the staff committee. Similar to last year's request for pool gutter replacement, the driving factor for this project is one of public safety, as well as ensuring proper pool operation. This new project to replace all pool starting platforms (6 in total) has an estimated cost of \$14,500. While this is only one of several projects submitted by Mr. Mannone this year, both he and the staff committee felt the starting platforms was the highest priority for the Pool for FY08.

Mr. Mannone answered various questions relating to Pool operations, including usage by swim teams, current pool fees and other maintenance concerns. Dennis remarked that he's planning on a modest increase in fees in FY08, but that Sudbury's fee schedule must take into consideration the limited amenities and impact on overall usage.

The committee asked for an explanation of Enterprise Funds and wondered what costs of operation are covered by user fees verses Town tax levy. Town Manager Valente explained that all normal costs of operation with the exception of benefits are covered by the Enterprise. Employee benefits as well as capital items (such as new starting platforms) are generally covered by appropriation of tax levy revenues each year. She also mentioned that the popularity and wide usage by Townspeople has resulted in this type of "subsidization" for extraordinary expense.

Item 3: Community Planning & Development Requests:

Jody Kablack, Director of Planning & Community Development, was asked to present on 2 projects being recommended for the FY08 budget cycle. The first project is the largest and involves the development of/re-configuration of the roadways converging at the (Old) Town Center.

Jody Kablack in conjunction with community groups, Town Department Heads and consultants has come up with several renditions/plans for further consideration. Funds being asked for in the Town's FY08 budget (\$70,000) will be used along with the requested amount of \$30,000 from the CPC, to further the engineering/architecture for the Center's re-design. Depending on the adoption of a final plan this project will cost somewhere in the range of \$500K-\$1.5M.

The plans under consideration can be described as low, medium and extensive renovations to the Center. The most aggressive/complex plan calls for the permanent use of some of the First Parish's frontage (as much as 20 feet alongside Concord & Hudson Roads). Whereas, lesser involved plans would not require as much land and therefore, would be less costly not only in terms of construction but also purchase/compensation for Church land.

Jody Kablack showed the committee various drawings and site pictures, all of which were previously unveiled and discussed at Public hearings earlier this year. Kablack indicated that the cost and scope of such a project lends itself to further public discussion; recommending this be put forth at Town Meeting as a monied article for FY08. If in fact the Town is not willing to proceed further with this project at this time, at least the public will have received as much information as possible on the subject. Whereas if the Town were to vote to move ahead, the significant cost (and time required – possibly 1 ½ years) will be decided on with majority consent and understanding of what such a project entails.

The other item presented by Ms. Kablack is \$100,000 for new sidewalk construction. While the staff committee recommended referral of this project to the CPC, Ms. Kablack indicated that it has been a few years since the Town has put up money for such construction. And, that the CPC would rather match funds with the Town on a bi-annual basis. Submission to the CPC is far from a guarantee and without additional funds all sidewalk construction is deferred indefinitely.

While not as significant in cost as some other proposed monied articles this year, Ms. Kablack pointed out that the Town has typically asked for sidewalk funding separately at Town Meeting. The Townspeople are therefore afforded the opportunity to consider and vote on whether or not sidewalks are to be given priority in any given year. Kablack also indicated that her Division continues its extensive consideration and prioritization of all sidewalk construction in Town. In doing so, no one area of Town is given preference. Since 2000, the Town has constructed 5.5 miles of new sidewalks. 2.3 miles of new sidewalks are under consideration for FY08. However, cost of construction, if this project is approved, will result in perhaps 1/2. The Town has at least an additional 6.8 miles of new sidewalks proposed by Developers and Citizens. Town Manager Valente remarked at successful efforts for the Town's new sidewalk, to date; citing that many people comment in great appreciation for our sidewalks' safety and attractiveness.

Item 5: Adjourned

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Next meeting will be held on December 13, 2006 in the Flynn Building Thompson Conference Room at 7:00 pm. The purpose of this meeting is committee deliberations & final vote for recommendations to the Selectmen, FinCom and Town Manager.