

Newburyport Redevelopment Authority
City Council Chambers
July 12, 2017
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Bob Uhlig called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Redevelopment Authority to order at 7:04 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Leslie Eckholdt, Bob Uhlig, Marian Levy, Andy Sidford and David St. Cyr.

3. Old Business

A. Somerby's Way

The planting of pachysandra along Somerby's Way has been completed. It might be necessary to spray the trees for moths. The watering of the pachysandra is proving to be more expensive than the members wish to pay. Andy Sidford moved that Tom and Gretchen Joy be given the responsibility for watering the pachysandra for an estimated cost of \$50 per week. Leslie Eckholdt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

B. Soils Testing in West Lot

ESS has proposed additional borings in order to refine its report on the location of hydrocarbons and arsenic in the subsurface. The borings would be outside of the scope of work that had previously been approved. An additional bill might be received during the reporting phase.

C. Lower Custom House Way Public Easement Update

The City had been asked to communicate with New England Development about recognizing the public easement on the east side of the Custom House. No information has been received.

D. Submerged Tidelands

Jamy Madeja is continuing to prepare a legal opinion on the NRA's rights and responsibilities as the owner of the submerged tidelands. This includes researching any restrictions that may have been included in the legislative act that conveyed the tidelands to the NRA.

E. Property Improvements

1. Path Safety Improvements

Bob Uhlig will obtain a quote to remedy the unsafe ground condition between the Chamber of Commerce information booth and the restroom.

2. Dumpster Modifications

The enclosure for the dumpster used by the Sea Level Oyster Bar is now 12' x 16.' Plans were presented to enlarge it to 16' x 16' to accommodate recycling. A concrete pad would be pour for the entire area. Currently half of the area is dirt and half is concrete. The dumpster might be rotated 90 degrees so that its entrance is off of the access road. This would require a curb cut. The trash hauling company will be contacted about the ability of the trucks to negotiate the access road. The design of the enclosure will be refined.

3. Free Library

Marian Levy reported the Little Free Library boxes have arrived. They will be installed after the posts been received. She is seeking book donations.

F. Agreements and Leases

Custom House and NRA Irrigation System Agreement

The agreement has been completed.

G. Central Waterfront Update

Bob Uhlig presented a plan showing the various areas under NRA control. He said decisions must be made on the future ownership of each parcel and which entity would have a management role over it. The opportunities for revenue sharing in each must also be explored. There is a general agreement the future owner of most of the land would be an expanded Waterfront Trust. The Custom House and lawn would be excluded. The Waterfront Trust would manage the park and the City would manage parking.

The members were asked for their comments. Andy Sidford said the NRA has a mandate to expand the open space and guaranteed its future maintenance is. He commented that the focus of the Ad Hoc Central Waterfront Committee has been on the dissolution of the NRA rather than the design and funding of an expanded park. He said the NRA has the organization in place to implement an expanded park and he wants the NRA to be involved with its design and construction. Bob Uhlig said he believes the NRA should be involved with the design process and later assess its roll in the construction of the park. Carol Powers agreed the NRA is in a better position to implement the park than a non-profit organization because it has the ability to raise funds and bond. She does not think the land should be conveyed before a design has been completed. The transfer of ownership would depend on the Trust document being revised.

The meeting was opened to comments from the public. Lon Hachmeister, High Road, Newbury, said the NRA cannot be forced out of business and it should be involved with making sure the park is going in the right direction. Rob Germinara, 2 Ashland Street, said the City Council is hijacking the process but has the least amount of say over it. He does not approve of the tying of the construction of a parking garage to the removal of a certain number of spaces from the waterfront. He said the NRA should be involved with the process until the park has been designed and implemented.

4. New Business

A. Parking Advisory Committee

David St. Cyr attended a meeting of the Parking Advisory Committee. One topic of discussion was the concern about parking creeping into the neighborhoods after the garage has been built. A consultant was hired to review the figures for the proposed garage.

B. Chamber of Commerce Building Assessment

Andy Sidford will evaluate the condition of the information booth and restroom structure.

5. Reports

A. Clerk's Report

Marian Levy reported the annual report is nearly complete.

B. Treasurer's Report

Leslie Eckholdt reported the balance in the money market account on June 30 was \$257,558.42 and the balance in the checking account was \$25,016.10. Andy Sidford moved to approve payments to Gretchen Joy for minute taking for the July meeting in the amount of \$150; to Tom and Gretchen Joy for PUP maintenance and supplies between June 4 and July 8 in the amount of \$399.47; to Lady Tracey Ann for watering for the month of June in the amount of \$2,000; to Comak Brothers for turning on the water to the PUP in the amount of \$85 and to Leslie Eckholdt in the amount of \$6.00 for copying. Marian Levy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Counsel's Report

No report.

6. Minutes

Leslie Eckholdt moved to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2017 meeting. Marian Levy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

7. Upcoming Meetings

The next meeting of the NRA is scheduled for Wednesday, July 12.

8. Public Comment

None

9. Adjournment

Andy Sidford moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Leslie Eckholdt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.