

Coolidge School Working Group
Meeting Minutes
4 pm Wed., Jan. 9, 2019
Finance Meeting Room, Town Hall, Maynard, MA

Committee Members Present:

Linde Ghere

Vicki Brown Stevens

Donna Dodson

Aaron Miklosko

Sarah Donnelly

Also Present:

Ellen Duggan

1. Minutes – The minutes of the Dec. 19, 2018, meeting were approved.

2. Cost/Benefit Analysis of Coolidge School Options – We discussed the cost/benefit grid Linde developed to explore various options to Coolidge – Housing for condos or rental units; other uses such as a school; demolition to make way for new development or expanded recreational space; and retaining the building for possible town use. We need a fully developed analysis so that, first, we can attempt to understand all the options, and, second, we can explain our reasoning to others. Topics included:

- **Sale Price** – Although we don't know its current market value, we agreed with Aaron that selling the building for \$1 would be the right price for a reuse that benefits the town and fits the neighborhood, given, also, that refurbishing Coolidge will cost at least \$1 million.
- **Water/Sewer** – The town would reap regular water/sewer utility fees from Coolidge residential units as well as a few thousand dollars from one-time fees for change of use and fire sprinkler connections, Aaron said.
- **Detriments to Town** – We can't foresee all that might happen once Coolidge is in different hands but we are very aware that access to the playground and sledding hill will most likely be more limited from the Bancroft Street side. Aaron said he doesn't anticipate problems for the town with new demands on water and sewer.
- **Benefits to Town** – Coolidge could be put on the National Registry of Historic Places by a developer at the developer's cost.
- **Parking** – Parking for the playgrounds and sledding hill will likely be a problem since whatever is in Coolidge will need the parking lot. Can Elmwood Street be made one way? Sarah asked. That would allow more parking spaces on the street. Aaron said it would require a traffic study and may not be so easy. However, he suggested that a developer may be required to make site improvements such as better sidewalks or a widened street to improve street parking. Maybe a second parking lot could be built on the north side of Coolidge off Bancroft for park use.

- **Enabling Factors** – A special exception to zoning of Coolidge to allow an ideal use is probably the way to go, Aaron suggested. An overlay district may also be considered.
- **Demolition** – The Coolidge Re-use Task Force recommended against this but we are including it since it may come up in community discussion. We noted it would cost maybe more than \$400,000 to the town for demolition and, as Vicki said, would be a loss of a valuable historic building. However, an even bigger park is valuable, too.
- **Town Ownership** – So far, we can't see this happening, although there are many in town who would like to see Maynard use Coolidge again.

3. Survey - We talked about subdividing the property so the Coolidge building is separated from the sledding hill and playground area. Aaron said we could tentatively present a survey that would leave the final lines undrawn until a developer is chosen and then the line will be drawn to more closely meet both the developer's and the town's needs. Vicki suggested a subdivision that would create a walkway from Bancroft Street to the top of the sledding hill on the south side of the property. That way, there would be three public access ways to the Coolidge playground and hill.

4. Jobs - Aaron and Linde will work together on filling in the Cost/Benefit Analysis.

5. Selectmen's Meeting – Linde will go to the Jan. 22 Selectmen's meeting to provide an interim progress update.

6. Upcoming 2019 Meeting Dates:

January 23, 2019

February 6 and 27, 2019

March 6, 13 and 27, 2019

April 10 and 24, 2019

Meetings are held at 4:00 pm in the Finance Room at Town Hall.

7. Adjournment – At about 5:40 p.m.