

Hockamock Y briefing
Thu, Feb 13, 2025

Summary:

The discussion focused on the potential collaboration between the Sharon Forward Foundation and the Hockamock YMCA, particularly regarding programming that could enhance community services. Jeremy Liu shared insights from his outreach to real estate consultants, indicating that the YMCA is considering expanding its offerings to include childcare and youth services similar to those at their Mansfield location. Sharon raised concerns about the YMCA's established services and the challenges her organization faces in staffing and managing costs, including a preliminary estimate that maintaining the building could exceed \$100,000 annually. The conversation underscored the complexities of competing with the YMCA's existing programs while exploring the possibility of a partnership that aligns with community interests.

Further discussions included land ownership issues near a train station in Massachusetts, where most land is owned by the town, presenting opportunities for workforce housing development. Jeremy and Sharon examined creative financing solutions for a property owned by an elderly nursery business owner, emphasizing the need to build relationships for effective negotiations. As the town meeting in May approaches, the urgency for collaboration between the library and the Sharon Forward Foundation with the YMCA was highlighted, with Sharon working on a business plan to meet town requirements. The group acknowledged the potential benefits of a partnership, including property tax advantages, while expressing concerns about the town's demands and the YMCA's commitments that could affect timely building acquisition.

Chapters & Topics:

Discussion on Hockamock YMCA Collaboration

Jeremy Liu shared insights from his discussions with real estate consultants about the Hockamock YMCA's interest in potential programming, such as childcare and arts services. Sharon Forward Foundation expressed concerns about the feasibility of competing with the YMCA, which already has established services. They also discussed preliminary cost estimates for maintaining the building.

* The timeline for the town's decision-making process regarding the building's reuse.

Discussion on Collaboration with the YMCA

Sharon discussed her apprehensions about collaborating with the YMCA, feeling that their approach may not benefit local businesses or the community's cultural development. Jeremy suggested that a partnership

could be beneficial if they align on values and objectives. He highlighted the importance of local ownership in programming to avoid competition with the YMCA's offerings.

- * The competitive landscape between the YMCA and local businesses.

Discussion on Land Ownership and Housing Issues in Massachusetts
Sharon Forward Foundation and Jeremy Liu examined the ownership of land surrounding a train station, noting that the town owns the majority of it, while the state owns a small portion. They emphasized the importance of addressing housing issues in Massachusetts, particularly the need for workforce housing for teachers. The conversation included the possibility of collaborating with the town to develop housing solutions.

Discussion on Property Valuation and Development Plans
Jeremy Liu and Sharon Forward Foundation addressed the valuation of a property owned by an elderly nursery owner, considering options for a potential purchase that could provide retirement income for him. They also discussed a problematic development proposal that Sharon has successfully opposed in the planning board, emphasizing the importance of building relationships with the property owner to negotiate effectively.

Collaboration Opportunities with the Y and Town Planning
The urgency of collaborating with the Y and the town was emphasized due to the approaching town meeting in May and the mid-March deadline for proposals. Sharon mentioned the need to create a business plan that aligns with the town's expectations, while Jeremy highlighted the potential benefits of a partnership that could alleviate some financial burdens. The group acknowledged the town's unrealistic demands and discussed strategies to negotiate effectively.

- * Discussion of potential services and programs the YMCA might offer in the new space.

- * The financial implications of the YMCA's involvement in the project, particularly regarding property taxes.

Action Items:

- * Sharon Forward Foundation will explore the possibility of partnering with the YMCA to utilize the space effectively.

- * Jeremy Liu will connect Sharon Forward Foundation with Jim via email to facilitate introductions.

- * Sharon Forward Foundation will develop a business plan that aligns with the town's expectations for the reuse of the building.

- * Jeremy Liu will send a note to Sharon and Jim regarding the meeting opportunity to ensure timely communication.

Key Questions:

- * What specific services does the YMCA plan to offer in the potential new space?
- * What are the potential financial implications of the YMCA taking over the building?
- * What are the specific requirements the town has for the reuse of the building?

Notepad:

- * No notes