

Barons South Committee
January 23, 2014

Present:

Steve Daniels
Martha Hauhuth
Ken Bernhard
Rev Ed Horne
John Thompson
Yvonne Senturia
Rob Haroun
Matt Mandell
Avi Kaner and Jim Marpe

Absent:

Sharon Rosen
Jo Fuchs Luscombe

Meeting called to order at 8:34am by Avi Kaner.

AK gave overview: Barons South project has the full 100% support of the Selectman's Office, and they will "do everything in our power"..... exciting project for our town.. " Want Westport to be one of the best five places to live, not just for school-aged children but also for senior citizens."incredible asset to town and residents"..... Something the town can be proud of, and will generate revenue for the town so benefit all residents, and will ensure a chunk of Barons South property remains Open Space for 98 years and available/open to Westport public. Synergistic with senior center and be open to other seniors by monthly membership fees and/or a la carte services.

AK introduced Rob Haroun as new member of the Barons South Committee. Rob has been a resident of Westport for 15 years, is a local developer, speaks their language, and will help negotiate with the developer as well as help navigate local waters of zoning and help streamline the process.

AK introduced representatives from Jonathan Rose Companies, Watermark and the Freshwater Group. This is a partnership in which our equity is the land, and we are building something for the community.

AK gave a status report, after a brief history of the last two years. Preliminary negotiating session yesterday, starting with the business terms communicated to the previous first Selectman, trying to enhance those terms. Concept is 60% market rate and 40% income restricted (30% affordable; 10% a notch above). Building physically linked to senior center to have pool, gym, exercise classes, etc). Will designate some of the remaining Barons South as Open Space with walking trails, etc maintained by the developer. Land lease will be for 98

years, with a \$3 million upfront payment to the town. Annual PILOT payments will begin at \$400,000 and escalate annually over the 98 years of the lease. There will be 130 total independent living units: 30% for <=80% state median income as defined by 830g, 15 units (11 ½%) for <=120% area median income, and 76 units at market rate. In addition, there will be 32 units in two separate structures for memory care. All private funding.

AK discussed amenities. There will be synergies with the senior center, including but not limited to pool, gym, café and spa.

AK discussed timing. Finalize memorandum of understanding over the next weeks. Town attorneys (Bloom and Kelly) will translate memorandum of understanding into a lease, which will then need approval of Board of Finance. In parallel, developer starts due diligence on the property for a period of 30-120 days. In parallel, Committee goes to planning and zoning with list of changes needed to original text amendment (increase number of units, decrease % affordable, etc).

Cathy Walsh asked about whether the memory care units would be eligible for government assistance. Rachel clarified that memory care not eligible for government assistance.

AK: town will work on designating who is eligible for affordable units. When they need memory care, Sue Pfister assured that the department will do their best to find solutions.

AK: Do our best to keep seniors in Westport. Project synergistic with Senior Center. Financial return to the town is commensurate with appraisals done on the property. Maintains accessible open space in perpetuity (98 years). Project has full 100% support Marpe/Kaner.

JM spoke also: Ability for our seniors to age in place and to continue to live here. An important opportunity to give back to people who have given to the town.

MH: Committee glad proceeding seamlessly with new administration.

MM presented a number of issues for consideration, including parking for Westport residents using walking trails/open space, details on amenities including swimming pool.

Rachel talked about the broader conversation about amenities and synergies with the senior center, such as socialization, evening meals, etc.

EH pointed out that we can not necessarily afford everything we might want, and should make sure to include what will serve the most people.

Carolyn said she understands that JR will need to address parking for the walking trails, keeping in mind the desire to preserve trees and the topography of the land/grade.

KB wanted to clarify the primary access, and was told it will be Compo Road.

AK discussed interface with Westport Transit, which would routinely stop at the senior complex to provide rides to the train station, YMCA, etc.

AK asked RH to discuss easements/corridor to Imperial Avenue.

AK clarified that the developer is not touching the two structures in area #4 (one is storage and the other is the Mansion), which will be the subject of a totally separate discussion at a later date

Sue Pfister pointed out that without the “club” amenities as proposed, there would need to be a major expansion of the senior center in the near future.

AK: Sue P will work with the project to utilize synergies.

Sue P said her seniors use the warm water at the Y and actively participate in aquacize classes, but not lap swimming. She listed large pools (for lap swimming) already available in Westport at Staples High School and the Westport YMCA.

Sue P concerned that include parking for those using the amenities or walking trails, as parking is already at a premium at the senior center

AK: next step is to continue negotiating with the developer, memorandum of understanding, due diligence, lease and planning and zoning.

Next meeting in approximately two weeks, with date/time TBA.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Yvonne Senturia