

6/3/15 Beebe School Community Meeting Notes

- Building can't be salvaged...no electrical or piping...cost to rebuild now higher than to demo
- Mayor Converse donated land; Olmsted designed
- Governor Baker's office of Energy and Environment is calling for increased urban parks
- Issue has been contentious in the past, but new effort and mood of collaboration moving forward
- Vision Team asked Matheson for official recognition from Malden city officials that our efforts are collaborative, between neighbors and city officials from both Malden and Medford, and to reject the high density development currently proposed
- Medford residents reported that from previous night's Medford City Council meeting, a 'resolve' is on its way to Malden city government that we must collaborate on this project to ensure what is developed is in the best interest of our cities and the neighborhoods
- We need reps from both city councils and mayor's offices to advise/consult on this project so that all stakeholders needs are considered
- Matheson said If we want to seriously consider Malden purchasing the land, we need to do our own 'due diligence' - so far, Malden has only entertained offers that have been brought forth from the current owner Hallmark...need to change that model
- First order of 'due diligence' is to have the land appraised (at the current highest value based on the current zoning), and the remediation costs estimated
 - Matheson asked for a show of hands of who wanted to ask the Malden city government to get the land appraised and the building remediation estimated...large show of hands
 - Matheson had a short petition ready that officially asks the Malden City government to accomplish this task (asked for Malden residents to sign on the way out of the meeting)
 - Matheson suggested that for Medford, those neighbors make a similar request of Medford city officials to get an official appraisal of the Medford portion of the property
- Hallmark is not saying what the cost of the land is... it is not sharing what the developer has agreed to pay for the land...likely tied to the amount of revenue expected from the housing development
- Matheson was asked if Malden officials have a consent right of the sale
 - He said that currently the land is zoned for Residential A only - anything else needs a zoning change
 - If the currently proposed development were to happen, they would need many zoning changes, which are granted by the Mayor and city council
- Matheson was asked if the city can, by way of stating publicly that they have no intention of making any zoning changes to the land that would allow this type of dense development, effectively lower the asking price for the property...he said YES, that's the idea
- He said that while on the face, the current proposal is of no 'cost' to the city (the building itself, etc.), the costs to the city by way of needing more schools, more public safety, more city services is high, and needs to be considered as a cost of the project
- He used for the sake of discussion these figures: if the land today is worth 10 million dollars, and the estimate to remediate the building was 5 million, the price of the property is effectively 5 million...he stated that Malden can afford/find funding for that
- Matheson stated 'this may be the last opportunity we have to get open space in Malden...' and if we don't do this now, we will likely never have this opportunity again
- Matheson said we can figure out/do the project in stages: buy the land, get the building torn down and the space remediated, while the vision team and others work on finding funding sources, and a developer to create a plan that is something more in line with open space and keeping with the nature of the existing neighborhood
- Next steps: get the land appraised, and the remediation estimated