

Newburyport Redevelopment Authority

4/25/07

7:00 pm

Present: Nat Norton, Rick Taintor, Tim Brennan, and Patty Dorfman (7:16pm)

Absent: Erford Fowler

Public Comment:

No public comment was heard.

Minutes:

Minutes from the previous meeting were not available.

Applications:

The Studio – Mr. Sidford signed off on the application for signage at 46 State Street. This sign was the same as previously approved for the former site on Inn Street. Mr. Taintor motioned to approve the application and Mr. Norton seconded. It was approved 3-0.

The Thirsty Whale at 26 Market Square applied for new windows, roof, gutters, downspouts, and paint. The colors chosen were several blue colors from the Benjamin Moore Historical Series. Members questioned whether vinyl windows were allowed in the district. Mr. Taintor said that he would check. In the meantime, Mr. Taintor motioned to approve the application (without the windows) and Mr. Brennan seconded. The application was approved 3-0.

(Ms. Dorfman arrived)

An application for use of the waterfront was received from the C10 Foundation. Barry Connell requested part of the east lot for the Brew Fest during Yankee Homecoming. He said that they were hoping to put the portable toilets on the wharf or in the tented area behind the Custom House. The DPW would set up fencing and police would be on site through the entire event. Mr. Brennan asked how the size of the tent was decided upon as in previous years it became very crowded underneath it. Mr. Connell said that they would be selling fewer tickets than previous years so it wouldn't be as crowded. He also said that they would get a general liability and liquor policy for the event and each vendor would also be required to carry their own insurance. Mr. Taintor requested the insurance binder at least one week prior to the event. Mr. Norton requested a revised sketch of the site where the toilets would be located prior to his signing off on the application. Mr. Taintor motioned to approve the application and Mr. Brennan seconded. It was approved 4-0. The C10 Foundation also requested parking spaces for the vendors. They were told they would have to pay the parking attendant and they would be able to rope off an area as soon as they were told where and how much parking was needed.

Design Review:

Mr. Taintor said that he was concerned that the NRA may not have jurisdiction over design review. He said that there weren't any design guidelines to follow in the Sign Book. Mr. Taintor said that he would request an opinion from Carol Powers so that they could resolve this question. Mr. Norton said that he would also call Mary Lou Supple for an explanation.

NRA Activity:

Meeting with Mayor:

Mr. Norton said that he met with the Mayor to discuss Bill Harris' proposed motion to create an Urban Renewal Completion Plan. The Mayor indicated that he no longer felt that one was necessary. He also said that he would have the Planning Department look at the parking issues in the City. Mr. Taintor was concerned that the Planning Department was being overburdened. Mr. Norton said that he shared this concern but noted that a citizens group offered to take on parking issues. Other parking ideas being discussed were using the Prince Place lot in conjunction with the Verizon building with access on Green Street, and rerouting State Street.

CPC Application:

Mr. Norton said that he attended the CPC meeting for the NRA's application. He said the meeting went well and the Committee would notify them if the grant was awarded. It was also noted that CPC matching funds was reducing each year due to additional communities splitting the funds.

Police Dept. Meeting

Patty Dorfman reported that she and Mr. Fowler met with Rick Siemasko of the Police Department. He told the NRA to use their best judgment on signage. Mr. Fowler has additional information on signage to be discussed at a later date.

Treasurer's Report

No Treasurer's Report was available for the meeting. Mr. Norton said that he would meet with Mr. Brennan to go over the duties of Treasurer.

Parking Lot:

RFP for 2007 fee collection operations:

One response was received from Standard Parking (SP). Mr. Norton, Mr. Taintor, and Mr. Fowler recently met with Standard Parking at the pre-bid meeting or spoke with them on the phone. SP suggested to Mr. Norton that the City provide placards to senior citizens if they were to allow seniors to park for free. The placards would facilitate the work of the parking attendants. They also suggested putting the senior parking in the East lot since that lot was usually underutilized. Standard Parking also requested the use of a storage shed for their supplies.

Standard Parking also suggested using tennis tape to stripe the lot since the material they used last year did not hold up. They suggested that the NRA bear the cost to buy a roll to test it out. SP also suggested using pay and display machines or pay and walk away machines. Mr. Norton preferred the pay and walk away machines as it is more

convenient and easier to enforce. He said that from a revenue standpoint, the pay and display would have better results. SP suggested having three machines. Mr. Norton said that he would like to research gates.

Ms. Dorfman motioned to approve the granting of the contract on the basis of the RFP and Mr. Taintor seconded. The motion passed 4-0. Mr. Norton said that they would reevaluate their contract after one year. He also said that he would review the proposed contract with Carol Powers.

Maintenance proposals:

Mr. Fowler got three quotations for work on the NRA lots. Mr. Norton reported that the Link House would clean the lots. The three quotations were as follows: Riverbend Landscaping = \$2,000 for 15 yards, Joe Spaulding = \$1,700 for 20 yards, and Salisbury Landscaping at \$1,800 (did not specify total yards.)

Mr. Brennan noted that Joe Spaulding was the low bidder but was concerned that 20 yards may not be enough to cover. He said that he would confirm with Mr. Spaulding that it would be enough to complete the job. He would also ensure that the job would be done prior to Memorial Day. Mr. Brennan motioned to approve the proposal from Mr. Spaulding and Ms. Dorfman seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Signage:

Mr. Taintor said that Mr. Fowler would like to have the parking lot signage either removed or repaired since it is in bad condition. Mr. Norton suggested using the NRA standards when planning new signage. He also suggested having a welcoming sign with small regulation signs. Ms. Dorfman suggested reducing the amount of time cars could be left in the lots if the number of parking spaces would eventually be reduced.

Park Designer Contract:

Mr. Norton said that Carol Powers has not yet called back regarding the contract but previously said there were many issues in the draft. Mr. Taintor also said that they needed to pin down the dates in the contract. A review meeting was scheduled for 5:30pm at City Hall on 5/9/07. Mr. Norton and Mr. Brennan would also arrange to schedule the transfer of funds for the contract.

Sign Regulations:

Mr. Taintor said that the Zoning Ordinance refers to the Sign Book, written in the 60s, for all signage in the Central Business District. He said that the Sign Book is not currently being used as the NRA's application was revised to be a simplification of the rules. Mr. Taintor suggested that the City take over jurisdiction of signage in the downtown and thought they would want to encompass the entire business district. A draft ordinance change was submitted by Mr. Taintor which would eventually be submitted to the City Council. Mr. Brennan motioned to submit the draft to the City Council and Ms. Dorfman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Media Policy:

Ms. Dorfman recommended that the NRA have a spokesperson for the group as it would relieve the burden on other members and present a united front. She said that usually, it is the chair that is the spokesperson. Ms. Dorfman also suggested coming up with a business plan as there is not a strong consensus on the NRA's purpose. Mr. Taintor suggested having a workshop meeting. The possibility of a website was also discussed in order to post documents, email addresses, etc. Ms. Dorfman motioned to begin a workshop to come up with the NRA's mission and goals. Mr. Taintor seconded. Mr. Norton said he would keep this topic on the agenda for future discussion.

Ms. Dorfman said that she has been receiving a lot of brochures and mail addressed to her at City Hall. It appears someone used her name and email address to have this information sent to her. She also has recently been receiving calls on her private cell phone. She said that she wasn't sure of the intention of whoever did this but wanted to make note of it. She said she would make Inspector Bruneault aware of the issue.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Sincerely,

Dianne Eppa
Note Taker