



Town of Bellingham

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Bellingham, Massachusetts 02019
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April 26, 2021

The Selectboard meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Michael Connor. All Board members were in attendance and participating in the Arcand Meeting Room with the exception of Mrs. Grant who was participating via Zoom. Also actively participating in the meeting was Town Administrator Denis Fraine and Administrative Assistant Hilarie Allie. The remote portion of the meeting was being monitored by Jim Kupfer, Town Planner and Zoning Officer. It was determined by Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place that no in-person attendance of any member of the public would be permitted at this meeting. This meeting was accessible to the public via the Zoom online option.

Public Hearing: Paula Stuart of Community Opportunities Group, Inc. to discuss and get public input regarding the Town's proposed application to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for funding from its combined FY 2021-2022 CDF Program. The Town is considering requesting up to \$1,350.00 in FY 2021-2022 funds from this program to renew the successful Bellingham Housing Rehabilitation Program and for an Architectural Barrier Removal Project (ABR) to install ADA Compliant sidewalk ramps at selected intersections. There will also be an update on progress of the Town's current (FY 2019) CDF Grant.

The public hearing was called to order at 7:00 p.m. and the Chairman recognized Paula Stuart, Senior Associate for Community Opportunities Group, Inc. (COG), the consulting firm who have been managing the Town's CDBG grants for the past several years.

Ms. Stuart explained that the purpose of the public hearing was twofold. First, to present progress on the current FY 2019 CDBG Grant, and second, to discuss the submission of a grant application for FY 2021.

The Town of Bellingham received an MCDBG grant in October of 2019 in the amount of \$800,000 to complete two activities:

1. To remove architectural barriers and install handicapped accessibility ramps at 46 locations along North Main Street from Hartford Avenue to Mendon Street. This project included making repairs to sidewalks and intersections to make these areas accessible to the Town's disabled residents. This project was completed on budget and ahead of the expected schedule.
2. Continuation of the Town's long-running and popular Bellingham Housing Rehabilitation Program which provides technical assistance and funding to low- and moderate-income homeowners to make repairs to their properties. Up to

\$35,000 per unit can be spent on repairs. Assistance is provided in the form of a deferred payment loans at 0% interest that are require no payments and are forgiven after 15 years if the owner(s) continue to occupy the home. The 2019 grant has been extended to December of 2021 to complete he ten units included in the program, due to delays related to the Covid-19 emergency. Construction activities were halted altogether for six months and then recommenced with appropriate Covid-19 procedures in place. To date 3 units have been completed and 3 are under construction.

Over the last 5 grants (2010 to date) the program has assisted 103 homeowners with repairs.

Ms. Stuart asked if there were any questions regarding the 2019 grant or suggestions for improvements, urging those who wished to do so to submit any comments or suggestions.

Next, Ms. Stuart began a discussion regarding the opportunity to submit a new Grant Application and to request input from Town officials and residents regarding potential activities.

She explained that the Department of Housing and Community Development had recently convened a public hearing regarding the next MCDBG funding round. In prior years, a single community could request up to \$800,000 from the CDF fund, the competitive funding round in which Bellingham competes for a single year. While this had been the initial intention for the FY 2021 grant, due to the delays caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the agency has now proposed the possibility of doing a single grant application to cover both the 2021 and the 2022 grant cycles, with applications due in March of 2022. If this plan were ultimately adopted, the Town of Bellingham could apply for up to \$1.35 million for the two-year grant cycle. This would open the possibility of potentially funding a larger infrastructure project than would be possible if the one-year grant cycle and funding limits are retained. This potential change was proposed after the current public hearing had been scheduled. DHCD held a public hearing online on April 21st with comments due by April 28th. At this point it is not clear whether there will be a single or two-year grant application. Those considering potential projects should consider the potential of a larger potential grant award if the two-year grant term is finalized.

Prior to the potential of a combined FY 2021-2022 grant application, preliminary discussions had identified two potential activities for an FY 2021 grant application, she explained. These included an Architectural Barrier Removal Project along Harpin Street to remove barriers and install ramps, as well as the continuation of the Bellingham Housing Rehabilitation Program. Additional ideas for potential projects were being encouraged by both Bellingham officials and residents of the Town. As advertised in the

newspaper notice of this public hearing and on the Town's website, comments and suggestions may be submitted to the Town Administrator, Denis Fraine by May 5, 2021, to be considered by the Selectboard for the grant application. She referred to the handout provided that outlined eligible activities under the CDBG program and explained the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles. Grant applications must propose activities that meet these guidelines.

The Chairman invited input regarding the application and, there being no further comments, adjourned the public hearing.

On a Spencer/Martinis motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to approve the VFW Poppy Drive request for May 29th from 9:00AM – 5:00PM at the corner of route 126/140. Certificate of Liability Insurance is on file.

On a Martinis/Spencer motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to award Contract 2021-CA, Castings Adjustments, to the low bidder Tasco Construction, Inc. of Belmont, MA in the amount of \$59,103.00.

On a McNulty/Martinis motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to approve the April 5th & April 9th minutes as submitted.

On a McNulty/Martinis motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to approve the March Abatements in the amount of \$5,728.58.

On a Spencer/Martinis motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to award Contract 2021-TCII, Town Center Intersection Improvements, to the low bidder Walsh Contracting Corporation of Attleboro, MA in the amount of \$2,132,332.00. Under discussion Mr. Fraine stated that the construction will take place during the day and cover 2 construction seasons with a completion date scheduled for December 2022. There will be message boards that will alert the residents of the construction. The Lobisser project will coincide with the construction and will begin with the demolition of Domino's and the road work on Common Street connecting to Mill Street. The Town Center construction project will take place during the day.

Mr. Kupfer updated the Board on the Lincoln properties warehouse. He stated they are currently working on the water line issue and that the signals are about 4-6 months out due to steel demands and that there is an agreement in place for a tenant. Mr. Martinis suggested the Planning Board do either a broadcast or Zoom session to update the residents on the construction that will take place over the summer.

Public Hearing – Application of Shoppes Liquors LLC, d/b/a Ernie's Liquors for a change in beneficial interest for the Retail Package Goods License to sell All Alcoholic Beverages for the property located at 191 Mechanic Street Suite 6A, Bellingham, MA.
Mr. Connor read the public hearing.

Attorney Mooradian introduced himself to the Board and stated Shoppes Liquors, LLC was requesting an amendment to the current liquor license. He stated Ami Naik would like to purchase 60% membership interest in the LLC from Mr. Pelletier and Mr. Pelletier would retain 40% membership. He stated that this transaction was simply a change of ownership and that Mr. Pelletier would remain as the manager and would continue to run the business.

After hearing comments from the Board members and all parties involved, the Board voted 4-0-1 on a Spencer/McNulty motion to close the Public Hearing.

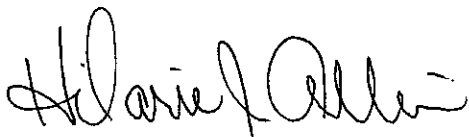
A Spencer/McNulty motion the Board voted 3-2 to deny the change of ownership interest request on the application of Shoppes Liquors for the following reasons:

- The Selectboard determined that when the license was originally approved on October 7, 2019, the applicant represented that he intended to remain the primary owner indefinitely, which influenced Board members in light of Mr. Pelletier's longtime ties and service to the Town.
- During the October 7, 2019 hearing, multiple Board members expressed that they believed an additional package store license in Town was not merited but voted in favor of Mr. Pelletier given his community involvement and that Town Meeting had approved seeking a special act for his license at 191 Mechanic Street.
- The store initially opened for business in November 2020. Until the subject application was filed on April 6, 2021, however, the Selectboard members were not aware of the August 24, 2020 Membership Purchase Agreement or that another individual was the sole source of investment capital behind the business. Selectboard members expressed concerns that Mr. Pelletier had been the public face of commencing the business in order to win approval, and that they had not been told the correct story of the business plan that would now make Mr. Pelletier a minority owner.

Mr. Fraine requested an executive session to discuss contract negotiations. All members of the Board were polled with all voting in the affirmative with the exception of Mrs. Grant who was not able to attend.

On a Spencer/Martinis motion, the Board unanimously voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 PM with no further business to be discussed at the conclusion of the executive session.

Respectfully submitted,



Hilarie J. Allie
Administrative Assistant