

Eminent Domain Committee meeting, April 20, 2016, 7:00 pm, Room 111, Town Hall
Minutes

Commenced at 7:10 pm

Members present: Craig Bolon as chair, Clifford M. Brown, Catherine Donaher, Thomas J. Gallitano, Jean Stringham, Leonard A. Weiss and Christine Westphal

Others present: Regina Frawley, TMM-16, Alisa Jonas, TMM-16, Jim Solverson, Shaw Road resident, Margaret Murphy, Chestnut Hill Realty employee

Committee members discussed background, issues and strategy related to the Hancock Village buffer areas. Each member expressed his or her view of topics in the discussion draft of a committee report. Copies of the draft report were made available to the public. Committee members also discussed how to generate more public interest in the committee's work and report. Public comments followed.

Margaret Murphy, from Chestnut Hill Realty, said she works on permitting for the company and volunteered to answer questions.

Jim Solverson, a retired architect and a resident for 37 years on Shaw Road, said he had been following Chestnut Hill Realty's efforts to develop Hancock Village.

Regina Frawley, a Russett Road resident and TMM-16, said land next to Putterham Library will be dedicated to outdoor reading and will not become playground space. Regarding 111 Cypress Street, she said the owner has filed an application for a 99-unit 40B development. She described reasons why neighbors near Hancock Village didn't propose acquiring land in the buffer areas earlier, saying, "We'd been told that the land would not be built upon—by the town and others."

Regina Frawley urged that the committee say more about the possibility of prescriptive easement as a tool to secure the land. She asked that the report be "thesis-like" in stating what the report does not include and asked that the committee reference some detail of its executive session, including legal opinions received. She also asked why the committee didn't seek a Reserve Fund transfer to undertake an appraisal of the property. Craig Bolon said he had verified that the committee could request such funds, but the committee decided an appraisal would be premature, since its report is recommending an approach of negotiation.

Alisa Jonas, a Russett Road resident and TMM-16, objected to use of "so-called" in connection with "buffer areas." She said the draft report did not discuss the "garden city" concept for Hancock Village. She offered to provide copies of documents from the 1940s through the 1960s.

Committee members discussed the structure of the committee report. They agreed that an executive summary should appear at the beginning, describing findings and recommendations. Discussion followed on specific findings. Minutes from prior meetings were not reviewed as planned but will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Next meeting: April 25, 7 pm

Adjourned at 9:15 pm