

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN
PUBLIC HEARING
MARCH 5, 2012**

A Public Hearing was held on Monday, March 5, 2012 in the aldermanic chambers of City Hall. Chairman F. Smith opened the public hearing at 7:35 p.m.

Ald. Veccharelli pointed out Ald. Gasper was not present due to illness.

2. ROLL CALL

Board Members Present

B. Anderson
B. Bier (7:48 p.m.)
R. Dickman
D. German
A. Giannattasio
J. Golden
R. Nunno
S. Shaw
F. Smith
P. Smith
G. Stanford
N. Veccharelli
P. Vetro
R. Vitali

Also Present

Mayor Benjamin G. Blake
Jonathan D. Berchem, City Attorney
Peter Erodici, Finance Director

Excused

G. Gasper (ill)

Chairman Vetro declared the public hearing open at 7:36 p.m. and asked if anyone wished to speak concerning the following matters:

3. Public hearing concerning consideration of sale of City owned parcel known as 139 North Street (Map 76, Block 825, Parcel 73).

Speakers in Favor:

L. Carroll – stated he is a member of the Board at Milford Hospital. He stated also with him tonight from the Board was the Vice Chairman L. D’Amato. He stated Mr. Pelaccia and Mr. Bergami were out of state on hospital business. He stated they instructed him along with Mr. D’Amato to speak tonight on the sale of property to the Torry Corporation. Attorney Carroll explained through this purchase the property would end up back on the City’s tax bills. He also stated the Board of Directors is very much in support of this sale and that the intention of this purchase is to provide medical services to the residents. He explained the intention is to pay for the property and then donate the property that contains the Downs house back to the City. He stated in that manner the Downs house would be preserved far into the future and that the proposed plan would effectuate that. He stated he would be happy to answer any questions the Board may have.

J. Agro, Jr. – 55 Brewster Road – stated he is in favor of this transaction. He went on to speak of some bulletin points and of past transactions by the City, i.e. Jai Alai. He stated the nature and generosity of this proposal would fulfill the wish to preserve the Downs House.

Dr. J. O'Neil – 133 North Street – stated he lives right next door to the Downs house. He also stated he is a 14 year member of the Historic Commission and a founding member of the Preservation Trust Commission. He stated these groups helped to stop a 6-lot development at that site. He stated he is opposed; he is against it, which could be a win-win. He also stated the City would be paid back the monies borrowed from the open space. He expressed concern if the project is not done properly, people could end up looking at parking lights. He stated the Preservation Commission also met with Torry Corp. two weeks ago and the Commission did not issue a certificate of appropriateness, which he stated is necessary. Dr. O'Neil stated he is in favor of Torry's request, but with compromise. He also commented Torry Corp. is part of the City, but that there needs to be a total and complete barrier of the building. He expressed the importance of light pollution control, a barrier and an additional line of trees. He stated if these compromises were not met he would make sure the Preservation Commission did not issue a certificate of appropriateness. He asked the Board to consider approving this with compromises.

T. Chaucer – 104 Hawley Avenue – stated he is Vice President of the Historical Society and nominating committee. He stated he would essentially support the sale because in the real world there is compromise. He also pointed out the buffer was moved out further and that this really could be a win-win for everyone.

Chairman Vetro stated he along with Ald. Veccharelli and Mayor Blake were the only aldermen in 2002 when the City purchased this property. He stated the intent was to keep it from development and explained they took money from the open space account and a Planning and Zoning fund as well as some taxpayer money. He stated the building was rehabbed with a new roof, the building was stabilized, etc. and that the City will receive every dollar back. He went on to commend Mayor Blake for putting this together.

Speaker Opposed:

R. Platt – 142 Platt Lane – stated he is on the fence regarding this purchase. He went on to give the historical background, noting a good part of it was already spelled out by the Chairman. He also spoke regarding the State Bonding Commission. He stated the question would be, where will the boundary be? And also, that he was not sure of the 25 foot buffer was adequate.

M. Krusewski – 147 North Street – stated she lives next door to the Downs house and the parcel which is behind the parcel. She stated this purchase will have a negative impact on her property and those residents that live on Sunnyside Road. She also asked the Board to focus on the property already zoned for. She also stated the buffers are terrible, there is no greenery provided and the parking lot will be lit all night long. She stated she was also told a special exception was granted to create a 10 foot buffer. She expressed her hope the board would look at the affect the Downs House would have on her house and that of others. She reiterated that property values would suffer.

T. Comer – 31 Locust Street – asked why taxpayers are left out of things. He stated this has gone on for so long. He stated people don't have a voice. He asked if the consideration of the value of people's homes were taken into consideration. He stated it is out of the hands of people and that no one knows what is going on. He also commented the Downs House is nothing more than a shell. He also spoke regarding the economy and

stated on these types of matters there should be a referendum asking people what they want. He reiterated he never knew anything about this. He also commented about the preservation of this historical property.

R. Krusewski – 147 North Street – stated he was born and raised in this town and has seen what has happened to it. He stated the property behind him is like metropolis. He asked the Board if they would want their property value to go down. He stated it is a win/win for the hospital, but stated “put it in your background, not mine.”

A. Berloin – 12 Overtown Avenue – stated when she came back from serving in the war, everything in Milford had changed. She spoke personally about her life and commented she is ashamed of this town and this country.

T. Chaucer – 104 Hawley Avenue – commented about Clarke Tavern, which is gone from Milford. He suggested maybe some of the money from the hospital to the City could be earmarked for the restoration of the Downs House.

J. Cianci – 105 Sunnyside Court – stated she has already seen the 3-story building in her backyard and she has not seen any buffers as yet. She stated she brought her property 4 years ago. She stated she had no notification when they brought their property what she was buying.

Being no other speakers to address the Board, Chairman Vetro closed the public hearing at 8:12 p.m.

Ald. Anderson and Ald. Nunno made and seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The Board adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Huber
Recording Secretary