



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: September 19, 2016 – Workshop
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall, Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Chairman Stevens, Clerk Hicks, Members Pepe and G. Woodbury.
Administrator Gaudette. Vice Chair C. Woodbury was absent.

At 6:11 p.m. Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vote to Approve and Submit Slum & Blight Report to DHCD for the Town's CDBG Program - Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)

Chris Dunphy and Ted Harvey from PVPC were present for the discussion. Mr. Harvey reported that PVPC completed the Slum & Blight Report which will be submitted to the DCHD upon the Board's approval. Results of the report indicate that the Town Center meets the definition of a Slum and Blighted area with over 25% of the properties reflecting physical deterioration and abnormally low property values. In addition, the infrastructure in the area is also in fair or poor condition.

Mr. Dunphy explained that projects must meet one of three categories in order to obtain CDBG funding: 1). Benefit moderate to low income people; 2). Resolve a catastrophic occurrence; or 3). Be located in a distressed area of the community, which is the case in this situation.

By keeping the focus on the area and not on any specific building, it allows the entire area to be eligible for funding, including infrastructure, public buildings, facilities improvement, and housing rehabilitation.

A motion to approve the Slum & Blight Inventory for the Spencer Town Center dated July 2016, and to certify that the designated Town Center area is in disrepair with recognizable patterns of disinvestment. As such, the area meets the Commonwealth's definition of a substandard, blighted, or decadent area as stated in MGL Chapter 121A and 121B (Pepe/Hicks) passed 4/0.

Discussion: Introduction to Holistic Health Group, Inc (HHC) – Potential Siting of a Medical Marijuana Facility

Mr. Gaudette introduced Holistic Health Group members Colonel Booth, Paul Ofria, and Tim McNamara. HHC is a non-profit corporation. A prior tech review meeting was held and a public forum will be held in the future. The group wants to determine whether or not Spencer is open to having a Medical Marijuana Facility.

Mr. McNamara noted that the first step in the process is to obtain a letter of non-opposition from the Board. Spencer was chosen for its location and the fact that over sixty percent of voters were in favor of legalizing medical marijuana.

Mr. Ofria mentioned this is a specialized market and will be a patient centered medical office with extremely high security. No one can enter without a special card that is provided by a medical doctor. It is not a recreational sales facility.

Colonel Booth said HHG is looking for a retail/dispensary operation only; not a cultivating facility.

Mr. Pepe mentioned his concern with the opioid crisis and said he is not sold on the idea of having a marijuana facility in Town.

Mr. Ofria noted that the entire process is continually evolving and there are currently eight facilities located in Massachusetts.

The Board agreed to hold a public forum to obtain citizen input prior to voting on a letter of non-opposition. HHG will deliver a presentation at that time.

The meeting was adjourned at 7: 42 pm. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Administrative Assistant

Referenced Materials
PVPC Slum & Blight Report