

**Capital Infrastructure Facility Asset Planning Sub-Committee  
Monroe, Connecticut  
Tuesday  
June 12, 2012 6:30 P.M.  
Town Council Chambers**

A Monroe Capital Infrastructure Facility Asset Planning Sub-Committee (CIFAP) meeting was held on Tuesday June 12, 2012 at 6:30 P.M. in the Town Council Chambers.

**PRESENT:** Richard Zini, Chairman of Planning and Zoning Commission and Steering Chairman of CIFAP  
William Porter, Commissioner of Planning and Zoning  
Brian Quinn, Commissioner of Planning and Zoning

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call**

**Present:**

Doug Arndt, Director of Public Works  
Chief John Salvatore, Monroe Police Department  
Scott Schatzlein, Land Use Director and Town Engineer  
Enid Lipeles, Chairman of Town Council  
James Agostine, Superintendent of Schools  
Kathy Dilks-Anderson, Resident (Democratic Party)  
Lee Hossler, Chairman of Economic Development Commission  
Frank Cooper, Parks and Recreation  
First Selectman Stephen J. Vavrek, ex officio  
Mark Reed, Chairman of Board of Finance  
Carl Tomchik, Finance Director

**Absent:**

Ron Vilani, Chairman of Police Commission  
Bill Davin, Fire Marshall  
Ed Steadman, Resident (Republican Party)  
Darrel Trump, Chairman Board of Education

**MINUTES**

**Motion:** Commissioner William Porter made a motion to ratify the minutes of May 15, 2012

**Second:** Commissioner Brian Quinn

**Discussion:** With one edit

**Motion passed:** 3-0

## **Review Capital Planning for Chalk Hill**

There was a request for Administration to give a presentation this evening regarding the following:

- Existing use and projected future uses
- Current building costs and future building costs
- Operating costs if the building was closed completely

First Selectman Stephen Vavrek stated that there were several meetings with Parks and Rec, DPW, Finance, and also with the Superintendent of Schools. They were in the process of reviewing things, when a public/private partnership opportunity came along. There was discussion on the partnership and everyone was in agreement that this would be the way to go.

Chairman Zini was looking for the three bullet points to be presented at this meeting from Administration. First Selectman Stephen Vavrek stated that when they were enlightened by this plan it seemed to be the consensus that this would be what they were going to do therefore they did not need to have the three bullet points that were asked of them.

Frank Cooper stated that he has a listing of the current uses of the building applying to Parks and Recreations as well as the expenses that have incurred applying to the programs that are operating inside the facility. This also includes the custodial charges for the inside of the building for maintenance. This is outside of any current rentals that are within the building. Mr. Cooper will copy the listing and submit it to Chairman Zini.

First Selectman Stephen Vavrek is relying on the 2008 and 2010 studies that were done for the cost of the building if it were partially open or closed completely.

Mark Reed looked for some clarification on the expenses. To keep the building open it would cost approximately 440K, "hibernation" would be approximately 265K for year one, and approximately 213K for year two.

Frank Cooper believes that if the building were closed that it would be detriment to the Town. He believes that it may take time, but as more programs are brought in that the Town members would like to see, then there will be an increase in the success of them.

Commissioner Brian Quinn from the Planning and Zoning Commission talked about a meeting that he had with Frank Cooper about the school fields. At the meeting they talked about the benefits of taking over the field from the Board of Education at a certain time every day to accommodate field usage for Town activities. He encourages everyone to let Frank have control of the fields after a certain time of the day during seasonal uses. This would help take some of the pressure off of Wolfe Park. Chalk Hill's field does not have lights, but they do have a watering system. If the building were to be closed then the watering system would have to be moved or eliminated completely.

There was some discussion about the costs of minimal renovations of the building. The studies showed that code compliance would cost approximately 2.2 million and safety compliance approximately 3.9 million. This would be for a full use of the building which would be 50% or greater and if it were to be returned to a school.

There was no Administration plan to be presented this evening, but there was a presentation for a private plan.

**Kevin Solli**, from the Kimball Group 523 Pepper Street gave a presentation on the public/private partnership. They are looking to utilize this facility as a community center. Their thoughts are to expand the current Parks and Recreational Department. It wouldn't be geared toward just children, but toward the community as a whole. Their thoughts are to have more teen nights, expand fitness classes, offer additional adult education classes (automotive repair, cooking, photography, art, etc.), the possibility of creating a community theater, daycare that can offer a drop off for their children if the parent were there to take a class. They would need to work out the zoning issues, code compliance issues, etc.

There was discussion regarding the following:

- It would cost 150K to mothball the building and Mr. Kimball and Mr. Solli would be looking at that as a contribution to them to help maintain and operate the building. They would also look at some shared common expenses such as snow plowing, etc. Those details would need to be explored and discussed
- They would be looking for a 5 year lease with 5 year extensions.
- The Town would own the building and Mr. Kimball's group would lease it and operate it. As of right now it would be just the building and not the field.
- The Town would have to pay 150K each year for the 5 year lease which would be a fixed number.
- Mr. Kimball's group would manage the building and do maintenance, custodial, and landscaping.
- They would have a staff to help with program expansions, but everything would be run through Parks and Rec and there would be a facility use fee for programs run through the Chalk Hill facility. Mr. Kimball's group would get this money to help offset the operating costs of the building.
- They will be proposing a "recapture" so that the Town would be able to recapture the building back if they need more school space. There would need to be a time frame to relocate the activities.
- The offices that are currently in the building would be allowed to stay within the building. They are actually looking to expand the EMS education. There would be a portion of the space they would call "community space" that would not have to pay a usage fee. If for instance, EMS would not have to pay a usage fee, but if they were to bring in out of Town people for a program, then the program would have to pay the usage fee.
- They are not planning on following one of the three proposals for renovations to the building because those were made for a school and not for a public building.

- They would have to do walk throughs of the school to see where and what needs attention to bring the building up to code.
- It was never brought to Mr. Kimball's attention, but he would be willing to consider separating the school driveways from the community center.
- The parking lot has a capacity of approximately 60 to 70 spaces. The activities would have to be planned around the parking. It was a thought that in the evening hours there could be overflow parking in the school parking lots if needed. If that were to be added in the planning then they will need to discuss security for the buildings to avoid vandalism and such.
- There are 100 thousand square feet of building and approximately 40 thousand square feet of usable space.
- If a Town Department needed to be relocated temporary then they could obtain a spot of the building for the department.
- They are going to fundraise and get corporate sponsors.
- Mr. Kimball's group would handle any costs that would generate for maintenance and the Town would not be liable.
- They will have an operating budget as well as a capital budget that will plan out for five years. They will also be getting input from the Town when making the improvements to the building.

**John Kimball**, of 151 Fan Hill Road spoke about the idea. He believes that having a vacant building within the school campus would be a detriment to the Town. Having an active community center would be very good for the Town. They have budget numbers to operate the building. Mr. Kimball talked briefly about renovations to the building and code compliance. This plan should help make this cost beneficial to the Town.

**Dennis Condon**, the Vice Chairman for the EMS Commission will be a formal member of the CIFAP sub-committee as of the next meeting. Dennis stated that they would like to move EMS completely over to Chalk Hill. This would include sleep rooms, education rooms, and vehicle space. Dennis hopes to eventually house the vehicles in garages. This issue of housing the vehicles has not been brought to Mr. Kimball's attention yet, therefore he had not thought about it. Mr. Kimball stated that it would have to be compliant with Chief John Salvatore when it comes to the safety of the children in the other schools and having ambulances racing in and out of a school campus.

Chief John Salvatore stated that in the planning process of this community center they need to think about the fact that Chalk Hill sits on a three school campus. The safety of the students in the active schools would need to be considered when creating activities for the community center.

There was some discussion about the daycare that is currently in the facility. In order for the daycare to stay in Chalk Hill they would have to go before the Planning and Zoning Commission just as any other business in the Town would have to do. They would need to go through the regulatory process.

- **Public Participation**

**Mark Antinozzi**, 21 Fan Hill Road had some concerns. He was concerned for asbestos if they ever had to transfer the community center back into a school. He also believes that a community center is a great idea for the Town.

**David York**, 14 Weekepegme Trail, is the Emergency Management Director for the Town. He stated that with the recent storms they have developed a search team program. The program will need a place for storage of materials. This could be another function for the Chalk Hill building within the community center.

**Tony Unger**, 15 Evergreen Lane, questioned if the CIFAP group would also offer this opportunity to other vendors who may want to do the same thing. Chairman Zini stated that the floor was open for 60 days for the Administration to invite whoever they wanted to present to the elected. The floor will remain open until a Public Hearing which will be July 16, 2012. Once the Planning and Zoning Commission takes action it would then be referred to Town Council, Board of Finance, and the First Selectman. At that point it would be in Town Council's hands. Mr. Unger believes that this new idea may stimulate other vendors with ideas. Mr. Unger offered the assistance of Town Council for the CIFAP sub-committee or any other committee if needed.

**Ted Quinlan**, 30 Kettle Creek Lane, also has some concerns for the plan of the building if they need to turn it back into a school. Mr. Quinlan looks for some clarification on the plan. The asset will belong to the Town, and Mr. Kimball's group will lease it from the Town. He believes that there should be a Commission that deals with the community center. This would help with the communication on the status of the asset and how it is being operated. Mr. Kimball confirms that there will be a safeguarding and they would have to inform the Town of anything that they do to the building. Mr. Quinlan stated that there should be a deadline created to get the accurate numbers that were requested. Chairman Zini responded by stating that tonight was the deadline.

**Debra Duchess**, 15 Hearthstone Rd, questioned if there were State Statutes for local resolutions and ordinances in regards to public/private partnerships. Deb also stated that Chalk Hill is not the only facility in Town that could entertain uses such as EMS.

**Pat O'Hara**, 282 Shelton Road, stated that he served on the Chalk Hill Study Committee. Mr. O'Hara listed a number of things regarding the community center:

- How does the program affect the Parks and Rec revenue that goes into the general fund?
- Public safety
- Security
- Public access to park for the trail
- Asbestos and code compliance
- If there is a lawsuit against the Kimball Group how would it affect the Town being that it is a Town asset
- Septic system study
- There should be a plan for the Economic Development Commission to reach out to the business community

Mr. O'Hara also thinks that the neighboring homeowners should receive a letter from the First Selectman's Office informing them of what is going on and that there will be a Public Hearing if they have any concerns.

**Nicholas Kapoor**, 11 Cardinal Lane, talks about the Monroe Early Learning Center. Mr. Kapoor has concern for the August 31, 2012 deadline that the Early Learning Center was given to find another facility to work out of. Mr. Kapoor asked that they keep that deadline in mind when planning for the community center to give them enough time to find somewhere else to go. Chairman Zini stated that the Monroe Early Learning Center combine with Mr. Kimball as quickly as possible to get before the Planning and Zoning Commission to figure out a plan.

**Dawn Ryan**, 129 Knorr Rd, is the owner of the Monroe Early Learning Center. She operated under the Monroe Board of Education for 11 years. She would need an extension to be able to stay there due to the fact that her lease is up on August 31, 2012.

**Frank Lieto**, of 528 Moose Hill Road, had a few questions. He inquired when Mr. Kimball would like to take over. Mr. Kimball thought that he would be able to move this forward quickly, but then realized that he will not be able to. There are many things that need to be done to get this in order. The end of next school year could be a potential for an opening. They are welcoming any ideas that anyone may have. If the community is behind the idea then it will move faster. Mr. Lieto questioned if there were any other submissions of a short term use through the Office of the First Selectman. Chairman Zini stated that nothing has come forward since last year, until today. He also wanted to know what the plan is for the school in the waiting period before Mr. Kimball opens the community center assuming his plan is successful. First Selectman Stephen Vavrek responded by stating that there would be a chance that the building would have to be closed until Mr. Kimball opened. They would have to look at budgets and see how the money could be reallocated to keep the current services opened. They are still waiting for the same bullet points that were requested of Administration.

**Kelly Plunkett**, 34 Kettle Creek Lane, also showed concern for the daycare service within Chalk Hill. It is a service to the Town employees and if there is no place for them to go after their contract is up and they cannot stay in the building then they will have to know as soon as possible to inform their customers. Parks and Rec would need to know as soon as possible for their programming. Kelly stated that it would actually be more expensive for the Town to "hibernate" the building than if they were to keep it open and bring in the revenue from Parks and Rec, and the daycare.

Chairman Zini informed everyone that there will be a joint meeting on July 16, 2012. This meeting will be with Planning and Zoning, Town Council, Board of Finance, and the Office of the First Selectman. Chairman Zini requested that Mr. Kimball submit a report on the plan for the community center prior to the July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting to be distributed to the elected officials, and also put on the website so that everyone has the information beforehand and the meeting can be productive. Mr. Solli stated that part of their presentation on the 16<sup>th</sup> would be how the use would fit into the zoning regulations.

Mark Reed, Chairman of Board of Finance, stated that he would like Administration to have the numbers ready for Board of Finance in a few weeks. The First Selectman said they would be ready. They need solid numbers on hibernation, operation, and current revenue.

The next CIFAP meeting will be on July 31, 2012.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further discussion, Chairman Zini adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Guerra