

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY FOR THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN HELD ON JUNE 17, 1969.

PRESENT: Messrs.: Achenbach, Chairman  
Gamer, Vice-Chairman  
Camp, Secretary  
Thayer  
Novicki  
Stone

ALSO

PRESENT: Messrs.: Kaplan  
Haze  
Guy  
Tibbitts, Hill Development Corporation  
Lash, Hill Development Corporation  
Campbell, Vice President, Wesleyan  
Higgins, City Plan Commission  
RePass, Middletown Press

The meeting of the Redevelopment Agency for the City of Middletown was called to order by Chairman George Achenbach at 5:30 P.M.

The first item on the Agenda was a statement by Mr. Lash concerning the present status of the proposed Medical Practices Building. Mr. Lash stated that 23 doctors and dentists have signed letters of intent to occupy the proposed structure and they are now completing full questionnaires on their needs.

The proposed structure is in the conceptual design stage through the firm of Moore and Salisbury Architects. There will be a meeting on July 9, 10, or 11, with a review panel consisting of Hill, 3 doctors, and 3 hospital representatives on a review of the plan and cost estimates.

The Wadsworth Grove Homes occupancy was then reviewed by Mr. Lash. Of the 45 dwelling units available, 24 potentially eligible applications are being processed with 8 having been approved by FHA.

Mr. Lash then reviewed the history of the various preliminary sites that have been considered for the location of the Inn complex which Hill Development has been interested in.

It was stated that Hill Development's policy has been to consider a location which would best serve Middletown's needs first. Hill Development will look to the Agency for guidelines in the selection of the most suitable location.

The original Inn study by Nelson Associates stated that a modest number of transient housing units could be supported in Middletown.

Mr. Tibbetts was then engaged by Hill for a second study and he recommended that there be a greater exploration of incorporating a

conference facility and local investment in this facility. With these new inputs it encouraged Hill Development to consider 100 units in the complex.

After the start of Urban Renewal Planning for Project No. 2, it was felt that the Goodyear site might be the best location of the Inn. This site was eventually discarded due to its distance from the Central Business district.

An Inn location, closer to Main Street, was then recommended by Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd as being best for the City. The pros and cons discussed by the Hill Board, assuming that Wesleyan would be a main generator for activity, were expressed concerning the problem of relocation of on-site businesses, traffic circulation and access from Route 9, distance from the Wesleyan campus, and the ability to successfully bend commercial uses 90° from Main Street to the river.

Further study was then devoted to the CBT block for the Inn and compatible commercial uses because of the apparent availability of this underdeveloped area. The advantages of this area, it was felt, were that it was central and nearer the campus. The disadvantage was that the area is outside of the renewal boundary.

Mr. Lash then discussed the merits of Mr. Kaplan's proposal for the use of Parcel E, and recognized the advantage of tying in the River. However, he felt that design difficulty and questionable benefit to the Central Business District needed further exploration.

The possibility of using the Middlesex Theater site with the availability of the theater space for conference use and the relationship to the Historical Society gardens was mentioned as also being explored.

Mr. Achenbach asked how many units were being considered for the Inn. It was explained that 100 units were now being considered with the expansion of an additional 50 units when needed.

Mr. Stone asked for an explanation of local participation. Mr. Lash stated that the majority interest would be local investment with the minority interest to be held by Hill Development.

Mr. Achenbach asked what uses were being planned for the Inn. In addition to the guest rooms, a quality restaurant, coffee shop, businessmen's club, meeting rooms, and conference rooms will be provided. There has been interest expressed for fraternal and civic club meeting rooms and an ecumenical center.

Mr. Higgins asked Mr. Lash if he would be more interested in Mr. Kaplan's proposal with total design of the area.

Mr. Lash stated that this was important and that besides the guidelines from the Agency, the questions of highway access, design testing and economic advice would have to be explored.

Mr. Gamer asked how large a site was needed. It was stated that two to four acres are needed with parking on site. A smaller site is workable with adjacent or offsite parking.

Mr. Achenbach asked if Mariot or Hotel of America fit into their plans. Mr. Tibbetts stated that in his experience local sponsorship and control were preferable to chain management.

Mr. Camp stated that location rather than the mechanics of packaging and operating the facility is the prime decision.

Mr. Novicki asked about market studies for transient trade and noted that relocation priority may make for public relations problems with local business men who will be moved from the area.

With discussion on the Inn site ended, Mr. Campbell then stated that their attorneys and architects were making a study of the Goodyear site for a development proposal.

The second item taken up on the Agenda was ratification of a resolution presented by Mr. Haze to apply for funds under NDP for planning in the North End. A copy of the resolution is attached. After due discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Stone, seconded by Mr. Thayer, and passed by all present to approve the resolution.

The third item on the Agenda was the presentation of a completed demolition contract as received from Cahn Engineers. The Agency requested further cost breakdowns on fill due to the fact that the developer of the elderly site would soon be excavating and it might be more advantageous to leave the cellar holes open. Under these conditions, Mr. Haze requested permission to advertise for bids.

A motion was made by Mr. Camp, seconded by Mr. Gamer and passed by all present to put the contract out for bid with a breakdown of alternate costs.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Gamer, seconded by Mr. Stone and approved by all members present that the meeting be adjourned to executive session.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

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Robert W. Camp, Secretary