

TOWN/UNIVERSITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
Tuesday, June 8, 2010
Audrey Beck Municipal Building, Council Chambers

Minutes

Present: P. Barry, M. Beal, M. Hart, J. Hintz, E. Paterson, C. Paulhus, S. Rhodes, J. Saddlemire, N. Silander, W. Simpson
Staff: M. Capriola, J. Jackman, G. Padick, C van Zelm (Town)
J. Coite, E. Roberts, K. Guillard (UConn)

- 1) Meeting called to order at 4:02pm.
- 2) The meeting minutes of May 11, 2010 were moved by Barry, seconded by Paulhus and approved unanimously without objection.
- 3) Agronomy Farm
By consensus, agenda item #4, Agronomy Farm was moved to agenda item #3. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Coite, and Mr. Guillard provided an overview of: irrigation needs at Agronomy Farm; project/timeline; public information process; citizen concerns (water levels, water quality); analysis and testing; and plans for implementation. Agronomy Farm is located on Route 195 and has been used for agricultural research since the early 1900's. Today it is used for teaching facilities, outreach and research.

- 4) Public Comment
By consensus, agenda item #8, public comment was moved to agenda item #4.

Neil Facchinetti, 6 Storrs Heights Road. Mr. Facchinetti spoke to baseline measurements, water quality, pesticide testing and monitoring wells.

John Rickards, 51 Storrs Heights Road. Mr. Rickards spoke to the use of non-experimental chemicals and testing.

Gerald Dunne, 27 Storrs Heights Road. Mr. Dunne spoke to his belief that the turf research at Agronomy Farm has necessitated the change in irrigation needs. Mr. Dunne also spoke to his desire for UConn to designate a liaison to be responsible for the testing/monitoring process and interfacing with residents.

Tom Markland, 11 Flaherty Road. Mr. Markland spoke to well levels, well drying, and UConn grants that rely on water/irrigation.

Robert Coughlin, 49 Storrs Heights Road. Mr. Coughlin questioned chemicals that will be stored on site and the potential unknown side effects. Mr. Coughlin thanked the University for the attention given to citizen concerns.

Quentin Kessel, Chair of Conservation Commission. Mr. Kessel spoke to the importance of area residents having a comfort level with the project and a university appointed liaison for the project. Mr. Kessel had questions about anticipated well water levels and well monitoring.

Robert Thorson, 9 Storrs Heights Road. Mr. Thorson spoke to the cone of depression, bedrock aquifers, and concerns about the proposed testing. Mr. Thorson also stated his desire to have a person not affiliated with the agriculture school conducting the testing and monitoring.

George Gibson, 24 Storrs Heights Road. Mr. Gibson had questions about whether or not residential developments are subject to the same water requirements/review as this project.

5) Updates

- a) Mansfield Downtown Partnership (MDP). Ms. van Zelm provided an update. Two more letters of intent for Phase 1A have been received. The Storrs Road design (at 30%) was submitted to the DOT in May for review. 21 responses were received by MDP for the RFQ it issued; 14 responses are for the garage and 7 responses are for the intermodal center. The MDP's Festival on the Green was a recent award recipient of the Connecticut Main Street Association.
- b) Spring Weekend. Mr. Rhodes and University staff provided an update on the University's task force on Spring Weekend. Consensus amongst Committee members is for Town-Gown to continue its operational review of Spring Weekend and prepare its annual Spring Weekend report.
- c) Mansfield Community Campus Partnership (MCCP). Ms. Silander provided an update. MCCP has been discussing rid litter day, adopt-a-road, a pilot blight reduction program, and mandatory (alcohol) server training.
- d) Proposed Off-Street Parking Ordinance. Mr. Hart provided an update. The Council adopted the ordinance but the Town received a petition which will send the ordinance to a special town meeting. Voters can vote to uphold, rescind, or send the ordinance to referendum.

6) University Co-Chair/Municipal Liaison

Mayor Paterson commended Mr. Rhodes for his efforts and offered her heartfelt thanks for his service to the Committee and the community. A successor to Mr. Rhodes in his capacity as co-chair has not yet been named. Many Committee members stated the importance in having a municipal liaison from the President's Office.

7) Other

UConn provided an update on the USDAA presentation and project.

Mr. Hart announced the public hearing scheduled for the North Eagleville Road walkway project on June 14, 2010. UConn has agreed to fund the project and the Town will provide design and permitting support.

8) Public Comment

Robert Coughlin, 49 Storrs Heights Road. Mr. Coughlin offered remarks on Spring Weekend.

9) The meeting adjourned at 5:35pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Maria Capriola, Assistant to Town Manager
Town of Mansfield