MINUTES OF THE CHERCHE TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 2010, AT 7:30 P.M. IN ROOM
207, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410

Present
James Sima, Chairman Planning Committee; Justin Adinolfi and David
Schrumm.
Also Present: Councilor Michael Ecke; Dr. Greg Florio; Vincent Masciano,
Director of Services, BOE; Anthony Perugini, BOE;
Staff: Michael A. Milone, Town Manager
Guest: Robert Behrer, Chairman of the CHS Turf Committee; Steve Trifone,
Athletic Director, CHS; Matthew Bowman.

1. ROLL CALL
The clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

3. REGIONALIZATION OF CALL CENTERS FOR 911 CALLS
Mr. Sima informed the meeting that there was a Senate bill to regionalize 911
dispatch calls in the State. He contacted Northwest Communications in
Prospect, CT, and information was sent to him. Since that contact, the Senate
bill has been vetoed by the Governor because she did not think there were
 enough details or the bill planned out for the process. The bill is expected to
come back before the Legislature in the future. In his discussions with
Northwest Communications representatives, Mr. Sima asked about a field trip for
the Cheshire Town Councilors to visit the site, which is on RT 68, at 28 Core
Road. This call center services multiple towns (9) in the State.

With regard to the Senate bill, Mr. Milone stated that it was read badly because
they piggybacked this legislation on the 1977 legislation which created the
enhanced 911. There are only a few lines in the bill that changed, and deals
with regionalizing call centers for communities of 40,000 or less population. Mr.
Milone read an excerpt from the Governor’s letter, paragraph #3, into the record.
He advised the police chiefs are concerned about the unanswered questions,
want a more thought out plan in advance, before being compelled to meet the
deadline of 2016.

Mr. Milone talked with Sue Webster, Executive Director, of Northwest Public
Safety, who explained they provide two services – regional 911 call center for the
9 communities, but only for fire and ambulance, and they do not dispatch police
calls. There is only police dispatch for communities with resident state troopers.
Mr. Sima said he asked Ms. Webster about the company’s capability to service Cheshire, and they replied that no one has asked them about this. There are also other centers in the State which handle police dispatch. Regarding the procedures for a 911 police or emergency call, the committee members agreed they would like to see the center, in action, and observe the service before going any further on the matter. There are other larger facilities in the State, with one in Torrington, covering larger cities up to the Massachusetts border.

Mr. Milone stated there is a question on how a police 911 call is diverted and this must be considered. The company does C-med for 22 communities, and Cheshire is part of this communication system between the ambulance and the hospital. The service is also set up for mass casualty communications and coordination, with the primary service for the 9 towns. Mr. Milone will call North West Communications and set up a date and time for a tour of the site, and advise Councilors.

4. CHESHIRE HIGH SCHOOL TURF/TRACK
The committee was informed by Mr. Sima that, at his request, Town Manager Milone invited BOE members to attend this meeting on the turf/track issue. Mr. Sima stated that 50% of the funds for the project would be generated through fund raising, with the group coming back to the Council with an update. He wants to insure this project is done through the proper channels and everything is done so the exact costs are known, what construction will be, and all the correct steps are taken (Public Building Commission, Inland Wetlands, etc.). Also, Mr. Sima wants to make sure who will be taking the lead on this project – is it owned by the BOE; has the BOE decided to take on this project; or will it go through the capital project plan.

Mr. Masciano stated that the questions asked need to be answered, not necessarily by the BOE, but with the BOE coming to the Council.

An update on the synthetic turf field project as of 6/16/10 was given to the committee members. On May 9, 2010 BOE put out a RFQ to find a firm to design to get the project to competitive bidding on the field and manage the construction of the project. On May 18th there was a mandatory walk through at the main game field, with 7 firms in attendance. May 28th was the bid submission deadline, and 4 firms submitted proposals. This piece of the bidding is not the lowest bidder but competitive negotiation for consulting services, and the fees do not necessarily align with the competitive bidding process.

CHA Sports bid $38,000; Milone and MacBroom bid $41,500; Stantec Planning and Landscaping bid $54,400; The WBA Group bid $38,000. The firms are all qualified based on their proposal.
There will be interviews with these firms on June 21st and June 23rd. On June 28th a recommendation will be made to the BOE to engage one of the four qualified firms to provide design services to know the scope of this project. If the BOE approves this, then the next step is bring it back to the Town Council Planning Committee to put forth the proposal, the cost of the design services. Then, there will be discussion on how to move forward, and determine if this is a BOE or PBC managed project.

$200,000 has been raised through fund raising, and there is a $525,000 grant from the DEP. Mr. Masciano advised that the letter received in June 2008 from the DEP indicated that the grant is good for five years from execution date. The Council must give Mr. Milone approval to execute the contract with the State. Mr. Masciano is concerned about the DEP grant out there, the contract has not been signed; and he does not want to see the State pull this money. This is a matter to be considered by the Town Council. The DEP issued the grant approval subject to the contract being signed; the contract is not signed because the Town Manager does not have approval; and this is pending Town Council taking the next step. The Council must approve having the contract signed to accept the grant from the State. This is not funding the grant because it is a reimbursement grant.

Mr. Sima stated that the Council voted to accept the grant in November 2009.

Mr. Masciano said this was subject to the activities of the fund raising efforts.

Town Manager Milone stated his understanding that he must sign the document, and to do that he needs a Council resolution, which must include an appropriation for the project. Acceptance of the grant does not give Mr. Milone the authority to sign the contract, only the appropriation would give him that approval.

Mr. Sima said the Council must appropriate the $525,000 in order for the Town Manager to sign the contract, and without this there is the possibility of the withdrawal of the funding.

Regarding the question about the grant funds still being available, Mr. Masciano said he spoke with DEP representative, David Stygar, who issued the letter in June 2008. He was told the grant was still available, and has not been rescinded. The Town would be in a stronger position if the grant was appropriated by the Town Council. There is $200,000 in the bank of the turf committee, and they are getting closer to having the funds for construction of the field.

Mr. Schrumm stated that the execution of the grant contract is between the Town and the State.
Bob Behrer, Chairman of the Turf Project Committee, said that acceptance of the State grant does not force spending the money, but reserves the money, and this is what the November resolution said. The project acceptance was conditioned upon the successful fund raising of no less than 50%. Four estimates were received; two were renewed at the same numbers; and one is at the low end. With the fund raised to date the committee is almost able to construct the field at the lowest estimate. There are some gray areas still being worked out, but the committee is well past the 50% mark of the most expensive estimate received. These are the best estimates until people have to put their numbers on the table.

When the Planning Committee discussed the pool project, Mr. Sima said some things were not included, and through the vetting process more things were included. With the turf project discussions in November, there was zero cost to the Town on the construction. He said he would need something concrete from the BOE through the capital plan. The Town has the capital plan so we know what is coming and not coming, and major projects must be known.

Mr. Adinolfi commented on this being money to be reimbursed by the State, and all of the $525,000 would be reimbursed. The Town Manager must sign the contract to confirm the money to the Town, but we are not saying it will be spent, and if it is not spent, he thinks the money would never come forth. He questioned what would preclude the Council from not starting the process now to insure the Town has the money.

According to Mr. Masciano his reading of it is that there is no commitment by signing the contract with the State unless the Town goes out and asks for reimbursement.

Mr. Sima said that execution means appropriation by the Council, and this is a distinct difference from saying the money is going somewhere and the project is going forward.

Mr. Behrer said that by the Town Manager signing the contract and getting the $525,000, it is not saying the money will be spent. Without spending the funds the State never gives Cheshire the money.

It was asked by Mr. Schrumm if it is reasonable to assume that the track is part of the project, and doing construction on the field and track should be done at the same time. Under the discussion points on the update information, he noted that integration with the track replacement is noted, and the Town is doing this project as an athletic facility. He asked if there was consensus on that fact.

Stating his agreement with Mr. Schrumm, Mr. Masciano said the way to do this is to ask the engineering firms when they put out the bid proposal for a supplemental bid to do the track drainage, and a second supplemental bid to replace the track. Then, there are alternates and a decision can be made.
Funding for the track ($150,000 appropriated now from the 2010 Capital Plan) and the 2011 Capital Plan has another $130,000 being requested. If the Council approves this there will be $280,000 for the track, which, hopefully will cover the track and the drainage. The DEP grant plus the private funds for the turf field is specific to the turf field.

It was noted by Mr. Behrer that the grant stated “improvements including a turf field”. Item #41 was for funds requested to provide a grant in aid to the Town of Cheshire to finance renovations and improvements, including installation of a synthetic turf at the football field at Cheshire High School.

Mr. Masciano read the scope of work from the grant application document into the record.

At one point in time, Mr. Sima said if the Council is going to entertain a motion to have something done in Cheshire it must come from an elected or appointed commission. Large expenses have always gone through the capital process.

It was noted by Mr. Ecke that the Town has never had a large project 100% funded by outside sources.

There was a brief discussion on how the skateboard park was done, with the grant coming from the State, and if it went through the capital process.

Mr. Milone said this was an individual grant of $100,000, and it never went through the capital process.

Mr. Schrumm stated that an official board of the community must take ownership of this turf project, and say it wants the project done, putting it on the normal track. Somewhere along the line the Council must have something from the BOE wanting this project done, with stated costs, and in this case there is the appendage of having the track which is in the capital budget.

The track is in the capital budget and Mr. Masciano said the $525,000 is not in this budget, but it could be put in with an amendment to the BOE Capital Plan.

By Town Charter, Mr. Schrumm said items part of the five year CEP are noted at the bottom of the project with the source of funds. The turf project would have to state the $525,000 from the State and other funds being raised.

Dr. Florio said it is the Council's call to put a project to the PBC. On June 28th the BOE will request Town Manager Milone to amend the five year capital plan to include in the 1st year the turf field project installation. When this is done, it is in the Council's court to appropriate, authorize and assign the project to the BOE or PBC.
There was a brief discussion about the West Main Street Scape Project being in the capital plan, and Mr. Milone confirmed that it was in the plan with $900,000 from the STEAP grants. The supplemental funds were noted in the capital budget.

Matt Bowman stated that this project did not go through the PBC.
Mr. Perugini, BOE member, stated that at some point in the process the BNOE must have a vote on the turf committee to go forward with the project.

According to Mr. Behrer the BOE voted to accept the project and move forward, and it did not end up in the capital plan. The Council permitted the group to raise money, no one brought up the point about putting the project in the capital plan. This matter has been out there and the BOE can request the administration to make an amendment on June 28th to the capital plan, and Mr. Behrer said this resolves the issue. When he was on the BOE he point of view was to look at the track in conjunction with the turf project. It is a matter of time; both projects do not need to be done at the same time; many turf companies install turf within a track, bridge it and do not harm the track. If the timing of the track funding is appropriate, then it could be moved into the turf project. The turf committee did not discuss holding up its project waiting for money for the track. They were going to do the turf, and if it made sense there could be money for the track in 2011 and do the projects together.

With the capital plan, Mr. Behrer said it is obvious that if there is enough money to complete the track, it makes sense to work with the engineers to get the number for the track to insure it is sufficient. The turf committee asked the BOE to interview the engineering firms, find out what the track is like, can it be resurfaced. We need to find all of this out. The committee asked the BOE for permission to interview the firms, decide who it wants to work with, how much the documents will be for a bid to be accepted for a firm number, and provide suggestions to the BOE on June 28th on how to pay to get the firm number.

Mr. Sima stated that he has heard, with BOE approval, there is $40,000 ready for consultants to come up with a design.

In response, Mr. Masciano said these numbers are for design, bid proposal, and construction management…taking things from A to Z. The four firms will be asked about separation of these services out because we only want to commit to the design phase. The bid document is the next component.

Mr. Sima said that it is design, schematic, bid, and asked where the BOE is in the process.

Mr. Masciano said the BOE wants to get to design, i.e. a cost of $10,000. There is $7,500 available from donated funds, and if the number is higher the BOE will have to determine how to make up the difference.
It was stated by Mr. Schrumm that it makes sense to do both projects, the track and the turf, at the same time. The track must be done, and this would have to be addressed in the next year. Regarding the schematic design, he has discussed this with Mr. Behrer, i.e. drains or no drains for the track, with an estimated cost of $75,000. This affects the cost of the track, and the Council must know this cost. Mr. Schrumm noted there are ongoing discussions about moving projects out into the early years of the CEP, the numbers must be solid.

At this time we are down the road and Mr. Behrer said the turf group must prove its numbers are reasonable because money is still being raised for ancillary issues which can come up. It would be good if the outcome of this meeting would be a general voice of support for what the group is doing, understanding that the engineering firms will be asked about the track, and by June 23rd there can be another meeting for an update. The $75,000 for the drain was a hard number based on a per foot cost from a major turf installer who has all the specs and costs. The BOE has allowed the group to go forward on this project and Mr. Behrer said they are looking at engineers, determining which one will be selected, but there is no commitment to an expense. On June 28th the group goes to the BOE with its findings, and recommendation on getting the $10,000 to be used, how it will be handled, and this will all be discussed.

According to Matt Bowman there was $10,000 set aside 8 or 10 years ago with the Education Foundation for this project. This money was given anonymously for this project, and the donors have given permission for this money to be used in the design phase of the turf project. The turf group is in the process of forming a 501C-3 status; money has been raised and placed in a separate account; and this is not just a turf field project. Mr. Bowman said that fund raising will continue for the future needs of the athletic complex. The group wants to name the field Alumni Field with alumni support of the project. The goal is to continue to enhance all the outdoor facilities of the BOE at all schools, and this will be part of the mission statement of the group. It was noted by Mr. Bowman that the volunteer group is raising the money, but has no authority to do anything with it, and will donate the money to the BOE for the field turf project.

Mr. Perugini (BOE) stated the Planning Committee met last week and agreed to let the firms be interviewed with a recommendation of a firm to the BOE. A hard number will be coming back to the committee.

With an amendment to the capital plan, Dr. Florio said the number is “zero”. With a place holder in it is clear to the Council that the turf field will cost the Town nothing.

Somewhere in all of this there must be a set date and Mr. Schrumm said all the numbers must be there in the Town’s account. All the local aspects must be
covered. The BOE and turf committee will engage this firm and take this project to the schematic design level for the athletic complex, field and track.

Mr. Masciano said that Mr. Schrumm was correct. One of the bids from a firm has the first three pieces being site survey, geo-technical investigation, programming, preliminary design, with a bid of about $15,000. The next step beyond that is construction document preparation, bidding and negotiations, construction administration. The intent at this time is to go up to preliminary design.

In that regard, Mr. Schrumm said there would be the schematic design and alternates and drainage.

Regarding water in the field, Mr. Bowman said it is retained in the field. There are four catch basins in the corners of the field now, and the field does not drain well. With the project there will be about 2 to 3 feet of crushed stone which will has as a retaining area, holding the water so it goes out more slowly. Mr. Bowman said if the turf is installed without the perimeter drains for the track we will have the same situation as now. The track does not drain properly, with water on the track, freezing and thawing, and breaks up the track.

Mr. Sima said the reason to hire the engineering company is to have everything in writing, and see everything that will occur, with a consultant’s stamp on it.

In the RFQ Mr. Masciano said there was a paragraph about the track and he read it into the record. There is no disagreement on the intent and he agrees the track should be done at the same time as the field.

Council Chairman Slocum stated that the Council must have a vote in order for the Town Manager to sign the document with the State.

Town Manager Milone read Resolution #111709-1 into the record. He said the Council must given him authorization to appropriate the money conditioned on fund raising amounts. He cannot make a determination on this fund raising amount without the Council's satisfaction with the money raised.

Further, Mr. Schrumm said the Council must have an approval vote so the Town Manager can sign the contract with the State for the appropriation of the grant funds.

The question of what is 50% of the $525,000 was raised by Mr. Sima, who said a real number is needed, not just an estimate from a company, including prevailing wages.

Mr. Masciano informed the Council that we will not get to this firm number until the project goes out to bid.
Mr. Behrer stated that there are four large companies who have installed 10,000 fields, and the committee looked at these firms. An estimate was received from them off their boiler plate at $690,000 to $780,000-$800,000. The low and high number were reconfirmed a few weeks ago, and once we start the real deal, award the project, there will be savings of some money. If the $690,000 is accepted as a real number, plus other parts of the project costs, we will be within $50,000 to $75,000 of meeting total expenses. The turf group has 75% of the money raised. The BOE has allowed the group to engage a company to look at the schematics, drainage, dirt to be moved, etc. and the numbers can be tightened. Based on the work of the turf committee Mr. Behrer said the numbers are good.

Everything must be incorporated into the process and Mr. Sima said that some of the work, i.e. removing dirt does not come cheap. If the number is $690,000 this must be taken into account, and the Council must know where the turf group is with the numbers. Once that happens the Council can vote for the Town Manager to sign the contract and the money will be appropriated.

Mr. Slocum said the BOE has to have the opportunity to do their piece, and then the Council does its piece.

BOE member Perugini said the process is for the BOE to hire a design firm, and the next step is the BOE reviewing the design and approving it. There are steps to be taken before the project gets to the Council.

Mr. Sima stated that the Council must decide whether the project goes to the PBC or is assigned to the BOE.

The normal process is for the PBC to get a project and Mr. Schrumm said PBC selects the design team, gets the design back, and authorizes going out to bid. User members are assigned to the PBC for a project, and it must go through all the steps.

Dr. Florio informed the committee the BOE would request the Town Manager to amend the five year plan to include the turf project, and the net number will be zero. In the meantime the schematic designs will be done for the numbers to be firmer, but the next number in the five year plan will be zero. If the Council decides to proceed with the project through the five year planning process, the Council will decide on assignment of the project to the PBC or BOE, or to a special building committee. Then, they take the schematic design, continue with the firm already in place, hire another firm, and the project moves forward.

Mr. Adinolfi stated that the right process must be followed. We have $525,000 and he wants to see Council approval for the appropriation, and have the contract signed by the Town Manager. He noted that if the Town misses the
window of opportunity for this project, a very different conversation will be held on this project. He does not want the money lost through the process being debated about what is done internally through the Town. Mr. Adinolfi stated the Town process will provide all the decisions on assignment of the project, the funds available, etc.

On June 28th Mr. Masciano said there will be a recommendation to the BOE on the firm chosen, but how long the work will take is unknown. He expected 30 to 60 days before receiving anything in writing.

Mr. Behrer reported that all the firms have done this type of work before, and there will be answers, hard numbers, hard data and a window for the BOE and Council by June 28th.

The net amount to the town in the capital plan will be zero and Mr. Schrumm said this is a place holder. Then the project goes to the schematic phase and we see what comes out.

Dr. Florio commented on the fact that this is a zero cost project and at the end of the schematic phase with x plus or x minus dollars, there is no money being asked of the Town.

Mr. Schrumm stated that the schematic phase will include the track and its estimated costs. He said there is an agreement that the track and turf should be done in tandem. The cost of the track could be $280,000 with $75,000 for the drains. He questioned whether a core sample can be done on a track to find out if it can be resurfaced or a totally new track. This must be found out. There are many questions to be answered at capital budget time for the Council.

Mr. Sima said he heard Mr. Masciano say the BOE is willing to do the design phase on the field, not the track.

In reply, Mr. Masciano said what is included in the FRP is consideration of the track replacement.

Dr. Florio said this is a question that could be asked and answered by the firms being considered.

Mr. Adinolfi commented on it making sense to have the track involved, and the State may say the Town must spend the money by December 3, 2010 or it is gone. We may have to make a decision on doing only the field and then the track even though it makes sense to do them together.

It was stated by Mr. Masciano that the add on will be the schematic design for the athletic complex.
Mr. Behrer said it will be A and B, the drain for the track, x number of dollars for the schematic on the field, x number of dollars for the drain, and comments for doing the track work. These numbers will be taken to the BOE for permission to go forward. If there is additional money needed for the track work the question is whether the Council is willing to support that expense.

When the decision comes back from the track, Mr. Perugini said it must go to the BOE Planning Committee for design and decision.

In summary, Mr. Sima said that four firms are to be interviewed, with selection of one to the BOE, and then the matter comes back to the Council through the five year plan. The Council will need numbers to do the field and track, with the track costs already delineated in the capital plan.

Dr. Florio said that the project comes back to the Council, and if the bid numbers are higher, the Council can fund it or not approve it. Everything will be broken down, i.e. cost of the field and cost of the track.

Mr. Milone said there will be a referendum item only if the Council portion, net cost, exceeds $350,000. Once the project is in the hands of the PBC the project has to go back to the Council during various stages of authorization, with final contract approval ultimately going back to the Council.

The final capital plan numbers are due in late August or early September and Mr. Schrumm said that the closer the project is to this time the firmer the numbers will be, broken down by the track and field. The selected firm should have the exact numbers by that date certain.

Steve Trifone, CHS Athletic Director, has concerns about marrying the two projects because the money for the two projects is coming from different areas of funding. For the track needs and field needs, the dividing line will be the curtain drain. A field can be built without a curtain drain. This drain is really for the track but can be incorporated with the field. If money is not allocated for the track, and there is money for the field, it should be installed with curtain drains. Mr. Trifone informed the committee that the track is near the ends of its life expectancy.

There was capital money for the track last year and Mr. Perugini said the BOE can ask for some of that money for the curtain drain. The BOE did request funding for the resurfacing of the track.

Dr. Florio said that three pieces could be bid – field, curtain drain and track, and make a decision based on how much the Town wants to go forward.

Mr. Sima stated a drainage system is still needed underneath the field, and this goes into the design phase of the field.
According to Mr. Trifone the curtain drain is separate from the field drain, and a number of quotes include the sub base and drainage.

Regarding the piping Mr. Sima asked whether it will be large enough to accommodate the field and track at the same time for drainage. He noted that the catch basins are small, 6 inches, and water must be caught around the track.

Mr. Trifone said this is all part of the design.

Mr. Behrer stated that the companies he talked to stated the drainage will be part of the number; everything has been considered; pipes and drains will be appropriate and hold the water.

Bill Keeley, turf committee member, asked whether the Council is at the point of granting the Town Manager the authority to enter into the contract with the State for the grant.

Mr. Schrumm stated that there is no danger of the State pulling the grant. This will come 7 days after the November election when they face up to what they have done. This matter will be resolved long before that time.

Mr. Sima said the Planning Committee will have the numbers back for the capital budget on the field. The committee will hear further on this matter after the appropriation is made.

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Adinolfi; seconded by Mr. Schrumm.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

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Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk