November 6, 2017

FIRST SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
TWO ARTICLES

To Town Meeting Members,

There will be two Special Town Meetings on November 6th.

The first Town Meeting warrant only includes two articles. Both are of major significance.

Article One has to do with Norwood's share of an $85 million project to undertake major repairs and renovations to the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School. As you know, we are one of nine communities which share the School’s costs of operations.

Article Two asks you to consider the purchase of a 27-acre parcel at the former Polaroid site off Upland Road.

We need resolution of both of these articles as soon as possible, which is why we have scheduled them separately from the 19-article Town meeting.

We hope the information we have provided herein will be helpful to you in your deliberations.

NORWOOD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

William J. Plasko, Chairman
Helen Abdallah Donohue
Paul A. Bishop
Allan D. Howard
Thomas F. Maloney
FIRST SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Article 1. This article has been submitted by petition of the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School District.

It requests that you approve the vote taken by the Blue Hills School Committee to undertake major repairs and renovations to the Blue Hills school facilities, and to borrow the sum of $84,862,768 for that purpose.

The project has received approval for grant funding from the Mass. School Building Authority in the amount of $43,438,247 or slightly more than 51% of the total cost. In addition, the School District has already committed $2,778,777 from its existing reserves to defray the costs of the project.

The net cost to the nine (9) member cities and towns in the District is $38,645,744. This amount will be bonded, and the annual debt service costs (principal and interest) will be assessed to the cities and towns on an annual basis over the life of the proposed 30-year bond issue.

Each community’s annual assessment is based upon its average four-year enrollment as a percentage of overall School enrollment, which stands at 876 this year. Norwood’s enrollment has averaged around 7% of the total since 2009; it has been trending slightly down, and stands at 6.33% for the 2014-2017 period. Norwood’s enrollment this year is 56 students.

Using these enrollment numbers as a guide, Norwood’s share of total costs, including interest, over the 30-year life of the bond would range from $3,872,000 (using a 3% interest rate) to $4,900,000 (using a 5% interest rate). The Town’s annual assessment would range from $129,000 to $145,000 per year. The actual amount would probably end up somewhere in between.

The District’s annual operational budget currently has a Capital Improvement line funded at $600,000 annually. During the initial years of the bond repayment schedule the district can reduce the debt payments passed on to member towns by as much as $500,000 annually, which could lower Norwood’s initial annual project assessment to $97,400 at a 3% interest rate and $131,000 at a 5% interest rate.

The law governing regional school districts requires approval or disapproval by member communities in one of two ways:
• By a vote of the community’s governing body (town meeting or city council) within 60 days of notification by the District. If a community fails to vote within that time frame, the action is considered by default to be a vote to approve the borrowing. However, if any one community votes in the negative, the project is disapproved.

• If this were to occur – that is, one or more communities votes not to approve the project – the law allows the School District Committee to notify the member communities to schedule a District-wide referendum on this single issue. The outcome is decided by a majority of votes on a combined, district-wide basis (not community-by-community). If the majority of voters approves the project, it passes – even if the majority of voters in a particular community voted against it. The cost of the referendum (the timing is determined by the statute) is borne by the individual cities and towns.

To date, we are not aware of any “No” votes by any of the member communities in the Blue Hills Regional District. Randolph, which has the largest enrollment in the District and which will as a result bear the highest cost, recently voted to approve the project.

We are well aware of the fact that if the project proceeds, the increase in our local assessment will impact our local budgets for both General Government and Schools. We nevertheless believe that that the project has merit, and fully support it.

A packet of informational materials prepared by Blue Hills is enclosed with this mailing.

**Article 2.** This article requests that you consider the purchase of the 27-acre site at the former Polaroid property off Upland Road that is slated for construction of a multi-family housing development known as “Forbes Hill” under the provisions of the State’s so-called “40B” law. The price tag is $13,000,000.

The developer, the Davis Marcus Companies, received a Comprehensive Permit from the Board of Appeals for construction of the 260-unit apartment project in September. This approval, together with a Comprehensive Permit issued for the 198-unit Avalon Bay development on the old Plimpton Press property, marks the end of what has been an arduous and contentious process to resolve the Town’s obligations under the 40B “Affordable-Housing” law. The Board’s press release issued shortly thereafter (attached) discussed both developments in some detail.
Concurrent with but totally separate from the Board of Appeals process, this Board attempted to negotiate with Davis Marcus for the purchase of the Forbes Hill parcel. Davis Marcus eventually agreed to sell the entire parcel to the Town for $13,000,000.

Here are the two options we considered before we proceeded with this article:

Option 1:
- The Forbes Hill project would proceed with the construction pursuant to the Comprehensive Permit of 260 apartment units (reduced from the 300 units in their original application) in two separate buildings plus the historic Forbes Mansion.
- Nine acres of the total 27-acre parcel not required for the project would become Town property. This parcel would remain undeveloped for a ten-year period, although it could be used for trails and recreation; after ten years, the Town would be free to develop the property, with certain restrictions.

Option 2:
- The Town would buy the entire 27-acre parcel for $13,000,000. The Comprehensive Permit would become null and void. The Town would be free to do with the parcel as it wished. The parcel would be free and clear of any structures, except for the Forbes Mansion, which would also become the property of the Town.

This proposal is to borrow the $13 million cost over 30 years. The annual Debt Service (Principal + Interest) would average approximately $796,000 over that period (our estimate is based upon information provided by the Treasurer and Bond Counsel).

The annual Debt Service would be charged against the annual budget — that is, other budgets would in total have to be reduced each year by the amount of the annual debt service. A future Debt Service exclusion is legally possible, but there was not time given the December deadline to bring that forward at this Town Meeting.
September 20, 2017

Dear Mr. Carroll:

Attached hereto is a vote taken by the Blue Hills Regional Technical School District Committee at its meeting held on September 19, 2017 at which time the Committee voted to finance the costs of renovating the Blue Hills Regional Technical School facility. The Board of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (hereafter MSBA) voted to approve the propose project at its meeting on August 23, 2017. A copy of the award letter with a project total of $84,862,768 and the maximum grant award of $43,438,247 is attached.

In the fall of 2009, submitted its first Statement of interest to the MSBA for a school renovation project. Over the years, we submitted a total of six SOI’s, and in 2016 Blue Hills was invited into the MSBA program.

We invited district sending town managers and selectmen, etc. to a recent meeting on September 14, 2017 to hear a presentation regarding the need, scope and projected costs of our project. Going forward, this letter serves as notification that the 60-day approval window. We hope that your town, as a vital member of our district, is in support of our project. If so, your town need do nothing to approve the funding for the project. If your board so desires, it may call a town meeting for the purpose of expressing approval or disapproval of the amount voted by the Blue Hills Regional Technical District Committee within sixty (60) days of the attached vote.

If you have any questions regarding the attached, I will be happy to meet with you at your convenience. I can be reached at 781-828-5800.

Very truly yours,

James P. Quaglia
Superintendent-Director

Attachments
MSBA Award Letter
Blue Hills DSC Project Vote
MSBA approved warrant Language
Blue Hills Regional Technical High School District
Article, Motion and Ballot Question for Use by the Member Towns

If a Member Town decides to hold a town meeting to consider the question of incurring the debt authorized by the District, the following forms of article and motion may be used:

Article ___. To see if the Town will approve the $84,862,768 borrowing authorized by the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School District for the purpose of paying costs of renovating, reconstructing and making extraordinary repairs to the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School District High School, located at 800 Randolph Street, in Canton, Massachusetts, Massachusetts 02021, and for the payment of all other costs incidental and related thereto, (the "Project"), which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority ("MSBA"), said amount to be expended at the direction of the School Committee. The MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any Project costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District and its member municipalities. Any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the lesser of (1) fifty-five and eighty-nine hundredths percent (55.89%) of eligible, approved project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA.

Motion ___. That the Town hereby approves the $84,862,768 borrowing authorized by the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School District for the purpose of paying costs of renovating, reconstructing and making extraordinary repairs to the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School District High School, located at 800 Randolph Street, in Canton, Massachusetts, Massachusetts 02021, and for the payment of all other costs incidental and related thereto, (the "Project"), which proposed repair project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program, and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority ("MSBA"), said amount to be expended at the direction of the School Committee; that the Town acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any Project costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District and its member municipalities; provided further that any grant that District may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the lesser of (1) fifty-five and eighty-nine hundredths percent (55.89%) of eligible, approved project costs, as determined by the MSBA or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA; and that the amount of borrowing authorized by the District shall be reduced by any grant amount set forth in the Project Funding Agreement that may be executed between the District and the MSBA.
August 23, 2017

Mr. James P. Quaglia, Superintendent-Director
Blue Hills Regional Technical School District
800 Randolph Street
Canton, MA 02021

Re: Blue Hills Regional Technical School District, Blue Hills Regional Technical High School

Dear Superintendent Quaglia:

I am pleased to report that the Board of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (the “MSBA”) has voted to approve the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School Project in the Blue Hills Regional Technical School District (the “District”) for a limited renovation and repair project at the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School.

The Board approved an Estimated Maximum Total Facilities Grant of $43,438,247, which does not include any funds for potentially eligible owner’s or construction contingency expenditures. In the event that the MSBA determines that any owner’s and/or construction contingency expenditures are eligible for reimbursement, the Maximum Total Facilities Grant for the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School Project may increase to as much as $44,394,076. The final grant amount will be determined by the MSBA based on a review and audit of all project costs incurred by the District, in accordance with the MSBA’s regulations, policies, and guidelines and the Project Funding Agreement. The final grant amount may be an amount less than $43,438,247.

Pursuant to the MSBA’s regulations, the District has 120 days after the date of the MSBA’s Board vote to acquire and certify local approval for an appropriation and all other necessary local votes or approvals showing acceptance of the cost, site, type, scope, and timeline for the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School Project. After receipt of the certified votes demonstrating local approval, the MSBA and the District will execute a Project Funding Agreement which will set forth the terms and conditions pursuant to which the District will receive its grant from the MSBA. Once the Project Funding Agreement has been executed by both parties, the District will be eligible to submit requests for reimbursement for the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School Project costs to the MSBA. The Project Scope and Budget Agreement signed by the District and the MSBA will form the basis for the Project Funding Agreement.
August 23, 2017
Blue Hills Project Scope and Budget Board Action Letter

We will be contacting you soon to discuss these next steps in more detail, but in the meantime, I wanted to share with you the Board’s approval for the Blue Hills Regional Technical School District for a limited renovation and repair project at the Blue Hills Regional Technical High School.

I look forward to continuing to work with you during the MSBA’s grant program process. As always, feel free to contact me or my staff at (617) 720-4466 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John K. McCarthy
Executive Director

Cc: Legislative Delegation
Marybeth Ncaren, Chair, Blue Hills Regional Technical School Committee
Steven Moore, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Personnel, Blue Hills Regional Technical School District
Gene Mastro, Facilities Director, Blue Hills Regional Technical School District
Steve Brown, Owner's Project Manager, Dore & Whittier Management Partners
Mike Burton, Owner's Project Manager, Dore & Whittier Management Partners
Carl R. Franceschi, Designer, Drummey Rosane Anderson, Inc.
File: 10.2 Letters (Region 5)
FIRST SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

ARTICLE 2

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Board of Selectmen announce settlements with the Forbes Hill and Avalon Bay 40B Projects

After months of discussion and consideration, the Board of Selectmen has determined that a negotiated resolution of the Forbes Hill 40B and Avalon Bay Norwood 40B Comprehensive Permit applications are in the best interests of the Town of Norwood. As a result, we are announcing today that the Selectmen believe the best deals possible have been achieved with the Comprehensive Permits which have been approved by the Board of Appeals in these matters.

The Board of Selectmen appreciate the difficult position the Zoning Board of Appeals was in dealing with these matters that state law leaves them little control over. The Board thanks the majority of the Board ratifying the negotiated settlements in these matters by approving each Comprehensive Permit.

We appreciate all of the input and support from the community. Rest assured that we have heard and considered all of your concerns in these matters. These decisions were not easy ones, or ones we take lightly, and we know they will be scrutinized and criticized. But we are convinced they are in the Town's best interest.

In the Forbes Hill matter during the course of the permitting process, the Board of Selectmen have been in direct negotiations with the developer to find a way to resolve the 40B project and the 1.5% issue in the best interests of the Town of Norwood, without ongoing, expensive, and increasingly more difficult legal standards to meet.

Ultimately, we negotiated with the developer, Davis Marcus, to revise the application it presented to the Board of Appeals which resulted in a smaller project, with fewer units, 300 down to 260. Because the project footprint was condensed, we successfully negotiated for the remaining nine (9) acre parcel to become Town property which will be undeveloped space, for trails and recreation, for the next ten (10) years. After that, the Town has the flexibility to do something else with the parcel. The changed plan also insures the Forbes Mansion will remain as part of the development.

These actions will also insure that the approximately 7 acres that were owned by the developer but not part of their original application will not be further developed.
We also obtained concessions from the developer to further reduce the storm water and waste water impacts at the site to ensure that the development does not add to the existing conditions beyond the site. The developer will also make a payment to help make drainage improvements on Bird Road.

Additionally as part of the settlement the Board of Selectmen received an offer to purchase the entire site if Town Meeting approves funding allowing the sale by the end of the year. That question will be presented to Town Meeting in November.

Regarding the Avalon Bay 40B project the Board of Selectmen again determined that a negotiated resolution was in the best interest of the Town of Norwood. The Avalon Bay project cleans up the former Plimpton Press site, an old deteriorating, underused, and contaminated facility. It will be transformed into a productive modern, transitional area between the abutting residential neighborhood and the commercial areas to the north and east of that neighborhood. The negotiated Comprehensive Permit is part of the settlement of the litigation. This permit will be filed with the Housing Appeals Committee for final approval, once that approval is granted it will be filed with the Town Clerk.

The negotiated Avalon project provides fewer housing units than the Plimpton Press 40R project which received support from over 60% of town meeting members in 2014. As part of the negotiation process, the Town was able to reduce the size and density of the project and create a buffer of landscaped area over 50 feet wide in an otherwise developed area. Besides providing a buffer for the immediate neighbors, this green space created from an area that was previously built upon or paved, thus reduces the amount of impervious surfaces, and improves stormwater flow.

The town has also secured a mitigation payment from Avalon of $198,000.00, and a $130,000.00 infiltration and inflow payment to the Town.

As a result of our negotiations with Davis Marcus and Avalon Bay, we will not be further challenging the 1.5% issue.

As a result of these 40B resolutions, the Town of Norwood meets and exceeds both the 1.5% and 10% 40B thresholds by comfortable margins. It is important to understand that these new affordable units are affordable in perpetuity. Some of the earlier affordable units in Norwood had expiration dates, and they would come off the Subsidized Housing Inventory. With these actions the 40B door in Norwood is now firmly closed and we are fully in control of our future.