

WAREHAM REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MINUTES

Thursday April 13, 2023
9am, Room 27, Town Hall
54 Marion Road, Wareham, MA 02571



CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Chair Butler at 9:02 AM

I. ROLL CALL

Members present:

Dan Butler, Chair
Judith Whiteside, member, Chair of Select Board
Derek Sullivan, member, Town Administrator
Ken Buckland, Clerk, Director of Planning
Ron Besse

Also present:

Linda Scharf
Jim Munise, (9:17)
Bernard Pigeon (9:35)

II. RESIDENT COMMENTS

None

III. AUTHORITY BUSINESS

1. Discussion and possible vote on Resident Comments Policy. As not all members were present, **NO VOTE** was taken. Item will appear on future agenda.
2. Discussion and possible vote on encumbering funds for 20% match on \$300,000 Seaport grant for Downtown Boardwalk design and permitting and any associated engineering, selection of engineering firm, and related work.

Mr. Buckland advised members that the railroad is now considering only one crossing. Further, while the railroad might build the crossing the Town would still be responsible for safety features, such as fencing. Mr. Buckland suggested applying either under the Seaport grant, or the One Stop program to fund a feasibility study, which is the first step in ascertaining whether the crossing and hoped-for boardwalk is appropriate for the Town to pursue. **NO VOTE** was taken.

3. Discussion and possible vote on design and permitting of grade-level pedestrian crossing of downtown State railroad tracks to access boardwalk and waterfront along Merchants Way.

As members felt they did not have enough information and had really covered the issues under item III 2 of this agenda regarding the scope of the proposed project. **NO VOTE** was taken.

4. Discussion and possible vote on encumbering funds for Tremont Dam and hydroelectric facility assessments.

Members discussed determining whether ‘protecting and continuing’ the FERC license is economically feasible. The Town has had an MOA with Littoral Power for several years, and although there have been many ideas suggested for the dam and its pond none of them have come to fruition. The issue requires further investigation. **NO VOTE** was taken.

5. Discussion and possible vote on recommended edits/revisions to draft Urban Renewal Plan for Wareham Village.

Members engaged in a robust discussion regarding the draft URP. Members agreed that items 56 and 57 were somewhat misleading, as the neither the Town nor the WRA have stated intentions to purchase any properties highlighted in the plan. Mr. Buckland will work with Ms. Ennis to use different language, ensuring that the language meets the requirements of DHCD. Members agreed that the resiliency studies provided had impacted some property owners’ understanding of the plan. **NO VOTE** was taken.

6. Discussion and possible vote on Wareham Village URP “next steps,” to include dissemination of updated draft URP; URP promotional video; aggregation of Town lots along Merchants Way, air rights, and other steps recommended by the Town Planner.

Discussion and covered under item III 5 on this agenda.

7. Discussion and possible vote on proposed ‘Letter to the Editor’ to be published in Wareham Week, regarding the Zoning Bylaw revision to be presented at the April 24, 2023, Special Town Meeting. Members made suggestions as to how to highlight the benefits of the zoning, listing the public hearings or meetings which were held to garner citizen input, the several newspaper articles, the focus groups who were asked to provide input, etc. Mr. Sullivan suggested asking ‘Do you like Main Street the way it is?’ as a focal point. Ms. Whiteside made the **Motion**, seconded by Mr. Buckland, to authorize the chair to send such a letter. **VOTE 4-0-0**

IV. REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

Mr. Buckland had no further information to offer.

V. MEMBER COMMENTS/NEW INITIATIVES

None.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

None to review.

VII. APPROVE PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

1. Ms. Whiteside made the **MOTION** to release and post the executive session minutes of October 27, 2022, seconded by Mr. Buckland.

VOTE: 4-0-0

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Whiteside made the **MOTION** to adjourn, Mr. Besse seconded.

VOTE 5-0-0 Meeting was adjourned at **9:57**

The foregoing minutes were submitted to the Wareham Redevelopment Authority
on _____

Attest _____

Kenneth Buckland, Clerk

Date approved _____

Date signed 6/27/2023

Date submitted to Town Clerk _____

Documents used in the meeting

1. Posters for upcoming Showcase Wareham
2. Minutes of October 27, 2022
3. Draft Urban Renewal Plan