**TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

**October 30, 2013**

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Town Council President Trocki called the workshop for the Jamestown Town Council to order at 7:06 p.m. in the Jamestown Town Hall Rosamond A. Tefft Council Chambers at 93 Narragansett Avenue and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. **ROLL CALL**

Town Council members present:

Kristine S. Trocki, President

Mary E. Meagher, Vice President

Thomas P. Tighe

Eugene B. Mihaly

Blake A. Dickinson

Also present:

Kevin E. Paicos, Town Administrator

Christina D. Collins, Finance Director/Interim Town Administrator

Wyatt A. Brochu, Town Solicitor

Lisa Bryer, Town Planner

Michael Gray, Public Works Director

William Piva, Parks and Recreation Director

Cheryl A. Fernstrom, Town Clerk

President Trocki stated the purpose of this evening workshop is to view the architect’s presentation and gather public comments and ideas regarding the golf course. This is the first of multiple workshops for the golf course project, and no votes or decisions will be made this evening. The rules of procedure for the workshop were outlined as follows:

* Three minute time limit per speaker
* Speakers must use the microphone at the podium, stating their name and address
* Don’t repeat what was stated by a prior speaker
* The workshop will end no later than 9:00 p.m.
1. **JAMESTOWN GOLF COURSE FACILITY**
2. Presentation by Burgin Lambert Architects. Architect Bill Burgin gave a PowerPoint presentation (copies distributed to Council members). Planning procedures to develop a schematic design were explained. An overview of the area included the golf course area, landscaped area, and present structures, identifying the club house, maintenance barn, parking lot, offsite storage and conservation easement. .

Comparison of the present golf course maintenance facilities to another golf course maintenance facilities ensued. Existing building work and storage areas, including building use and square footage, were demonstrated. A proposed building use and square footage was reviewed, with the clubhouse (Building B) location moved closer to the first tee. The old building could be used during construction of a new one, and other buildings (Buildings A [storage barn], C [storage/multi-purpose], and D [general storage], and E [temporary storage]), could be constructed one at a time.

A breakdown and comparison of existing and proposed square footage ensued. The proposed outcome is to have all facilities located on Town land under Town control, an additional 15 parking spaces, an enlarged Caddy Shack, and increased overall square footage of 1,000 sq. ft. to 11,555 sq. ft. for the golf course facility only. The inclusion of the multi-purpose facility would increase the overall square footage by 2,831 sq. ft. to 13,355 total sq. ft. for the project. Discussion of alternatives ensued, including storage under the clubhouse.

The estimated cost for the golf course facility only, based on 11,555 sq. ft. at a cost of $350 per sq. ft., is $2,252,250. The estimated cost for the golf course facility with the multi-purpose building (4,300 sq. ft.), based on 13,355 sq. ft. at a cost of $350 per sq. ft., is $3,724,000.

Discussion ensued of improved functionality and visibility with the new location for the clubhouse and the village concept for separate buildings. Vice President Meagher asked whether the multi-purpose building with cart storage under the clubhouse building was preferable. Mr. Burgin stated not necessarily, and referenced storage under water-tight porches and decks surrounded by curtains for view purposes.

Councilor Mihaly asked about options for the clubhouse and the purpose of C building (multi-purpose). He was informed to house what is on the present second floor (now closed) at the clubhouse. Councilor Mihaly inquired about a third floor to B building (clubhouse). Mr. Burgin noted using the two floors like a split level building gives direct access on each level and improved aesthetics, while a third floor with required elevator adds great expense. He feels it is better to separate the maintenance and storage from the clubhouse operations. Discussion continued.

Mr. Mistowski (operator) noted the proposed clubhouse location was what he had in mind, wants the Caddy Shack to be the same as it is now, likes the village concept, and prefers to add on to the present maintenance facility.

Councilor Dickinson likes the proposed configuration. His primary concern is parking and asked if parking spaces were lost with removal of the double entrance. Mr. Burgin stated it is the same. Discussion ensued of existing parking. Mr. Burgin noted the Buildings and Facilities Committee was in favor of the multiple buildings and moving the clubhouse location. Discussion ensued of landscaping and use of lawn areas for additional parking for events.

President Trocki asked what would be new for the present operator. Mr. Burgin noted it would be a whole new space with a new clubhouse and restaurant, space for outdoor dining on the deck, and better maintenance and storage space.

Town Administrator Paicos commented he had an opportunity to read reports and publications on the golf course and recreation facilities. It is apparent that culture, recreation, and amenities are a part of the character of Jamestown. There is a lot of programming in that area by private and public groups and is not sure we have a complete inventory of all activities, so we don’t know where to house all of them. It would be beneficial to review and determine programs and needs prior to moving forward and making permanent decisions. Council members agreed.

1. **PUBLIC COMMENT/DISCUSSION**

Bill Munger of Reservoir Circle stated he and his wife are neighbors to the golf course. He appreciates the challenges of being a tenant of the Town. He likes the B building concept and feels everything in one building is not a good idea; there are higher insurance rates with all activities included in one building. He prefers that C building be addressed after a needs assessment is completed. The parking is a better concept. He supports the B building, but cautions against C building and D building.

Mr. Burgin explained the grade change to lower the height of B building on the west side to accommodate people’s wishes for a better view and vegetation for improved aesthetics.

Christine Ariel of Steamboat Street asked what this proposal does for community organizations, as many people don’t play golf, and recreation includes singing, dancing, and performance. She likes the concept of the C building for theater, band, chorus, piano recitals, and the arts. Performing groups need a space to store equipment and rehearse, and there is a need for performing arts space for our leisure activities to provide a service for the segment of taxpayers who do not play golf. She doesn’t like seeing older people setting up staging at the Baptist Church and doesn’t like crawling under the stairs at the Rec Center to set up and store chairs at the end of events. The 2,500 sq. ft.of space for cultural and artistic activities is needed. She doesn’t see any need for banquet facilities, and would not use them. The gathering of information is already done just assemble the performing arts people, as they can provide it right now. She asks that this go forward without delay. The preliminary design is compatible as long as it takes into consideration the needs for performing arts participation.

Mary Wright of Highland Drive thanked Town Administrator Paicos for his comments on the Recreation Study pointing to various creative activities. The first consideration is the survey results and it what the public wants. As Director of the Community Theater it would be refreshing to have space for productions and other arts groups, as there is much creativity on this Island.

B. J. Whitehouse of Steamboat Street this stated this is the perfect format for discussion of performing arts. He understands the community, has been active with performing arts in town for 24 years, referenced equipment storage difficulties, and feels the over-used Recreation Center would also benefit from a performing arts center. He estimates over 1,000 Island residents are involved in performing arts (participants, spectators, supporters), and they are all taxpayers. The town-owned piano at St. Matthew’s should be housed in a performing arts facility, and the time has come or a performing arts facility.

Jane Bentley of Mount Hope Avenue asked if there was an extra story on building B would it eliminate building C. Mr. Burgin stated no, it would not. Ms. Bentley stated she did community activities that included Pilates and Yoga until they were cancelled (due to the unsafe conditions) and feels the new building should be available for everyone. It is her concern there is not enough storage space, and she hopes building B will be used for other activities during the day to meet other community activity needs.

Sue Nicholson of East Shore Road stated she is in band and they use the PAC. Storage is a problem and she would love to see another facility. She likes the concept of multiple buildings and believes the various groups and the restaurant would not interfere with one another.

Tony Gutierrez of Clinton Avenue stated the Town Administrator’s remarks were on target. Everyone wants to fix the golf course. He asks the Council to take the time to evaluate other needs, as there is no adequate performing arts space in Jamestown. It doesn’t have to be huge, but properly designed it could serve the community and be a venue for other performing opportunities. Proper planning will benefit all citizens and the golf course operator.

Robin Monihan-Yoffa of Hamilton Avenue stated whatever happens with building C, with dual activities the 115 parking spaces would not be enough.

Jack Brittain of Conanicus Avenue sees the golf course every day. He likes building B, but is not sure if building C is in the right location. He understands performing arts space is needed, and he worries about the Mistowski family leasing the golf course, who pay a substantial amount of money. Mr. Brittain expressed concern for parking with multiple activities, especially on weekends.

Councilor Dickinson referenced the Zoning Ordinance matrix and noted the property is not restricted to just a golf course, it is for active recreation. Per Planner Bryer, any additional activities may need to go to Zoning for approval.

Dorothy Strang of Riptide Street referenced the parking situation and stated golf is not played after dark or in winter, and that is when many performing arts activities take place. She thanked Town Administrator Paicos for acknowledging the arts and space needs.

Dorothy Brittain of Conanicus Avenue stated golf is played at night and the parking lot is always full. Arts organizations need a place, but she does not think it should be there, as it should be reserved for the golf course and its activities. She would rather see the $1,000,000 spent for the golf course, as there are other locations in town that could be used (for performing arts).

Vice President Meagher thanked architect Bill Burgin. Tonight’s discussion revealed we are a long ways from resolution, and many things need to be taken into consideration. The main point is the golf course; the Town owns it and leases it to a good tenant, and the present building is problematic. She appreciates the desire to create a home for performing arts, but we need to step back and look at all the information gathered and have a comprehensive discussion on how we can provide performance space in town. There may be other places that better serve this need. The Recreation Study and the Rec Center should be included in the discussion and all aspects need to be reviewed. The Jamestown Arts Center was referenced as a model to follow.

President Trocki noted Mr. Paicos’ remarks were very accurate. She would love for Christine Ariel and other citizens or groups that have compiled information to submit it to the Town Clerk. We need to look at the golf course and the community at large and all aspects of recreation in order to give the architects some direction. This is a lot to digest and she needs time to process the information. This is a lot of money to spend, and we want to proceed, but thoughtfully and cautiously.

Vice President Meagher stated developing the program is a very important part of the process. It forms what we need, what we want, and what we can afford. Please be patient while we develop what this building should be.

Councilor Dickinson thanked the other Councilors, the Town Administrator and the people for their input and concepts. He enjoys the arts and asks that performing arts people be patient and work with non-performing arts entities to find a solution. We need to be sympathetic to citizens’ needs and the golf course operator. He thanked Mr. Burgin for the preliminary concept.

Councilor Mihaly commented on the Recreation Study which revealed the identity of the Town is wrapped up in culture and recreation. We should be thinking Town-sponsored and non-Town sponsored activities and the opportunity to serve who we are. We need to see how the pieces fit together of what we have and what we need. He believes this will take a short time to develop.

Councilor Tighe referenced the activity to build a police station where the Rec Center exists. It was voted down by the people with the recommendation a proper location be found and a new police station be built on that location. Perhaps that approach is the right one to find something that will meet everyone’s needs in an appropriate building, without trying to combine the performing arts needs with the golf course.

Christine Ariel stated she wonders how the two activities can come together before she goes home to do her homework to develop what is needed. The theater people and other performing arts groups already know what they need, including dimensions and climate control for instruments and equipment. We can get all that information together to make specific proposals and have detailed discussions.

President Trocki asked Town Administrator Paicos how he would like to proceed. We can’t have a building for every individual organization; it will be a space sharing facility. Mr. Paicos stated it is encouraging the performing arts groups know what they need for performing and storage. There should be a dialogue with other groups, such as Pilates and yoga that no longer use the golf course space. As the first step Town staff needs to gather information to begin to prepare the inventory. The staff needs to collect information from other organizations and get a sense of what they need. Once we have gathered the information, we can work with Mr. Burgin, who has done an excellent job developing the golf course needs, to determine where to place various activities and facilities needed for performing arts. This will not be a long exercise and will work well with the timeframe established for the project.

Ray Iannetta of North Main Road stated he likes the proposed layout as it doesn’t intrude on the first or ninth hole. The main objective is to replace a sub-par facility. The proposed layout would allow the Town to proceed with building B and then determine the performing arts needs. The parking difficulties created by combining the facilities and activities in this location need to be addressed.

Mary Brittain asked for clarification whether the Town has performing arts community groups in the budget. As taxpayers are we responsible to provide such space? Where is JAC funded? Where do you draw the line?

Town Administrator Paicos noted the precedent for public/private cooperation exists. Youth group sports are performed on Town land already, which is beneficial, and the model is there and very much appropriate.

Mary Wright stated her group is fortunate to be under the Rec Department. Performing arts have exhausted all other places, we can’t afford to use the schools, and the PAC is not a good place for all ages of participants. Prior discussion to add a floor to the Rec Center was referenced.

President Trocki thanked everyone for their comments. This discussion will be continued to a future date.

1. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, the workshop was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Attest:

Cheryl A. Fernstrom, CMC, Town Clerk

Copies to: Town Council

 Town Administrator

 Finance Director/Interim Town Administrator

 Town Solicitor