

NMI/Starmet Re-use Planning Committee

Meeting Minutes

August 2, 2019

PRESENT:

Members: Gary Kleiman, Jim Burns, Pam Rockwell, Karl Seidman, Paul Boehm, Andrew Boardman, Steven Ng

OTHERS:

Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning & Land Management Department (DPLM)

Garry Waldeck, Massachusetts Dept. of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 am.

The Agenda was reviewed and approved with two additions: a review of the Committee Charge to identify/determine 'what is the deliverable' expected, and to add a "Public Comments" item at the end of all future agendas.

Election of Officers

Andrew Boardman nominated the following slate of officers: Gary Kleiman as Chair; Paul Boehm as Vice Chair and Pam Rockwell as Clerk. Karl Seidman seconded and all voted in favor.

Review Committee Charge

Paul B. led the discussion of the Committee Charge with a focus on the Duties and Responsibilities, noting that assessing the possible uses of the site with public input as being a critical aspect. The group then discussed possible evaluation criteria as uses were considered, such as: funding, environmental impacts, public benefits, economic return, etc. The committee members agreed that prioritizing the possible uses and identifying where on the site possible uses might be located were also important.

Some committee members thought that more information was needed about the remediation work to be done; others felt that the group needed to discuss locations for infrastructure to support future uses. Questions were pondered as to whether potential re-use would need to be a cost-neutral solution, or a fiscally positive solution.

The committee refocused on compiling the list of potential re-uses that have been identified so far in various plans and by various town committees; that this list would serve as the initial outreach to other town boards and committees as well as the public outreach workshop in order to gain community input; and the plan proposed to the Select Board could include potential impacts to the town.

Garry Waldeck from MassDEP noted that the more definitive the proposed plan, the more readily costs can be assigned. He observed that the NMI/Starmet site was of a considerable size and acquisition of the site could be beneficial to the Town. Paul Boehm noted the 2015 Town Meeting vote (Article 2) that authorized the Select Board to acquire the property at the appropriate time.

There was general agreement/an underlying assumption that the Plan prepared by the NMI/Starmet Re-use Planning Committee is dependent on the Town acquiring the property.

It was further noted that the dates contained in the Charge needed to be modified with regard to the deliverables.

Overview of Potential Uses

Gary Kleiman presented information from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan – Envision Concord, which focused on three “Big Ideas” contained in the plan, and reviewed the Handout provided.

Pam R. presented the 2229 Main Street committee’s letter submitted to the Comprehensive Plan Committee in April 2018, and suggested adding an educational use to the discussion.

Paul B. cited the 2014 Recreation Plan (that had been distributed to the committee prior to the meeting) that the NMI/Starmet Site may be suitable for additional recreation facilities that were desired/needed in the community.

Karl S. suggested the need to consider higher level goals for re-use of the site as a means to balance the range of needed and desired uses. He felt it would be worthwhile to focus on goals, priorities and criteria.

Pam R. felt that various town reports could help inform the list of needs in the town.

Steve N. suggested that rather than specific uses, the committee might consider visionary uses, such as a ‘wellness development’ that could incorporate several potential uses to meet a wide variety of town needs. Andrew B. added that the committee could consider optimizing development of all of the identified Area ‘A’ locations on the site.

Gary K. observed that the three ‘Big Ideas’ in the Comprehensive Plan did not capture the full range of potential uses for this site and suggested adding Recreation and Education.

Paul B. asked whether the committee needed to think about the site as a whole, or divide it into areas for re-use. Pam R. asked how to accomplish everything on the site and whether there was a need to return the site to the tax rolls.

For the next meeting, Gary K. and Marcia R. would combine the lists identified so far. The agenda for the next meeting (Friday, September 6) will include a discussion of Goals and Priorities.

Outreach Process

The committee discussed which were the key boards and committees that should be engaged early in the process (sometime in September if possible) and committee members volunteered to begin outreach as follows:

- ❖ Planning Board – Gary K.
- ❖ Recreation – Paul B. and Pam R.
- ❖ Natural Resources – Pam R.
- ❖ Public Works – Andrew B.
- ❖ Finance Committee – Steve N.
- ❖ CMLP (Municipal Light Plant) – Karl S.
- ❖ Housing – Jim B.
- ❖ Council on Aging – Gary K.
- ❖ Disability Commission – Pam R.
- ❖ Schools – Paul B.
- ❖ West Concord Advisory – Karl S.
- ❖ WCJ Cultural District – Gary K.

Additional outside groups that should be engaged include:

- ❖ Concord Business Partnership – Steve N.
- ❖ League of Women Voters – Pam R.

Paul B. observed that designation of the NMI/Starmet property as a Superfund site carried a stigma when discussing future/potential re-use of the property with different groups. It was suggested that SKEO and others could help prepare materials that might begin to address this concern, which the committee would find very useful as each person met with other town boards and committees.

Gary K. suggested that the September 6 agenda include a topic regarding case studies and messages; integrated strategies for the site; a revised list of uses with goals and priorities; and, a sample “briefing” page that can be used by committee members when they meet with other groups.

As discussion continued about the public outreach process, a variety of outreach tools were discussed such as developing a series of educational articles, preparing a survey/questionnaire to collect data, holding a public forum or workshop to solicit additional re-use ideas and input on the ideas identified so far.

Marcia R. would identify potential locations and dates for a public forum in October and send out a Doodle Poll to determine who can attend which dates.

It was also discussed whether to continue with the first Friday of each month or consider the second Friday (because the League of Women Voters holds periodic discussion events on the first Friday of the month).

A request was made to ask SKEO and others to prepare a tentative timeline (a reasonable timeline) for when the site might be ready for re-development/re-use being considered or how the remedy of the site moves forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Rockwell, Clerk