

**WHITE CLIFFS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – December 21, 2022**

2:00 p.m. – Chairman’s Introduction to Remote Meeting

Chairman Helwig stated that Pursuant to S. 2985 as amended, a bill to extend certain COVID-related amendments to the Open Meeting Law, as modified by Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, permitting remote meetings and participation until March 31, 2023, signed into law on July 16, 2022, this meeting of the White Cliffs Committee will be conducted via remote participation.

Chairman Helwig confirmed that the following members and persons were remotely present and could be heard:

Committee Members

Todd Helwig, Committee Chairman - CPC Representative
Norm Corbin, Committee Vice Chair - Historical District Commission Liaison
Tom Reardon, At-Large Member
Diana Nicklaus, At-Large Member
Julianne Hirsh, Board of Selectmen Liaison

Town Staff

John Coderre, Town Administrator
Laurie Connors, Town Planner
Scott Charpentier, DPW Director
Shawn Thompson, Facilities Manager

1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: September 22, 2022

Mr. Corbin moved to approve the meeting minutes for September 22, 2022; Ms. Hirsh seconded the motion. The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Reardon	“aye”
Nicklaus	“aye”	Helwig	“aye”
Corbin	"aye"		

2. DISCUSSION WITH CONSULTANT BRETT PELLETIER OF KIRK & COMPANY REGARDING PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF RESPONSES FOR THE WHITE CLIFFS MANSION REDEVELOPMENT AND REUSE RFP AND TO SCHEDULE INTERVIEWS

Mr. Coderre stated that three proposals for the RFP were received by the deadline of December 8, 2022. The proposals were distributed to the Committee for review in advance of the meeting, along with an initial assessment memo from Mr. Pelletier. He stated that the purpose of today’s meeting is to determine which proposals meet the minimum evaluation criteria and should move on to the interviews. Mr. Coderre asked Mr. Pelletier to walk-through his memo, particularly as it pertains to minimum criteria.

Mr. Pelletier reviewed his assessment memo with the Committee.

Response 1 – Historic Artifact Preservation Organization (HAPO)

- Checked all boxes for *RFP Required Compliance Criteria*
- The proposal includes a unique blend of uses, including: event space, collaborative workspaces, greenhouse, grounds and gardens, community use, and meeting spaces.
- Observations and recommendations: The proposal is very thorough and responsive to the RFP. What is uncertain is the group's track record of delivering projects of similar complexity and scale, and their capacity to deliver on their White Cliffs vision. One area of concern is their proposed capital budget which includes a total spending of less than \$4,000,000, while most professional analysis indicated a budget closer to \$7,000,000- \$10,000,00. Mr. Pelletier would suggest pressing HAPO for additional materials in support of their proposal so the Town can fully vet the team and their capabilities to deliver the project.

Response 2 – Metro West Collaborative Development (MWCD)

- Checked all boxes for *RFP Required Compliance Criteria*
- The proposal includes creation of 52 units of intergenerational affordable rental housing for families and seniors.
- Observations and recommendations: The proposal is very thorough and responsive to the RFP. They propose an option to purchase with an extensive option period that projects a closing date of November 2024 or November 2025, which may not be responsive to the Town's wants and needs. Their pro-forma is detailed and thorough and appears to be reasonable, however they are contingent on state and federal funding allocations, as well as a request for CPA funds. Mr. Pelletier would suggest that the Town better understands their intended process for transfer of ownership and the Town's rights and responsibilities during the option period and what contingency plan they might have in the event of a failure to close.

Response 3 – Downeast Residential LLC

- Did not check all boxes for *RFP Required Compliance Criteria*. The proposal did not provide a pro-forma as required under Minimum Evaluation Criteria #2, Basic Feasibility/Financial Projections.
- The proposal includes between 110-160 multi-family housing units with some reserved as affordable and a commercial/food service component. No definitive use profile was presented, and no pro-forma was developed within the response outside of the narrative description.
- Observations and recommendations: Based on the lack of feasibility or financial pro-forma as outlined in the RFP as a minimum evaluation criteria, Mr. Pelletier determined that this proposal does not confirm to the RFP criteria and should be rejected on that basis.

Mr. Pelletier noted that after today's meeting, he will begin the formal review process, which includes market research, reference checks and financial capacity review, all of which are outlined under "Next Steps" in his memo.

Mr. Codere indicated that the Committee should take a formal vote to determine which of these respondents meet the minimum criteria and should move forward to the interview phase.

Mr. Corbin moved to approve Historic Artifact Preservation Organization (HAPO) for meeting the minimum evaluation criteria. Mr. Reardon seconded the motion. The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Reardon	“aye”
Nicklaus	“aye”	Helwig	“aye”
Corbin	"aye"		

Ms. Nicklaus moved to approve Metro West Collaborative Development (MWCD) for meeting the minimum evaluation criteria. Mr. Reardon seconded the motion. The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Reardon	“aye”
Nicklaus	“aye”	Helwig	“aye”
Corbin	"aye"		

Mr. Corbin moved to reject Downeast Residential LLC from further consideration for failure to meet the minimum evaluation criteria as specified in the RFP. Mr. Reardon seconded the motion. A discussion ensued when Ms. Hirsh indicated that she did not wish to eliminate any of the proposals at this stage. Committee members pointed out that since the Downeast Residential proposal failed to meet the minimum criteria, the Town could not legally consider them further in accordance with State procurement laws.

Following the discussion, the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“no”	Reardon	“aye”
Nicklaus	“aye”	Helwig	“aye”
Corbin	"aye"		

Mr. Coderre stated that the next step is for the Committee to pick a date to schedule interviews for Historic Artifact Preservation Organization and for Metro West Collaborative. He suggested Thursday, January 12th at 9 am. Interviews will be 90 minutes each. He added if members should have any questions in addition to the ones provided by Mr. Pelletier in his memo, to please email them to Mr. Pelletier so that he can compile the list of questions for the respondents. The questions can then be sent to the respondents and let them decide how they would prefer to respond, either in writing ahead of the interview, or verbally during the interview.

By consensus, the Committee agreed that the meeting will be in person, recorded and broadcast live.

Mr. Pelletier will coordinate the interview schedule with the respondents. Over the next two weeks, he will begin the formal review process and will put together a memo with his findings. The memo will be distributed to the Committee ahead of the interview date, along with the final list of questions for the respondents.

Mr. Coderre stated that after conducting the interviews, the Committee will rank the proposals, based on the comparative criteria. The top ranked proposal will be recommended to the Board of Selectmen for further negotiation and potential award. From there, the Town will have to decide if the project will be ready to go to Town Meeting in April 2023.

3. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2023 at 9 am.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Corbin moved the Committee vote to adjourn the meeting at 2:50 p.m.; Ms. Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Reardon	“aye”
Nicklaus	“aye”	Helwig	“aye”
Corbin	“aye”		

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynda LePoer
Executive Assistant

Documents used during meeting:

1. December 21, 2022 Meeting Agenda
2. Meeting Minutes from September 22, 2022
3. RFP Response – Initial assessment letter Kirk & Company
4. (3) White Cliffs RFP Responses:
 - Historic Artifact Preservation Organization (HAPO)
 - Metro West Collaborative Development
 - Downeast Residential LLC