

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC HEARING)**

November 20, 2000

5:30 PM

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Levasseur, Sysyn, Clancy, Pinard, O'Neil, Shea, Vaillancourt, Pariseau, Cashin, Thibault, and Hirschmann

Absent: Aldermen Wihby, Gatsas, Lopez

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to hear those wishing to make comment regarding the so-called Hackett Hill Master Plan; that a presentation shall be made followed by comments from those wishing to speak; that those wishing to speak shall come forward to the nearest microphone when recognized, clearly state their name and address and give their comments, and that all comments shall be directed to the Chair.

Presentation regarding the so-called Hackett Hill Master Plan.

Mr. Leddy stated this is essentially the same presentation that we gave to you several months ago, but I will make it in a somewhat abbreviated form so that we can get right to any questions that you might have. The 833 acre Hackett Hill property was conceived for development by the City of Manchester and the question comes up first of all why should we consider that as a development site. Well, there are currently a lack of good Class A business sites in this City and there is a difference between the kind of environment that would be created at Hackett Hill and the Millyard and Elm Street markets, which currently exist. This is different from and complimentary to those markets and would form the third leg of the tripod if you will. It is one of the last remaining opportunities to significantly increase the City's tax base and it is a highly visible location that we think would be advantageous for development of this sort. There is an 833 acre study area. The property

was acquired from the University of New Hampshire in 1999 as part of an agreement moving the university to the Millyard. There was, in 1975, a significant amount of development infrastructure constructed on the site in anticipation of constructing a commuter campus which never came to fruition. In addition to all of that, there are some truly unique natural areas that are part of the property as well. The property is also adjacent to the FE Everett Turnpike on one of its entire lengths so there is significant exposure to the public. In terms of the site analysis, you see the property indicated in the colored portions of this map. The area that is shown in green is the area that will be conveyed to the Nature Conservancy for protection and perpetuity, which leaves the white areas of the site available for development by the City. The infrastructure that I spoke of earlier consists of a road that comes up the hill, as well as a number of parking lots that exist up at the top of the hill that are currently just used for fire training and so forth. There are also several areas of the site indicated in this cross-hatch that are so-called special development areas that are to be treated with special caution in the development process because they are quite close to areas of the preserve. The property basically forms a series of ridges that run in a northerly/southerly direction through the site. There is a large basin that includes the Black Gum Swamps and the Atlantic White Cedar and Rhododendron Swamps. Generally speaking, the development area that we are contemplating really lies entirely outside of the water sheds of those critical natural resource areas. The special development areas are indicated as such simply because they may be within that watershed so they deserve special scrutiny. The City's landfill was also part of the study area and as you no doubt know, is subject to an ongoing closure procedure and we wanted to see what kind of opportunities might exist for that area. Access to the site right now is via Hackett Hill Road, which comes up on the northeasterly side of the site. There is an existing intersection that has been improved with a signal but to accommodate this development would require some additional improvements. We estimate, based on our sensitivity analysis, that approximately 600,000 square feet or the equivalent amount of trips could be processed through this intersection without failure. So, we can accommodate some of the development or the proposed development, but not all of it through that access and there are some other opportunities for moving the existing Exit 7. Exit 7 as you know is just north of the Amoskeag Bridge and has some safety issues and so forth and is on the 10 year plan for improvement. So, that figured into our plans for providing improved access to this property. The key issues are access to the site...we have a front door which eventually might become a less prominent entry in the future. We have the need to develop direct access from the F.E. Everett Turnpike or the F.E. Everett Highway. There are those critical natural areas that need to be considered and protected in the development. We want to create a high quality environment in a corporate park here at Hackett Hill, which means that we want to provide the kind of landscape amenities and recreational amenities and other amenities that will attract the highest quality corporate users. The site does represent some challenges. There is a reason that it has not been developed in 200 years and the access issues, as well as topography

represent the most significant challenges to developing the property and we want to integrate the development in terms of both infrastructure, planning and permitting, to serve identified potential users. We think that this site will serve different kinds of users than would be attracted to the Millyard or would be attracted to downtown locations and we need to account for that in our planning. The conceptual master plan provides for up to 1.5 million square feet of leasable space in a number of buildings. The layout uses the existing infrastructure wherever possible so we don't throw away that significant investment that was made in the past. Development is phased to respond to the market so there is plenty of flexibility in the City's development of the property and the development is also integrated with plans for the preserve. In other words, we don't want to create a problem where there is a conflict there. We will propose strict environmental and design controls as a part of the development as well. The Master Plan consists of several development areas, which are enumerated in the report, but basically it calls for an extension of Hackett Hill Road up into the property, basically along the existing roadway system and then an extension of that roadway out to Dunbarton Road where it will meet with a road that comes off of a new interchange for the F.E. Everett. These development areas consist of varying densities, but basically they accommodate between say 100,000 and 300,000 square feet per development unit and the other notion is that open space within the development will be an integral part of the design theme. In other words, as you come up the road you have the ability to have views into a more manicured open space that is part of a campus style development in contrast to the more native and wild areas of the site. In terms of roadways and access, as I said earlier Hackett Hill Road will be the initial front door with about 600,000 square feet of capacity. There is significant roadway that will need to be constructed on-site to allow for development and the development of a new Exit 7 adjacent to the landfill will benefit this property, but it will also benefit other properties on Dunbarton Road and Front Street, which we feel will ultimately want to be developed by their owners. Significantly, the gravel pits and so forth on the westerly side of Dunbarton Road that we think would be a good redevelopment opportunity for the City as well. I will turn the discussion of design and development guidelines over to Barry, but let me first say that the design and development guidelines will cover both design of the buildings and also design guidelines calling for environmental protection and water quality enhancement. We will provide for a comprehensive set of design guidelines that insure protection of the environmental quality for this site.

Mr. Brensinger stated from the buildings perspective, the importance of the guidelines is to maintain a consistent level of quality throughout the development of the property and other similar parks across the country have demonstrated that this is particularly important in order to attract the investment of quality users. If you expect people to come to the Hackett Hill development and invest very substantial dollars in high quality buildings, they will only do so with the insurance that the neighbors will produce buildings of similar quality and that we

won't in three or five years develop industrial metal buildings next to high quality corporate users. So, design guidelines are important from that perspective. They will overlay other existing City regulations and govern things such as use, building design, size, height, materials, parking, loading...all of the physical attributes of the site if you will and the guidelines would ultimately be enforced through the design and review process to, as I said, assure consistency over a long period of time.

Mr. Leddy stated so, all of this is geared toward capturing what we think are the high quality users out there, primarily representing what we call the new economy, but there are significant numbers of companies seeking to retain employees by locating in a high quality environment. The market for the Hackett Hill property compliments, as I said, the existing areas of the Millyard and Elm Street and another important factor is that we believe with a comprehensive design approach such as that envisioned for Hackett Hill, that streamlined permitting as a part of the Master Plan development, can allow development to proceed without delay and we see this as a critical market edge against other sites that exist in the marketplace and also maintaining high quality standards to both maximize property values and assessed valuations, as well as the City's interest in terms of future sales as the project goes forward. Barry, do you want to talk about the differences here?

Mr. Brensinger replied sure. As Gordon noted a moment ago, from our view the proposed corporate park at Hackett Hill is really not in competition with other opportunities in the City but will, in fact, compliment them. We are familiar with the Millyard. It has made very substantial progress in recent years. It represents buildings with very large floor plates, meaning there is a lot of square footage on each floor, which is quite attractive, however, structurally as anyone who has been in the buildings knows, there are many, many columns and the structure is quite rigorous so for some modern corporate users that is an impediment. It is not desirable space for everyone. It also has a very specific aesthetic. Some corporations prefer to create an image of their own to enhance their corporate image. As important as the Millyard is and as well as it is doing, it is not the answer for everyone looking for office space. Similarly, if you look at Elm Street there have certainly been improvements in recent years. The characterization of office space on Elm Street might be high density with relatively small floor plates and as a result if you look at the spectrum of users it has tended over the years to lean more toward professional, financial and governmental users rather than large corporations. Again, Hackett Hill would, therefore, provide an important alternative that the City would have to offer. These are some images of similar parks. Actually one of the parks happens to be here in Manchester. The former home of Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Others represent the character buildings that you find in parks such as are proposed elsewhere in the country.

Mr. Leddy stated now the development plan for Hackett Hill is...we thought it was very important to phase development to meet market demand. In other words, not get the development out on a ledge as it were financially before the income stream could catch up with the investments that were taking place. So, we formulated a plan that stages development to try to meet the needs of potential users as they have demand for space. One external constraint of the development is access capacity as I mentioned that 600,000 square foot cap on the Hackett Hill Road access and the potential schedule for any Exit 7 work. Exit 7, due to the vagaries of the Federal process primarily for construction of new highway projects, is probably 5-7 years out from the day that the City decides to go forward and support the project. Costs are incurred though only as new revenue opportunities are created so development would take place only in response to demands in the marketplace. This outlines just...we call them stages rather than phases because if as users come to the table looking for space this is stage one but that may or may not be the first stage to be developed. It may be a later stage if somebody comes in and wants a site off of the existing road or if a large user comes to the site and wants to develop the top of the hill so I think flexibility in the plan is important and we tried to account for that in our plan. The cost benefit of all of this is that there are significant investments that have already been committed to...the City has committed to purchasing the property and that is represented in this Year 1 number. You can see that that plus some other ancillary activities are almost \$6 million worth of investment but as properties are developed and as further investment is undertaken, you can see that the property or the project winds up returning to the City in the form of land sales and tax revenue to the point where another major investment would be required and that is the extension of the road out to Dunbarton Road, as well as the local match for the Federal highway dollars for the interchange work. That is sort of the second threshold and then as you can see it starts paying back again until Year 12 if everything goes according to the plan it would go into the positive side and at the end of the day the project is anticipated to generate using current tax rates and assessments, approximately \$2.5 million per year in tax revenue. In conclusion, we believe that this project is a visionary approach to creating a corporate environment for the new economy. I give the City of Manchester a lot of credit for contemplating such a project because it is a real opportunity. It sets the standard for high quality development in New England, not just in the State but in the Region and it is an opportunity to create a stable return on the City's investment. Thank you.

Alderman Hirschmann asked while the experts are in the room, if the public has questions can they ask them.

Mayor Baines answered absolutely.

Mayor Baines requested those wishing to speak to come forward.

Andrew Wilson, 628 Hackett Hill Road, Manchester, NH stated:

First of all, I am not Andrew Wilson, I am his father so I am representing him. I was wondering what kind of buildings you were going to build and if it is going to be something like high tech or light manufacturing?

Mr. MacKenzie replied the Board is considering the zoning ordinance which would designate what the allowable uses are. The primary emphasis will be on a corporate office park. The zoning ordinance does allow certain limited manufacturing like light assembly and research and development activities. It does not allow heavy industrial, which would be the typical heavy manufacturing so there are five uses. Some of those are allowed. Some manufacturing use is allowed. Many of the manufacturing uses are not.

David Boutin, 105 Brae Burn Drive, Manchester, NH stated:

Good evening Mr. Mayor and Aldermen. I am here to support the Hackett Hill project. I was first introduced to this project a couple of years ago and I found that it is a very exciting one and the whole process that they used to come to a conclusion about what developable land there is available and I think they have done a marvelous job in protecting some very important environment to the community. I just want to say that in addition to what Mr. MacKenzie spoke to regarding the zoning ordinance, if it is the will of this Board to do so, one of the aspects of that zone is to incorporate a node within the park for convenience/retail uses where during the lunch hour in particular people would be able to come out of their offices, walk in a campus environment and maybe there is a little store or a dry cleaner or a sub station for the post office or a restaurant. One of the arguments that I have heard about being opposed to this is that it is going to cause all of this traffic all day long and I think that the efforts of the Planning Board were to insure that there would be an opportunity to do your things as they normally do downtown now when they go to a place to eat and so forth. I think they have done a marvelous job. I think it is a great opportunity for the City to move forward and have a project that will probably achieve national acclaim for what it does to preserve the environment and at the same time create a classy development.

Rosalyn Krause, 622 Hackett Hill Road, Manchester, NH stated:

I would like to go on record as being opposed to this plan. First of all, if you look at your conceptual Master Plan, the condos that are in the far northern right corner are where we live. There are 24 units. We were never notified of any of the plans that are going on. We just happened to have some people see it in the newspaper and they let everybody else know what is going on. I find that distrustful. The significant level of quality was mentioned earlier. This, I believe, is going to be a downgrade to the quality of life to the abutters. We are very, very close to the building that is going to be built there and right now we have a wooded area behind us and we will be losing that. On 3A there is already a strip mall down by Route 93 that is vacant, most of it, and they have had a very difficult time leasing out that

space. I would hate to see the same thing happen here. If that isn't filled up, I don't know why this would be filled up. The access off of Route 93 on that end would have to be altered also because right now it is very dangerous when you are coming south on 93 crossing over and going north. The City would have to upgrade Hackett Hill Road tremendously. Right now, there is an existing overpass that 293 is on. That would have to be widened, at least in my estimation. The traffic on Route 3A and Hackett Hill Road, the intersection at the bottom of the hill, I go there every morning and every night and it is horrendous. I would say that at least two to three nights or mornings a week there is an accident there. I would like to know and I don't quite understand the zoning, what is it currently zoned for, that whole area, what is the proposed zoning and what is included in that zoning that is designated? I would also like to know...they have a proposed preserve area. What is the access for the public to get to this proposed preserve area and will it be available for people to come through? Is it going to be another little infrastructure within this infrastructure with roadways getting to it? Again, I would like to go on record as being strongly opposed to this. I don't understand why, being such a close abutter, we are not notified in any way whatsoever. I don't know if anyone has an answer to that.

Mr. MacKenzie stated the abutters are notified when the project comes to fruition and there is actually a site plan or subdivision. That is when the Planning Board goes through the process of notifying abutters and abutters are invited to speak in opposition or have their questions answered. That is provided for under State law. This particular hearing was not necessarily required. The City fathers felt that it should be open to a public hearing to get all of the input, but it is not required so there was no notification for this hearing.

Ms. Krause asked as far as the zoning is concerned, what is the current zoning and what is allowed in that zoning and is there going to be a change in the zoning and exactly what would be allowed. The gentleman who spoke awhile ago mentioned people coming out for lunch and going to the drycleaner.

Mr. MacKenzie answered the current zoning is RS, which is single-family residential development and it could be developed in that fashion. The proposal is for a new district called Research Park and the primarily allowable uses are corporate office parks as has been discussed. A few minutes ago I mentioned some light manufacturing, but not heavy manufacturing and there is a provision that if the development gets large enough there could be a small commercial core that would serve the users of the office space but is not intended really for retail for the general part of the City or to get people off the highway. The primary uses are limited to, again, the main use is corporate office park.

Ms. Krause asked that means that there would not be restaurants and that type of food facility.

Mr. MacKenzie answered there would only be allowed a small core that once the office park got to a certain size there would be a small limited area. You could not have restaurants and strip commercial throughout the project. It would be a small location, perhaps just one building that would have a copy center, a small restaurant and maybe a small Mailbox, Etc. type facility to serve the companies in that area.

Jeff Michelsen, 45 Falls Avenue, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here again to talk about A squared, that is Hackett Hill and D squared, that is the concept that is indigenous to Manchester, the famous "done deal." I assume that everyone saw today's front page Union Leader story about Hackett Hill. This was probably the first Union Leader story that did not portray Hackett Hill as suitable only for a Taj Mahal style office park. At the same time, the story was incorrect since it left the impression that the fate of Hackett Hill is in the public's hands when it is, in fact, in the hands of this Board. I hope that you will consider zero development for this site rather than a phony bologna preserve with the Taj Mahal plopped down in the middle of it. Ladies and gentlemen, I urge you to consider the merits of a zero development policy for this land and to accept some real input from the citizenry. We, the people of this City, got this last remaining undeveloped large tract of land dirt cheap. You do not need to spend tens of millions of taxpayer money to build luxury 10 story office suites so that yuppies can sit in corner offices drinking lattes while looking down over the Merrimack and Manchester thinking perhaps, "man, what rubes these Manchester people are." No one, absolutely no one, has proven the supposed economic benefit to this City. It is yet another pig in a poke. You do not need to further reward the same old tired crowd, including development, financial, real estate, insurance, legal and architectural interests that is always lurking at ground zero when dubious development using taxpayer money is proposed. The crowd whose snout is always sniffing around the taxpayer's wallets. You do not need to let loose squadrons of bulldozers to level vast swaths of trees only to have an economic downturn stall the project and then have the City sell off these areas to private developers at bargain prices. Who remembers when all of the trees came down up at Livingston Park. Remember, when the trees start coming down and the trucks, tractors and graders swarm over the property and when the devastation along the ridges is visible from 293 and all high points in the City, the people will take notice and demand explanation. It will not then suffice to tell the residents, the voters, that perhaps after full development and 20 years have passed that the project will return nominal benefits to the taxpayers. I urge the members of this Board to emulate their predecessors who had the foresight to sprinkle dozens of parks throughout the City. Gems like Derryfield, Stark and Livingston Park. For many residents of Manchester, the quality of life is under siege. Here is a clear place to take a stand. I urge you to take a deep breath, shut down the bulldozers and consider making this entire property a gift of open space in perpetuity to the hardworking people of Manchester. Thank you.

Stephen Cabral, 654 Hackett Hill Road, Manchester, NH stated:

My unit is the end unit, which is going to abut the property, the site plan and I am opposed because my back area is going to be facing this building. Right now, I have a beautiful view of wooded land. My kids and grandkids come over and walk this area. The way the site plan is here, it looks like at some point in time there is going to be an access road to the road that leads to Countryside Village. It is only a matter of a few yards away. Traffic in this area is horrendous to begin with. It takes sometimes five to eight minutes just to get off of Hackett Hill Road onto Front Street. There are numerous accidents there. I just can't see the additional benefit of all of this other traffic that is going to be introduced in this area. I just want to state my opposition and as far as light manufacturing, I work for a light manufacturing company which deals with a lot of chemistry, thousands of gallons of chemicals that should not be introduced in this area. If we are talking and industrial park that is light manufacturing, this is a possibility of something that could go in there and I am very much opposed to it. I work for a company like this and I don't want to see it in my neighborhood and in my backyard. Thank you.

Kathleen Sutton, 292 Belmont Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am sorry to say that it is anger that brings me here this evening. It saddens me to see that such a wonderful piece of natural beauty is going to be destroyed for what seems to me to be greedy purposes. Money cannot inspire in us that which nature can and I am just very sorry to see this place be destroyed. I have hiked there on several occasions and it is so beautiful. I just don't understand why anybody would want to destroy that. Thank you.

Clay Groves, 292 Belmont Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am also, as you can guess, opposed to the development of Hackett Hill. My thoughts on this are zero development for exactly the same reasons that Kathy just stated. I am nervous because I have never talked to the Board of Aldermen before so I apologize for my shaking up here. I have also hiked Hackett Hill several times. I enjoy going out there. I have been out there with family and friends. I just think that developing it is a very poor idea. This group of Aldermen could be known as the Aldermen who saved the last bit of open space that Manchester has or the Aldermen who destroyed it. Think about that for a few minutes. I also think it is very selfish for us as a City to build there. We really have to not think about money lining our pockets, but the natural pieces of earth that need to stay there. All of the animals. All of the plants. All of the trees. They all have their place and just because we want money in our pockets and we all like money occasionally but I think it is important that we think differently about this. Also, when you bring all of these new businesses to the City of Manchester, you will also be bringing more people. If you bring more people, where are those people's kids going to go to school? Are they going to fit into our schools? Are we going to expand our schools? Is that money going to be able to pay for our schools to

expand and to get more teachers, etc.? I can't think of the words I want to use. I thought of them over there and I had a lot of really good ideas, but I can't remember them. Thank you.

Wendy Schorr, 173 North Road, Deerfield, NH stated:

I do not live in Manchester. I live in Deerfield. The reason that I am here tonight is my interest in the many years that I taught in the public schools here I taught for 16 years and worked with many children in the City of Manchester and that is what brings me here tonight. At the beginning of this presentation, someone mentioned that this is one of the last remaining opportunities to expand the business tax base here in Manchester. This is the last opportunity to keep a large tract of open land here in the City of Manchester. I wonder if any of you have ever thought about what it must have been like for people in New York City long, long ago when somebody said why don't we save this tract of land that then became Central Park. Somebody had to forego that short-term profit. Somebody had to say okay we are going to lose out on a little tax revenue here. We are not going to be able to make money on this. We are not going to be able to sell it off to developers, but that land is invaluable. That land is so precious now. Manchester is growing by leaps and bounds. We are going to be much bigger in the years to come and the benefit of open space is invaluable to this City and it is invaluable especially to the kids of this City. There are many kids who have never been out in the woods. When I have been out to Hackett Hill there are signs of bear and signs of moose. Where else in the City can kids go and see that? I don't know of anywhere else in the City of Manchester where they can. For those of you who are concerned about sprawl, this is how it happens. Little bit by little bit by little bit. You take it, you take it and pretty soon you have sprawl everywhere in your City. Also, at the beginning of this presentation they talked about the cost benefit. I wonder if they have taken into account the cost of...they mentioned that it could be used as single-family residences. That is the way it is zoned. Somebody could change their mind in the future. If that is the way it happens, you are going to end up with a lot more kids in the City. I know from first hand experience...I don't know where they put the kids right now in the schools. You are going to need to think about that in the future. Also, even if it is not single family residences and it is just used as business, then that also attracts certainly in this economy more people to the City, which means more families and again less school space. From all of the people that I have talked to, very, very, very few people even know that this place exists. People have never been out there. The word is not out. If people knew what was out there, I think you would see this place overflowing tonight. It is a place that nobody knows and this is your chance to leave a legacy that is more than just a postage stamp park here and there. This is your chance to leave a really large and beautiful chunk of land and I think it would really be a shame to do anything else other than zero development. Thank you.

Pat Mattson, 144 W. Webster Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a member of the Merrimack Valley Sierra Club and I guess as everyone knows we are in favor of zero development at the Hackett Hill property. I feel that as the development plans seem to move along that democracy was not really alive and well in Manchester so I prepared a time-line that would substantiate my opinion. On September 30, 1998, a public hearing was held. Very few people were aware of it. There was low attendance by the public and not all of the Aldermen were there and no maps of the development plans were distributed for one to take home and study. On March 16, 1999 there was the announcement of the EPA City Compliance Order and the property sale of Hackett Hill. The document itself and a map were available for the public, but the availability was not publicized and they only became available after the announcement had been made. On August 26, 1999 and February 15, 2000, two meetings were held concerning the fate of the Hackett Hill property. Present were City and State officials, consultants for the Master Plan and a few environmental organization representatives. No members of the press were present for either of these meetings or the general public and no Aldermen were there. No copies of a draft Master Plan were given out, although this was presented, and questions were actually discouraged. On September 5, 2000, the actual Master Plan presentation took place. The plan was made available to the public afterwards, but at a cost of \$25 and no forum was actually held such as the one for the zoning ordinance where people could have some input into what was planned or to hear about an alternate plan and then finally at tonight's meeting we are hearing again another presentation about the development plan and only brief comments are permitted and a few questions. There is no time for the Sierra Club to present its alternate plan for the use of the property, which would be the use of French Hall for environmental education, ecology classes at the high school level and the use of the entire property for this purpose. Frankly, I feel as though I am living in Russia and not Manchester. Thank you.

Mike Tansey, 620 Hackett Hill Road, Manchester, NH stated:

One of the questions I had was with regards to the development near the Glen Haven Condo Association, which I am a part of and I see Area A1 that is in there. Is there a plan and it really has not been specified in terms of that particular building and where its access will come from? I am not sure from these plans. I wonder if someone could address that concern.

Mr. MacKenzie stated Mr. Taylor might be able to help a little bit more as well although I do know that at a recent meeting the Board, after discussing it, Alderman Hirschmann indicated that he felt that access to that particular parcel should not be off of Hackett Hill Road and he also requested a significant buffer. I don't think we have pinned that down yet, but he asked for a significant buffer between Glen Haven and this particular development site. So, we don't have those details, but the access would not be off of Hackett Hill Road onto that site.

Mr. Tansey stated one of the other concerns that I had in being opposed to this development is that currently due to concerns that other people have brought up some of the infrastructure improvements are not yet in place and are in deep need of being done prior to any development being done at all, mainly along the 3A corridor. I would like to personally see some of those improvements be done prior to any development on this hill and that if there is any development on this that it should be scaled back with more of a balance between the properties residential possibilities and the commercial possibilities. Thank you.

Tabitha Taby, 227 Salmon Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I want to keep Hackett Hill there for the animals and for the trees. One reason is because if we take away the trees when I get older and I have children I will come back and there will be nothing left. There will only be a little park. Do you think we can survive with just a little park? We need trees to breathe and we need animals too. That is the reason why I want to keep Hackett Hill.

Bob Delliujudas, 648 Hackett Hill Road, Manchester, NH stated:

I guess as you can tell there are a lot of people from that condominium here voicing their concern. Of course, we are all against the development over there but what really concerns us is every time we look at the Master Plan we notice in there that they are talking about corporate office buildings and there is always a footnote in there referring to Site A1 as being the industrial portion of it and that is what concerns us the most. We definitely do not want to see that part of it built into the A1 section as light industrial.

Mayor Baines asked can we just get clarification on that before we go further.

Mr. Leddy answered just to clarify the uses that are contemplated for that area that is close to your homes, the intention was not to call for that specifically as a spot where light manufacturing or those kinds of uses should take place, but rather that if such a large...typically those kinds of uses take place in larger footprint buildings and that is the only development site on the property that would accommodate such a building. That is the reason that type of building is shown there, but I don't think that any of us are necessarily advocating that kind of use there. I think it is important to keep in mind that the Master Plan as it has been presented, is a conceptual Master Plan with respect to the lay out of buildings and the kinds of buildings that might be built on the property. Until a user comes forward and works with the City and with the Manchester Housing & Redevelopment Authority on specifically designing a site and in fact undertaking a whole range of other studies that are going to be required to do so, no specific proposals for development have been made or will be made. I think that we have heard loud and clear from Aldermen Hirschmann and others that incorporating buffers to protect the residents of the condos is going to be a big concern of both the City and the residents.

Mr. Delliujudas stated the only reason I brought that up is in the Master Plan it says that corporate office buildings do not like co-tenants to be industrial and yet the Board of Mayor and Aldermen suggest it. That is what they want. To put some type of light industrial development in that section because of the size of it and we are totally against that mainly because I don't think you will get a big enough buffer zone to cushion us from that. With light industrial, there is a possibility of manufacturing going on late into the night. You have parking lights. You will have noise and so on and so forth and if you put in an access road there with light industrial you are going to have truck uses and you are going to have more traffic because of that type of thing. So, we are totally against that. The biggest problem is the way the thing is set-up now, in April you were planning on putting up a light down on Front Street, which never took place and then it was supposed to be in October which also never took place. I don't know if you are holding off until some development comes up here or not, but the point is that you are going to have the traffic that is there now and if you put in an industrial park or a corporate park there you are going to end up with more traffic and you are going to have more problems and if you are slow to develop that we are going to have more problems in the end.

Mayor Baines asked Alderman Hirschmann to clarify the problem with the traffic light.

Alderman Hirschmann stated the light is in progress. We had to take some land from some parcels along Front Street. The State of NH declared that there wasn't enough frontage so we had to go through the process of taking some land parcels and that is to be done in the spring now.

Mr. Delliujudas replied they also had on the plans that they were going to widen the street to four of five lanes. Is that going to take place?

Alderman Hirschmann stated there will be a turn lane to go up Hackett Hill. That is the land taking. They are taking land so you will have a turn lane up Hackett Hill and a straight lane.

Mr. Delliujudas responded if they do put the access road in where the fire station is now, it is going to T where Hackett Hill is right.

Alderman Hirschmann replied there would need to be some kind of intersection improvements there if that is the main entrance.

Mr. Delliujudas asked which should include a light.

Alderman Hirschmann answered I would think so.

Karol Lacroix, Birchwood Drive, N. Hampton, NH stated:

I am Dean of the University of New Hampshire here in Manchester. Admittedly, the transaction that gave UNH-Manchester the ability to consolidate its facilities in the historic Millyard and the City the opportunity to purchase the 800+ acres at Hackett Hill was indeed a complex process, but fortunately the City and the University were able to work collaboratively with the Department of Environmental Services, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Nature Conservancy to come up with a satisfactory solution to develop the land and preserve the environmental treasures at Hackett Hill. I do think that the environment and responsible economic development can co-exist and there can be mutual benefits. From the perspective of an academic administrator, I see that new businesses coming to this area can provide quality jobs for people who graduate from our colleges here in Manchester and this is an important means of keeping homegrown talent in this area rather than losing this same homegrown talent to Route 128 in Massachusetts and beyond. Depending on the nature of the businesses that chose to locate at Hackett Hill, there may be more internship opportunities for our students and expanded research and development opportunities for our faculty. From the environmental side, with the City's support this land can still become an urban laboratory for students of all ages to enjoy. Also, there can be opportunities to conduct environmental research projects that will increase the understanding of ecological issues associated both with the undeveloped and the developed parts of the Hackett Hill property, of course with the permission of the City and the property owners. I am confident that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen will ultimately decide upon a plan that is in the best interest of the residents of the Greater Manchester for now and in the future, but I would urge you to not look at this as an either or solution and to look at ways in which partnerships can be evolved that will benefit both the environment and the economic development in a responsible manner. I would hope that this could be in the same spirit of cooperation that we realized when we made the transaction with the City initially. Thank you very much.

Patti Drelick, 889 Elm Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here on behalf of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce. I am here to speak to you this evening in favor of the Hackett Hill development Master Plan on behalf of our Chamber membership. One of the mechanisms the Chamber employs in reviewing what projects and issues it will get involved in is asking the question does it fit within our mission statement. Our mission statement is to be a leading force in the improvement of the business environment, as well as the economic health and general vitality of the region and as we see it the Hackett Hill area being developed as described today is a perfect fit within our mission statement for the general vitality of the area. A corporate business park with a campus environment design is an exciting and much sought after business component for the City while at the same time the appropriation is being made for the preserve working in concert

with a clean form of business development that is highly desirable and again a good balance. This type of development also offers the ability to create a new source of tax revenue for the City, which can add to our tax base without necessarily burdening other sectors of our infrastructure such as schools, which residential development could bring forward. We believe that the plan that is being presented today holds the greatest potential for preserving the open space that others have talked to you about tonight while still being able to afford that, as well as reach financial benefits from it. Again, we believe this plan mirrors our mission statement and that it can be a leading project for the continued improvement of our City by attracting high caliber business that will bring with them good paying jobs for our citizens, all the while being mindful and allowing for sensitivity to infrastructure demands and land conservation needs. In conclusion, we commend the design's vision and your leadership to look favorably on a plan and encourage you to move it forward. Thank you.

Aline Lotter, 227 Salmon Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I recently read the old Master Plan from 1993 and I would just like to quote to you from it. It says, "The City should, in the future, consider the importance that woodlands have to the ecological well-being of the City. Efforts should be made to acquire and preserve any remaining woodland in the City and in cases where development is inevitable, preserving as much natural area as possible on each site should be the central goal of the Planning Board." Then it goes on under the category of endangered plant species and it says, "of the 207 natural areas in the State, which have been tracked and identified by the NH Natural Heritage Inventory, the Manchester Cedar Swamp ranks third in the entire state in ecological importance and conservation need." Then later on it talks about wetlands and states, "the policy should be that city-owned property, as well as tax deeded land which has wetland areas should be retained as conservation land." Hackett Hill was considered not wetlands though. It was forest land and about that it is said, "Mature trees have proven to increase the value of real estate and woodlands provide natural habitat for wildlife. Therefore, it is recommended that regulations be modified to reflect a concern for forested areas and their value for preserving the quality of life in this City." Furthermore, more recently in the inventory that was taken by the Southern NH Regional Planning Commission, Hackett Hill was designated the number one priority for preservation in this City. It was called an ecological resource and it was the only one there. An ecological system dies when it becomes fragmented. Development on portions of Hackett Hill would result in fragmentation and the loss of that ecological system. Perhaps the swamps can be preserved in isolation. Perhaps not but the totality of the area would be irretrievably altered and that is why I am opposed to any development. Thank you.

Ray Pinard, 65 Kidder Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a member of the Manchester Development Corporation and Chairman of that Board. I am here this evening on behalf of the MDC to speak in favor of the Hackett Hill

Development Master Plan. As you may recall, the MDC played a role in the UNH/Hackett Hill transaction seeing it as a future economic development opportunity for the City of Manchester. From a long-term economic viewpoint, we have an interest in seeing that the Hackett Hill property is developed effectively bringing many high paying jobs to Manchester and increasing the City's tax base. We believe that the plan that is being presented holds great potential for the City of Manchester and business and industry. The modern corporate business park being proposed with a focus on a campus environment for corporate headquarters, research and development firms and technology-based businesses is one that is both exciting and responsible. As proposed, currently 15-20% of the entire property that will finally be acquired as the entire parcel will be developed leaving 80% or more as green space. As you know, due to land constrictions in the City of Manchester, this corporate park is perhaps the last major effort the City will be able to make in attracting new business and industry to the City. We believe that the plan balances the interests of the City, business, industry and the environment and should move forward. We ask that you look favorably on this plan so that it may proceed into the action phase as soon as possible. Thank you for your time.

Ken Rhodes, 540 Commercial Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am with CLD Consulting Engineers. We are a business interest here in town and my reason for sitting in this chair tonight is in the 15 years that I have been practicing in land development here in the City of Manchester, I fully support the evolution of how this particular plan has come about and I think there are a couple of things that are very important for the record to reflect here in this hearing this evening. A number of years ago, as you all well know, this land was owned by the University of New Hampshire system and it had been their intent for a number of years to turn this into a campus environment up here on this 800+ acres. Very candidly, without some vision in a couple of places the university system could have been free at any time to either continue their development plans or turn this property over to any interest they so saw fit and dispose of it as an additional asset. The City of Manchester took the steps necessary and we are sitting here this evening talking about a portion of those steps that have resulted in the following. The university is now doing some major investment in the Millyard and bringing their operation into the center city, which I think has been a goal of the Master Plan and downtown development that has been talked about for some time. We have the opportunity to preserve a significant portion of the very sensitive resources here on Hackett Hill. Maybe not all of them. The land is around there, but a much better opportunity than existed a number of years ago and at the same time, yes, have the opportunity to increase the economic base of the City as an additional benefit of this entire project. It has been innovative. It has been a little bit outside the box and very frankly at certain times government and the public asks you folks to think outside the box and do those innovative things and I think I would speak for a number of people to say that you should continue with your efforts. Two other comments related to this particular area. One,

traffic is going to be a major issue as Gordon and Barry have pointed out and there are other lands up here in this particular area where the capacity of the current infrastructure there will have to be coordinated with and I will also reemphasize not only to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen but to everybody that the City also has a significant asset directly adjacent to these lands that previously had been a liability and may also improve the opportunity for developing this land. The landfill, which is now currently closed, is also available to the Hackett Hill Development as an alternative green energy source for power and heat and other ways of enticing business to reduce their costs in this area and make innovative use of resources that a few years ago were considered a liability up at the northwest corner of town. I go on record and comment in favor of this proposal. Thank you.

Mayor Baines stated just so people know Alderman Pinard just left and I will be leaving shortly because we have a Ward 6 neighborhood meeting that has been scheduled for sometime. I will stay as long as I can and then ask Alderman Cashin to take over and Chair the rest of the public hearings.

Peter Flood, 6 Shore Drive, Merrimack, NH stated:

I did spend some years in school here and we are very concerned with the City. Some projects and I have been a developer by the way for 30 years and have had some strenuous efforts to do with very fine development I think and some projects are smart to do and other projects seem so smart to do and this is one project that I think seems so smart to do that it is going to be very hard to stop it, but if you consider the proformer of the company that put it together, they have promised a cash benefit of \$6,778,505 in Year 14, but they use all of the taxes collected over the first 13 years to help pay the 5% bond debt. There is no provision for City services during that period of development for 13 years and the average northeast cost of providing services to office space is \$296 per \$1,000 of taxes collected. These services must be provided by the City so cost plus bank interest because it is not going to be part of a bond issue, must be accumulated through the 13 years and surprisingly it comes to over \$6 million. That is almost as much as the projected cash benefit. No other impact costs are shown. You can look at the other side of this handout and see the litany of other considerations that have to be taken into account. New methods have been devised to determine more true costs of growth. Please read, "Better Not Bigger" by Eban Fodore or "Sprawl Costs Us All" by Brett Tulsey. After all costs are considered, the losses may total \$4,117,161 by Year 14. These projections might not be dead on the money, but they are close enough that you should consider Hackett Hill dead in the water. A good builder heeds the admonition measure twice, cut once. If you look at Page 2, you will see that the 1,386,000 square feet of office space anticipated if it provided 200 square feet per employee...I am not absolutely sure of that but it must be someplace close, the number of employees assumed would be close to 7,000. The number of parent employees assumed at 75% would yield 5,197 parents that work there. Parents creating new households in

Manchester at 50% of those would be 2,599 households. The elementary students coming out of that would be 1,092; middle school 388; high school 311, for a total of 1,741. The total weighted school capital cost per household would be over \$11,000. Total school capital costs from Hackett Hill could be \$29,568,823. The cost of other development impacts on Manchester public facilities like library, municipal, fire, police, parks & recreation, transportation, etc. we could assume to be at a cost of about \$14,000 per dwelling unit and about \$11,600 per thousand square feet of office space provided. That would be \$52,463,000 of cost of other development impacts. The cost of bonding for other impacts could amount to \$2,623,000 per year. The cost per year above taxes to service Hackett Hill because it costs \$1,160 in the northeast on the average to subsidize over \$1,000 in taxes received so \$1,160 per household per \$1,000 of taxes would be necessary and that would come to \$363,000 per year. The total possible annual cost incurred by Manchester to service Hackett Hill impact by Year 14 could be \$10,895,666. The cash promised by the proformer would be \$6,778,000. The possible real cumulative net cost by Year 14 for Manchester could be over \$4 million. Please measure twice. Thank you.

Alderman Levasseur asked can one of the consultants give us an idea...if they want to rebut this.

Chairman Cashin stated I don't think you want to rebut anything here this evening. It is going to be counterproductive.

Alderman Levasseur replied I want to know if these numbers are close.

Chairman Cashin stated well it is going to come back to Lands & Buildings and you can ask your questions then.

Tom Irwin, 27 N. Main Street, Concord, NH stated:

I represent the Conservation Law Foundation. We were invited to participate as a concerned environmental organization by a resource group that was to look at this project. We were happy to participate in two of those meetings. We would have liked to have had the opportunity for further participation and would like to provide a few comments today and I will be brief. First for the reasons that have been stated by many others so eloquently, the Conservation Law Foundation would urge you to seriously consider the zero development concept here. Hackett Hill clearly is a significant, unique property for the recreational and educational opportunities it provides. If the City decides to proceed with its development and we hope that it won't, but if it does there are a few concepts that we would urge you to consider. First, we would urge that the development take place in a geographically phased approach so that if the forecasts for development on this property are not realized, we don't have for example pods of development scattered throughout the property. We would urge

you to take a phased approach that starts at the north and again if the development projections aren't realized, approaching it in that manner will prevent development from being fragmented and scattered throughout the property. Secondly, we would urge you to have the development proceed in a manner that minimizes impervious services as much as possible. If you look at the conceptual plan, it is hard not to notice the significant amount of space that is devoted purely to parking. We would ask you as the development unfolds if, in fact, the City proceeds in that way we would ask that development of this property proceed in a manner that is done creatively through the use of public transportation and other creative alternatives to minimize the amount of space that is needed for parking. Second, we would ask you to take a hard look at area designated as B1 on the conceptual Master Plan. That area is essentially an island of development that has received special attention in the ESO agreement in that according to the CSO agreement it warrants special review by the EPA and the Department of Environmental Services. Even if the EPA and the Department of Environmental Services okay the development of that island, we would ask that the City think seriously about not developing that area and causing the unnecessary fragmentation that would result from that. Finally, we would ask that all efforts, if in fact development occurs, we would ask that all efforts be taken to protect the preserve from the potential over use of trails that could develop from the users of this office park. I would address your attention to Page 2 of the Executive Summary of the Master Plan that states that since the open space remaining after development of the property is a significant asset to the development, an extensive trail system is planned for the property. Clearly, we are here today because of the significant concerns related to the preserve to the extent that that language refers to a potentially extensive trail system throughout the preserve for use by employees and others at this office park we think that could have a major detrimental effect.

Charles Watson, 281 Dubuque Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a Planner for the Town of Hooksett. We appreciate the communications which we have received thus far concerning this project. This project definitely borders on the Town of Hooksett and if it proceeds, traffic and other impacts will undoubtedly affect the Town of Hooksett. We request that the Town of Hooksett be granted abutter status in this matter as it comes before government bodies in this City and request that we receive copies of reports relative to this matter. Thank you.

Jeff Kassell, 22 Appleton Street, Manchester, NH stated:

Let me start off by saying that I am not an environmentalist. I am not a tree hugger. I have really a different concern about this Hackett Hill project and it really has to do with money. I was very interested to hear Mr. Flood of Merrimack, he doesn't live in Manchester and I don't know who he really represents. Someone told me a few minutes ago that he was involved with the Sierra Club. I was very interested in what he had to say because it raised questions that I had and really what that is is what is the real cost of this project. I believe

that the people who have paid for this land and we got it at bargain basement prices. This land cost the City approximately \$800/acre. You can't even buy a wood lot for \$800/acre 100 miles north of here. This is valuable, valuable land. The City bought it for fire sale prices. I am kind of curious as to how that happened, but development of this land is another matter. There is another thing that concerns me and there has been a lot of talk about redeveloping downtown. The civic center project, one of the biggest projects in the history of Manchester, was designed to increase traffic downtown. An office center is being proposed for the Hackett Hill project and this office center is going to have retail spaces somehow adjacent to it. This is the projection. I am wondering how this is going to enhance traffic downtown if you are going to have a different office center located several miles from the downtown area, which will probably defray traffic away from downtown rather than towards it. This is what I would like to propose. I would like to propose that there is not...this land is an asset for the City. It is not going away. It is going to increase in value regardless of when it is developed. I would like to see a robust discussion of this asset to the City over the next year or so so that people really understand what its value is and how that value should be deployed in the best interest of the City. It is not really for just 12 or 14 people to decide how this land is going to be used. This is the City's money. The people who live in this City who pay the taxes and the debt service on this land and they should be considered. It shouldn't be rammed down their throats. Now I am not saying an office park is the worst use for this property. I really don't know, but I would like to see a robust discussion of it in the newspapers and in the Aldermanic Chambers so that everybody understands how the money is going to be deployed and how the land is going to be used. Thank you very much.

Don Welch, Boutwell Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I come before you tonight to speak in opposition to this proposed Hackett Hill project. I had the opportunity over the past couple of years and actually throughout the last 40 years of going up in this area hunting when I was younger and hiking in the last couple of years. This is an asset to the City of Manchester. I sit back and I say why are we developing this. I flew over the land a couple of weeks ago and there are areas there that the biologists and environmental people can tell you cannot be seen anyplace else in North America. Furthermore, I heard tonight again economic development, tax base. You know what? I think the taxpayers are sick and tired of getting ripped off via these land grabs because that is exactly what is happening here. This land will be turned over from the City taxpayers to developers that in turn profit hugely from these developments. I don't know how many of you tonight know that when I saw that screen up there tonight, if you look at your map here, this area right here is 147 acres. Most people don't know this. December 7 there is a hearing to subdivide the land that abuts this property for 147 acres of commercial development. So, when I sit back and I hear people talk about increasing the tax base, well if there is an increase in the tax base there are a couple of things going on. One, this money should be

used for improvements in the City whose tax base we improve and nothing is happening in this City as far as we have infrastructure that is falling apart. Why don't we concentrate on downtown? I mean we are already on this bandwagon. If you people have an opportunity to go up there and walk around up there it is amazing. I am not into that but I sit with a bunch of hunters in the morning that go out there. There is wild game out there. I don't know. The land grab continues in this City and that is exactly what this is and I think the taxpayers are going to look at every single one of you when you decide on this project and where we are going. Thank you very much.

Dorothy Courser, 213 Gingras Avenue, Manchester, NH stated:

I wasn't going to speak tonight, but I parked my car on Elm Street and I was walking in and I was looking at Elm Street...I have been a lifelong resident of Manchester and I know what Elm Street used to be and then we looked and we said well maybe the outskirts aren't so bad and all of the stores went to the outskirts. Now we are trying to rebuild downtown again. When I look downtown now all I see are office buildings and restaurants. If you take the office people out of Manchester and move them to the outskirts of town, we are going to lose what we have downtown now. Hackett Hill is such a beautiful place just the way it is. It should be left alone. Years and years ago I used to swim off of South Willow Street where Wendys is now. There is a pond there and I bet you years ago we didn't think anything would happen by moving everything out there. That is so polluted now it is disgusting. Please, for the children of Manchester, think very hard before you move on this. Thank you.

Laura Magzis, Penacook, NH stated:

I moved to NH 10 years ago and fell desperately in love with the State. I fell in love with the open space and also with the unique cultural and historic features of the State. I feel that we are in serious danger of losing what I and other people love about New Hampshire. I have occasion periodically to visit Connecticut. The towns in Connecticut and it is eastern Connecticut, all merge with each other. There is no differentiation between them. The traffic there is horrendous. It looked like any other place along the Eastern seaboard. If somebody put you down there and you didn't see signs that indicated where you were, you wouldn't know if you were in Connecticut or New Jersey or New York or Atlanta for that matter. I feel that New Hampshire is in danger, as a previous speaker said, of little by little losing open space and developing that kind of lifestyle of sprawl. I believe there are two costs. As previous speakers have said there is the financial cost. I am not at all convinced that further development actually improves the tax base. Then there is also the quality of life part and I feel that is even more questionable. I think that this kind of sprawl greatly reduces our quality of life and that is what this adds to. I strongly agree with people who suggest putting resources and energy into developing the downtown area. Thank you.

Elinor Kehas, 158 Whitford Street, Manchester, NH stated:

My focus was on the financial aspect of this project. In the proformer statement it mentions and it bases a lot of figures on land sales of \$100,000 on the average and the retail space \$220,000 and I was just wondering if these have been substantiated at all by any kind of research. I question them because we just sold 11 acres in Manchester, the City of Manchester did, for \$320,000 and that is about \$31,000 per acre. So I was wondering how they got these figures. Can anyone respond?

Mr. Farrelly stated I am a consultant with Cushman & Wakefield. We specialize in commercial and industrial real estate services for corporations and effectively at today's market runs where it is appropriately zoned to build office buildings that is actually on the low side of what the price would be. That is actually a very conservative number.

Ms. Kehas replied which is a conservative number. The land that was sold is near the airport and I am sure the Aldermen are familiar with the land I am talking about. It was sold to Oak Design for \$31,000 an acre. Am I correct? If you use those kind of figures, how can we foresee \$100,000/acre for this parcel or \$220,000?

Mr. Farrelly responded the important thing when we look at different parcels of land is the usable acres. How much of the 11 acres that the City sold for \$33,000/acre was wetland or was incurred by other site premiums such as ledge so you can have an 11 acre lot of which only 3 acres of it are buildable. I don't know the specific site.

Mr. Taylor stated the particular lot you are referring to is located in the Manchester Airpark, which is a redevelopment project done by the City. The price that those lots are being sold for were based on an actual appraisal. The particular lot that you are talking about happens to have less than 3 acres of developable land. The bulk of it is non-developable. So, you are dividing the total price by 11 and you should be dividing it by 3.

Ms. Kehas asked what makes it undevelopable.

Mr. Taylor answered because it is wet, the topography is bad, there are wetlands down there and there are some drainage ditches that have to be accommodated. You are really spreading that sale price over a much smaller amount of land than the total land area of the parcel.

Ms. Kehas stated I was wondering if it was possible to have another meeting to decipher the financial text here. There are a lot of questions that I have about it and I don't want to hold everybody up.

Chairman Cashin asked would you be agreeable to give us the questions you have and we will get the answers for you.

Ms. Kehas answered yes.

Chairman Cashin asked if there was anyone else present wishing to speak.

Jackie Flood, 6 Shore Drive, Merrimack, NH stated:

I am concerned about this development, however, I am a real estate broker of 25 years and actually speaking against development. I thought some points might be of interest to you that I have seen over the last 25 years. Manchester has come along way. Downtown is getting quite lovely. There are restaurants and shops and it looks much more like a downtown then when I first came but your progress is going to be jeopardized. The experience of Nashua might be of interest to you. Back in the late 80's, there was a saturation of the marketplace. Speculators built a good number of office buildings on the outskirts increasing traffic terribly on 101A. What happened was to fill the buildings they decreased the rent and it stripped tenants from downtown out to these buildings. Even during the boom time, the buildings were all half empty. They are now...some of the newer ones are full after quite a number of years of prosperity, but the downtown buildings are still half empty. For example, the Oddfellows Building, one of the prettiest buildings probably in the State is kind of divided up into little cubicles and they have homely signs in the windows. It is very low rent and very unattractive. That will happen to Manchester too. Right now we are in a period of prosperity. We have economic cycles. There is no doubt about it. We don't know when the next recession will come. You are going to be caught for sure with some of these buildings and it is going to take an awfully long time to fill them. The other point I wanted to make is that we are at about 100% employment as we know. Any companies coming in have to bring workers with them. This drives up rent terribly and it affects the affordability of housing. Merrimack bit the bullet about 10 years ago. We bought 80 acres of beautiful trails and woodlands with lakefront. We treasure that greatly. Merrimack has benefited from that tremendously. You are going to miss a big opportunity if you don't preserve Hackett Hill.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Vaillancourt, it was voted to refer the Master Plan and comments and documentation presented to the Committee on Lands & Buildings for future report to the Board.

There being no further business to come before the hearing, on motion of Alderman Thibault, duly seconded by Alderman Pariseau, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk