

Newburyport Redevelopment Authority
August 22, 2007

Present: Erford Fowler, Patty Dorfman, Rick Taintor, Tim Brennan

Absent: Nat Norton

7:07 call to order

Public Comments:

Dominique Dear said she was very excited about the meeting with the Cecil Group as it was very positive. She suggested an on-site meeting with the Cecil Group with all the entities involved, when the timing is deemed right. The purpose would be to get a sense of the site. Sketch out on the ground in order to see the concept plan. Mr. Taintor thought that this would be more likely to take place in later October or later. He suggested removing any entertainment factor from the meeting and making it an official site visit, not a celebration-type of event.

Minutes:

Minutes were held until the next meeting.

Treasurer's Report:

Mail service may be having issues. The bank statements and electric bill had not yet arrived in time for the Treasurer's report. Mr. Brennan reported no significant change in the balances reported at the last meeting.

Correspondence:

Mr. Taintor reported that two letters from Division of Unemployment were received noting violation of not filing a report. A past due notice states \$35.29 is owed by the NRA. He was not sure why the NRA would be required to file quarterly reports as the NRA doesn't have any employees. Mr. Brennan will investigate.

Parking income was deferred until next meeting. Ms. Eppa will forward parking reports to all members when received in the future.

Curb Stops – Half of the curb stops on the parking lots have been installed by Standard Parking. No invoice has been received.

Sign Applications:

Simply Sweet on 12-16 Inn Street. The applicant said that there were two sides to the store. One side will have ice cream, one will be candy. The signs would be black and gold, with a simple design. The store has two entrances with a stairway in between, which separates the two sections of the store. Ms. Dorfman motioned to approve the application and Mr. Brennan seconded. All voted in favor.

French Lessons – 26 State Street. The application was to recover the existing awning in black. No lettering on the awning was proposed. Mr. Brennan motioned to approve and Ms. Dorfman seconded. All voted in favor.

J.L. Coombs – 1 State Street. The application was to recover the existing awning in Opera. They also proposed to paint the door white and window boxes putty. Ms. Dorfman motioned to approve the application and Mr. Fowler seconded. All voted in favor.

Purple Onion – 42 Inn Street. The application was to recover the existing awning in Plum. No lettering was proposed. Ms. Dorfman motioned to approve the application and Mr. Brennan seconded. All voted in favor.

DEP Notice of Non-Compliance:

The NRA approved \$2,000 for hiring an LSP at the last meeting. Mr. Norton has not hired one yet as DEP has not issued the requested documents. Mr. Norton will speak to a co-worker about hiring a LSP soon.

Mr. Taintor said that an Administrative Consent Order that should have been signed and sent back to DEP was received. He said he would have Mr. Norton handle it.

Legal Counsel:

Atty. Powers suggested hiring another attorney at this phase. The NRA hasn't hired anyone yet. Members hoped to find someone specializing in redevelopment matters along with some environmental knowledge. Mr. Fowler suggested hiring someone that was familiar with Newburyport. Ms. Dorfman will ask her husband for contacts.

Waterfront Planning:

Mr. Taintor reported that the waterfront planning meeting has been scheduled for 9/11 at 7pm. Draft materials should be ready by 9/4/07. The Maritime Society will have a landscape designer and architect put together a plan for the area behind the Custom House. They had hoped to review it prior to the next meeting. The plan includes visitor center, public toilets, and a café. Mr. Brennan asked if the Cecil Group could use the plans Mr. Harris found. He was concerned that some plans were being made upon a wrong assumption of the minimums or maximums. He said that he would like to ask Cecil to review the email from Mr. Harris to see if any of the conditions could change under different constraints. Mr. Taintor will email Dave at the Cecil Group to ask him to respond to Mr. Harris' letter. Ms. Dorfman noted that the plans conform to regulations anyway so that documentation and court references aren't that important. Mr. Taintor just thought it may be good to know if the conclusions on regulations are any different. An invoice was received for the stakeholders meetings, interviews, and Chapter 91 info. 58.38% of the first task has been billed. Mr. Taintor agreed that they have completed this amount totaled in invoices #1 and #2. Mr. Brennan motioned to approve the invoice and Ms. Dorfman seconded. All voted in favor. Mr. Fowler would like to find the first invoice that is missing.

NRA Activity:

Coordination of a meeting with the Waterfront Trust – Mr. Norton will try to set up a meeting after he returns.

Mr. Taintor said that he made a brief presentation to the City Council on sign review. The Planning and Development Committee and Planning Board will schedule a joint meeting soon to discuss sign review regulations.

Flower pots were dumped on the NRA lot last year at the end of the season. Barbara, the gardener, dumps them on the East lot and DPW has agreed to pick them up. This will occur sometime this week or next.

Mr. Fowler suggested doing an audit of the financial records. He said that the NRA previously voted to approve an audit. He said that Ambrose has done the audit before and could be used to do it again. He said he will ask Mr. Norton to pursue it.

Mr. Taintor handed out an article about parking meters in Portsmouth that now take credit cards. It said that they will be doing a trial of the new meters.

In regards to the Division of Unemployment letter, Mr. Brennan asked if anyone had any recollection of the NRA having an employee. Apparently there was a bill for \$10 in the second quarter. No one had any recollection of ever having an employee on the NRA. Mr. Brennan will follow up.

Adjournment at 7:52pm.

Dianne Eppa
Note Taker