

Springdale Study Committee Minutes
August 18, 2015
Town House Selectman's Room

Attendees: Eric Aborjaily, Juris Alksnitis, Nancy Kostakos, Doug Novitch, Anne Reitmayer, Matt Schmid, Catherine White

Liaisons: Kate Cannie (WC), Joanne Connolly (COA), Paul Wood (OSC)

Guests: Camille Johnston, Douglas Johnston, David Powers, Stuart Swinney

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm by Catherine White
2. **Minutes** from the June 18 meeting were approved.
3. **Preliminary survey responses** were discussed. Ms. White tabulated approximately 214 responses to our email and regular mail town survey, and went through preliminary results. 65% of the respondents were in the 40-65 year old age range, and 67% have lived in Dover at least 11 years. There seems to be very strong interest in maintaining as much open space as possible, and relatively low interest in development or uses for senior housing or a senior center. The majority prefer no active recreational use of the site, but of those who do have an interest in active recreation, the majority are interested in a community pool. Interest in selling the property for development or to recoup most of the cost is low. There seems to be a willingness to absorb the cost in order to maintain open space or passive recreational use. Ms. White also reported that she had briefed the Board of Selectmen on our preliminary results. Ms. Kostakos agreed to contact the schools and see if we can further publicize the survey in the initial email blasts around school opening.
4. **Vulnerability to ongoing unfriendly 40B development** was discussed extensively. Although the survey results, thus far, appear to strongly side with preserving 46 Springdale as is, and past long-range planning efforts have confirmed the overall sentiment that we should maintain the do all that we can to maintain the rural character of Dover, this Committee is conscious of the fact that the reason we exist at all is because of the ongoing threat of unfriendly 40B development in our town due to very low affordable housing inventory. We discussed the fact that, in spite of efforts to provide education to the town regarding the long-term benefits and protections that friendly or town-controlled 40B development could provide, there remains a lack of understanding and a lack of mobilization around housing planning that could lead to reducing the threat of further unfriendly development. We are not all in agreement as to our role in pushing the affordable housing agenda, but at least understand that we would not be here if this was not an issue for the town of Dover.
5. **Further exploration of preferred options** for the site were then discussed. Mr. Novitch agreed to contact local realtors to get a better sense of the site's market value under certain scenarios. We already have an appraisal for the full property that was provided in conjunction with the sale. We want to get a better sense of the market value of the existing structures and approximately 3 surrounding acres, with and without potential shared road access and further development or community use of the rear acreage.
6. **Community pool:** Because of early results showing an interest in a community pool, Ms. White asked the Recreation Subcommittee (Ms. Kostakos and Mr. Novitch) to conduct further research into costs and feasibility of developing a pool or aquatic center on the site in advance of this meeting. Ms. Kostakos sent a survey to surrounding towns and received feedback from Lincoln and Weston on their outdoor pools. Both were built in the 1970s, and include bathroom and

shower facilities as well as concessions stands and additional recreational facilities. Generally, the operating costs for these seasonal pools seem to be mostly covered by annual membership and concession revenue. Mr. Novitch spoke with a representative from the Sudbury Parks and Recreation Commission and heard a much different story regarding the costs and effort needed to build and operate a true year-round community aquatic center. Sudbury has a wait list for use of its existing indoor pool, and is currently spending \$25 million to modernize and double the size of the facility. The Sudbury representative quoted \$400-500 per square foot to build a center and \$30-60 per square foot to operate it, stating that you could only expect to recover 60% of operating costs, at best, through membership and other revenue sources. Mr. Novitch also provided information on a new Concord-Carlisle aquatic center, which took over ten years to come to fruition. Land was gifted specifically for this use in 1996, and it took four years to get a committee mobilized to start working on the project. A 25,000 square foot facility was opened in 2008 that cost \$10.8 million. Given Mr. Novitch's research, the Committee felt that it was unlikely that Dover would have an appetite for such an expensive investment, particularly given the relatively low interest in active recreational uses for 46 Springdale in the first place.

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Kostakos