

CCW Ad Hoc Committee Report to BOS

Activities and Process

The CCW Ad Hoc Committee, comprised of chair Carolyn Wolff, Debbie Fried, Chris Lovejoy, Andy Esposito, Tom Kenefick, Deke Hotchkiss and Gary Desir, met on the following dates: July 16, August 20, Sept. 2, Sept. 8, Oct. 1, and Nov. 3, in addition to visits to sites developed by each responder on Oct. 15.

Chair Carolyn Wolff and ex-officio member First Selectman Ellen Scalettar met with each of the two bidders to follow up on questions and requests for information on Oct. 7 and Oct. 17.

The Committee heard presentations from the two responders on separate occasions: Sept. 2, Sept. 8 and Nov. 3.

Evaluation of Proposals

Consultant John Milone met with the committee and helped the committee frame the discussion around the RFP and evaluation criteria. John Milone was not present once the committee began deliberations.

The committee members who visited the sites agreed that they were attractive and generally suitable for Woodbridge.

Bidder #1, The Toll Brothers Proposal:

- Fiscally strong: full purchase price to be paid at closing
- Fiscal capacity of organization
- Addresses Town interest in over 55 housing
- Flexibility regarding open space: 9 hole golf course vs. other open space
- Flexibility regarding investment in clubhouse
- Investment in pool and Town infrastructure
- Question whether Town residents would support total number of units proposed
- Has negative image in Town from prior proposal that they will have to address/overcome

Bidder #2, The Rose Proposal:

- Strong on providing a community building for public use
- Very flexible and willing to combine project with others
- Acknowledges Town interest in such things as open space
- Proposal is for rental units; willing to discuss for-sale units but only in partnership with for-sale developer
- Entirely new concept not discussed (age-restricted rental units) or previously contemplated by BOS or Town residents
- Fiscally less favorable

Recommendations to BOS

The Committee recommends that the Board of Selectmen consider the Toll Brothers proposal because:

- It is fiscally strong. Toll is proposing a total purchase price of \$7.5 million, \$6.5 million paid to the Town upon closing. Toll will make \$1 million worth of improvements by demolishing the clubhouse, renovating the parking lot, tennis courts and pool, and creating a small pool house with showers and bathrooms, all of which are for public use.
- It will contribute to the Town budget for the long-term. The project is estimated to generate \$2 million in taxes annually once completed after 6 to 7 years. Toll proposes to build 96 attached townhomes (32 buildings) and 74 single family detached homes ranging in size from 1,500 square feet to 2,600 square feet and starting in price in the mid-to-upper \$300,000s.
- Toll has provided two alternatives for the approximately 85 acres of land they will not build on: open space with walking trails or a 9-hole golf course. If the golf course option were chosen, Toll's \$1 million would be spent on demolishing the clubhouse, creating a 9-hole golf course, building a small pool house with showers and a small pro shop with restrooms, all for public use (not renovate the parking lot, tennis courts and pool).
- Toll has offered to help find a company to purchase and operate a 9-hole golf course.
- Toll's proposal retains significant open space for the Town, either as golf or walking trails. According to the current draft of the POCD, there are 3,787 acres of open space in Woodbridge, or 33% of total land, and the Town owns 1,277 acres of open space, including the Country Club. Toll's proposed development uses approximately 70 acres.
- Toll is aware of its public image in Woodbridge raised by residents during the presentation of their prior proposal, and told the Committee that they would make efforts to address resident concerns. Toll suggested hosting several small group conversations about the plan to hear feedback and address any concerns from residents.
- Toll shall be responsible for the cost of the construction of the development's infrastructure such as roads, sewers, public water, gas lines, sidewalks, etc., the maintenance of which shall become the responsibility of the homeowners association.

The homes would be managed by a homeowners association and would include a private clubhouse, pool, gym, tennis court and bocce court.

The committee has discussed Toll's open space with walking trails plan and Toll's 9-hole golf course plan and feels that both options have advantages and disadvantages. If the BOS chooses the golf option, the committee agrees that the Town should not operate the golf course and that the BOS should carefully consider the private versus public ownership of the golf course.

The committee felt that Toll should also provide a robust, publicly accessible community center.

The committee has discussed the number of units and agrees that a range of 100-170 would be appropriate for the Town, keeping in mind that a lower number of units would mean a lower payment from Toll.

Toll's proposal would significantly help the Town's financial position:

- A. August 2009 purchase price plus closing costs for the property was \$7,000,000.
By July 2016 the balance of the outstanding notes will be \$5,250,000.

Toll's cash proposal: \$6,500,000

Net proceeds to the Town: \$1,250,000, assuming a closing by July 2016.

Possible use: Replenish fund balance for prior CCW losses of \$1,700,000.

- B. Additional \$1 million in improvements for open space with walking trail option
 1. Demolish and remove existing clubhouse
 2. Construct new pool house
 3. Restore tennis courts
 4. Restore parking areas
 5. Create walking paths and trails
 6. Restore pool and pool area

Additional \$1 million in improvements with 9-hole golf course option

1. Create a 9-hole golf course
2. Construct new pro shop with restrooms
3. Demolish and remove existing clubhouse
4. Construct new pool house with showers and restrooms

- C. Net position of the Town
 1. No debt on property
 2. Ownership of approximately 85 acres of open space (unless golf course is sold)
 3. Ownership of pool, tennis courts and pool house
 4. Annual tax revenue of approximately \$2 million once units are completed
 5. Costs to Town for possible additional services, such as police, fire, etc.

Although the Rose/Watermark proposal introduced new and interesting concepts, this proposal has a less favorable financial impact on the Town.

Rose proposed 110 age-restricted rental units in a three-story building which would include a state-of-the-art community center available to its tenants as well as the public.

The average age in other Watermark senior housing buildings is 82.

Rose is offering to pay the Town \$1.75 million for 11 acres of land. Rose proposes that the Town spend \$1.5 million to change the 18-hole golf course to a 9-hole course and another \$1 million to create enhanced open space. The estimated tax revenues are \$600,000 annually, which they estimate would be realized two to three years after commencement of the project.

Rose would take up 11 acres of land for the apartments/community center and could take another 10 acres for a potential 20 cottages, also restricted to age 62 and over. Rose proposed that the cottages would be rental. Rose is willing to make the cottages for sale, but would partner with a third party to build and sell the units. The site's remaining 134 acres would be owned and managed by the Town.

While Rose is willing to discuss and modify their proposal, Rose is not willing to increase the \$1.75 million payment unless the Town chose to include the rental cottages, in which case the payment would increase by \$800,000.

Rose's units would rent for \$5,295 to \$6,295 per month, which includes meals, utilities, housekeeping, transportation and access to building amenities and classes. The facility would make available various health and care services to residents for an additional fee.

For these reasons, the committee feels that the Rose proposal should only be considered in conjunction with the Toll proposal.

Combining the two proposals may increase the combined purchase price to the Town. The two proposals do not use the same land for development. Other Rose/Watermark properties are next to or near age-restricted (55+) properties and Rose says that set-up has been beneficial.