

MINUTES OF SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
OF THE TOWN OF COLCHESTER
C-TIP Application
September 30, 2014

Present: First Selectman Stan Soby; Board of Selectmen Rosemary Coyle, Denise Mizla, William Curran, Kurt Frantzen; Board of Finance Rob Tarlov, Art Shilosky, Rob Esteve, Tom Kane; Economic Development Commission Jim Ford, Bruce Fox; Board of Education Mike Voiland; Town Planning Director Adam Turner; Brenden Healy, Applicants Tom Turner, Maryellen Turner; Gayle Furman, Town Clerk and 136 citizens.

Meeting was called to order by Stan Soby, First Selectman at 7:00 p.m.

Motion that Brenden Healy be Moderator was made by Denise Mizla, seconded by Rosemary Coyle.

Motion to close nominations made by Jim Ford, seconded by Kurt Frantzen.

Motion that Brenden Healy be Moderator. SO VOTED AND CARRIED.

Moderator Healy asked the Town Clerk to read the warning of the meeting.

Motion to move Item #1, To discuss and vote upon the C-TIP (Colchester Tax Incentive Program) Application for the site 175 Old Hebron Road; applicant is Colchester Sports Arena, as recommended by the Colchester Economic Commission made by Stan Soby and seconded by Bruce Fox. SO VOTED AND CARRIED.

The Moderator introduced First Selectman Stan Soby to speak.

Stan Soby introduced the agenda for the evening and the process of making a recommendation for this application.

Mr. Soby introduced Adam Turner to give a brief overview.

Mr. Turner stated that the Economic Development Commission recommended the C-TIP by authorization of the State Statute 12-65b. Mr. Turner read the statute. He also stated that this project is for a recreation facility at the cost of approximately \$10,000,000. This abatement is for the building only. The property taxes for the land and personal property will still be paid.

Mr. Turner introduced Tom Harper to speak on the facility.

Mr. Harper stated that the building would be a 250,000 square foot facility and all that would be included in that building. It would also host the Colchester Schools sports teams. He stated that it would take four to five years to turn a profit and once the abatement was over it should be one of the largest taxpayers in Colchester.

The moderator called on Jim Ford to speak.

Mr. Ford stated that the Colchester Sports Arena meets all of the criteria for the tax abatements; it would bring services to the town where we currently have a deficit and that the town needs to stabilize taxes and have less reliance on the residential taxpayers and more commercial development. He also stated that the Economic Commission had serious debates and it was brought to the Board of Finance to review.

Discussion:

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Resident Anne Curran asked if other residents/taxpayers of the town could use the facilities. Mr. Harper stated that during the day and after youth leagues get out the facilities would be open to the public for various uses and that they are depending on that revenue also.

Resident Willie Althamire asked if the other schools as mentioned in their business plan had any commitments. Mr. Harper stated that he does not have any commitments in writing but has letters of interest. He also stated that his research has shown that Colchester is currently bussing students to other towns to use their facilities so they are trying to create something locally.

Bruce. Fox stated that this facility would potentially alleviate some of the cost of bussing students to other facilities. He asked if that would be a fair assessment. Mr. Harper agreed that it would.

Resident Cliff Bartiss asked if the residents are going to be charged for using the facility while it is in abatement. Mr. Harper said absolutely, without revenue they would have to shut the doors.

Resident Steve Schuster stated that he is in favor of the facility and that the town is taking a big commitment and he feels the developer/owners should offer a discount to the town residents in order to form a good relationship. He asked if they would consider this. Mr. Harper said they would consider it and it is important for them to give back to the community.

Resident Meaghan Kehogreen stated that she lives near where the facility would be and has concerns about the impact it would have on those who live nearby as in traffic, and quality of life.

Another resident stated that she was also concerned about the traffic. She stated that she is not against it but wants to know what kind of goals they have to address this.

Jim Ford stated that they took a look at the traffic impact and the access would be on Old Hartford Road with a small right-of-way on Old Hebron road for emergencies. He also stated that this requires a state permit and the DOT will be looking deeply into the project.

Resident Ted Sanford stated that he is a neighbor to the Harpers and spoke of their character. He said they care about Colchester and the best interest of the families in town.

Resident Maggie Nolan stated that she lives in Westchester but would be fine if it were near her and that she would rather see a Colchester resident succeed than big box facilities from outside of town.

Resident Carl Swanback stated that he believes the business plan is overstated with the large building costs and the traffic impact. He had concerns that we would have to upgrade fire equipment and the sewer system which would add costs. He had concerns about who would pay for this. He also asked if it could break even in fewer years.

Resident Marlene Hageman stated that other businesses', that residents currently use, have had abatements. She also stated that she currently brings her children out of town for sports.

Moderator Healy called for a vote on item #1: SO VOTED AND CARRIED Motion to adjourn made by Moderator Brenden Healy and seconded by Rosemary Coyle at 7:33PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Gayle Furman, Town Clerk