

## **Municipal Facilities Committee Meeting**

### **Monday, February 10, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 10:04AM by Councilor Eric Smith (Chair).

Roll call: Councilor Henry “Chip” Lawrence, Councilor William “Steve” Brown, and Councilor/Committee Chair Eric Smith are present, along with Town Manager Sophie Wilson, Public Works Director Earl Gibson, and Carter Becker (Tenant – 3 S. Freeport Road).

A motion was made by Councilor Brown to accept the minutes from the January 13, 2025 meeting which was seconded by Councilor Lawrence and approved by unanimous vote.

**Tenant Request to Store Materials Outside the Leased Premises at 3 South Freeport Road (Dunning Boat Yard)** – The committee discussed a request from Carter Becker (tenant) to store materials outside the leased premises. Specifically, the tenant is requesting permission to store 50-foot aluminum sections and other material that is being (or has been) fabricated for his upcoming projects next to the guardrail adjacent to South Freeport Road until after ice out this spring. The Town Manager indicated that she initially fielded this request; however, did not feel that her discretion did not extend far enough to grant it as it was for an extended period of time and storage in this area is prohibited by Town regulations. Councilors discussed other options at the site, which the tenant described as operationally unfeasible, and expressed concern regarding its authority to allow material to be stored in the ROW which is prohibited by Town ordinance. Some members of the committee expressed that this was temporary in nature, similar to storage seen on some other parcels in town, and an urgent situation for the business owner. Committee members informed Mr. Becker that this would be a one time permission, expressed concern that this location was not large enough to support his business needs, and suggested that he consider submitting an applicant driven land use ordinance change to allow for reasonable storage of materials in the public right of way.

**Action:** After approximately fifty minutes of discussion, a **motion was made** by Councilor Lawrence and seconded by Councilor Brown to direct the Town Manager to provide written permission to the tenant to allow temporary storage of specific marine construction materials needed for upcoming jobs in a space of approximately 10’ by 50’, with such storage allowed in the area between the lease premises and the guardrail adjacent to the South Freeport Road, starting as close to the building as feasible and under the expectation that removal of said material will begin at ice out and be complete by May 1, 2025; and, further that said approval is given with the understanding that this is one-time permission and not intended to be precedent for future decisions. **The motion carried with 2 yeas (Councilors Lawrence and Brown) and 1 nay (Councilor Smith).**

**Preparing Background Material for the 3/10 Committee Discussion regarding the construction of a Skate Park on Town-Owned Property located at 0 Depot Street** – The Town Manager sought the Committee’s guidance regarding background materials need to best support next month's agenda item related to a request from a community group to construct a skate park at 0 Depot Street (adjacent to the train station). The committee emphasized the need to best understand the highest and best use for this property and suggested that staff also identify any other potential sites, including school property. The group was looking for information about: the proposed use; property details; legal commitments to Amtrak, New England Passenger Rail Authority, shared parking, etc.; parking study or other needs assessment; and other Town-owned property that might feasibly host the project.

**Staff Updates** - The committee briefly discussed parking at the Town-owned Soule School property, noting a 60-year agreement and conflicts between the French School and Bustins Island related to parking at the site. The group debated potential solutions for maximizing parking without major investments with staff. Staff will review and work with the entities to address concerns. Additionally, staff updated Councilors on the efforts underway to repair the elevator at the Bartol Building, noting significant costs and ongoing tenant frustrations.

Motion made by Councilor Lawrence to adjourn the meeting at 12:07PM which was seconded by Councilor Brown and approved by unanimous vote.