

## **NEWBURYPORT REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Minutes of Meeting  
September 27, 2006

### **1. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM. Present were members Janet Marcus, Erford Fowler, Nathaniel Norton, and Rick Taintor. (Timothy Brennan had given notice that he would not be able to attend.)

### **2. Minutes**

The minutes of the Authority's August 23 meeting were distributed and reviewed. The following necessary corrections were noted:

- Page 1, para. 2: change "\$170" to "\$178"; and change "Oak" to "Oak Engineering";
- Page 1, para. 6: change "Waterfront Trust" to "Mayor's Waterfront Task Force"; and record that Nat Norton and Tim Brennan planned to attend the September 13 meeting of the Mayor's Task Force (Jan Marcus and Rick Taintor would not be able to attend due to conflicts).

It was also noted that the minutes did not include the important discussion about Chapter 91 with representatives of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and Coastal Zone Management Program. Rick Taintor will add a summary of this discussion, and make the corrections noted above. The revised minutes will be brought back to the October meeting for approval.

There was a discussion about inconsistency in note-taking at meetings. Jan Marcus will contact Diana Lord to find out whether she is still interested in, and available for, taking notes at meetings. If not, Jan will contact other offices in City Hall to find a replacement. Erford Fowler noted that the going rate for taking notes at City board meetings is \$150 per meeting, and it was agreed that the NRA should offer this rate.

### **3. Treasurer's Report**

Nat Norton distributed the Treasurer's report dated March 22, 2006. The report indicated the following:

Total deposits as of September 1, 2006	\$101,088.45
Loan balance	\$88,143.52
August payments	\$1,316.38
August receipts	\$31,366.91

In accordance with the authorization given at the August meeting, a special principal payment of \$30,000 was made on September 26, in addition to the regularly scheduled payment of \$10,000. This brings the line of credit balance down to \$48,143.52.

#### **4. Sign Applications**

The signage application from the Fragrance Bar was resubmitted with previously missing information (owner's name and signature authorizing application, and store operator's name) now complete.

On a motion by Nat Norton, seconded by Erford Fowler, the application was approved unanimously.

#### **5. Enforcement Problems with Window Signs**

Jan Marcus reported that she had spoke to Gary about several stores with illegal window signs: Paws (State St – rear windows), Mary Jane (pasted shoes inside windows), paper store.

#### **6. 2006 Survey – Final Draft of Summary Report with Tabulations**

Nat Norton reported that the library will not post all the comments on its web site because the file is too large. He will talk to Mark Cavanaugh or Dianne Eppa about putting the comments in the NRA folder on the City website.

Rick Taintor volunteered to convert the raw numbers to percentages, create charts, and email the charts to members in a Word document.

Jan Marcus moved, and Erford Fowler seconded, acceptance of the summary report with the changes discussed (i.e., convert numbers to percentages, add charts). The motion was approved unanimously.

Jan will send copies of the survey report to City Council President O'Brien, Mayor Moak, the City Clerk, the *Daily News*, the *Newburyport Current*, *Globe North*, and the Library.

#### **7. Parking Lot Problems**

Erford Fowler discussed his concern about the appearance of the parking lots. He received a quote from Joe Spaulding for digging up the dirt and weeds and cleaning up around the perimeter of the lot. The quote was \$1200 for the complete perimeter of the East Lot plus three spots at the edge of the West Lot. Erford stated that competitive bidding is not required for contracts under \$10,000.

There was discussion of the need for regular maintenance of the lots during the summer. It was agreed that this can be addressed in February or March. There is also a need to improve the condition/appearance of our signage at the lots.

Erford also discussed the issue of missing handicapped parking signs. We need 2 poles and 3 signs to replace missing signs in the East Lot. Public Works Director Tony Furnari estimates that the cost of materials will be approximately \$100. He will place them and bill the Authority.

Erford Fowler moved approval of the Spaulding Landscaping proposal and the DPW cost estimate for handicapped parking signs. Nat Norton seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **7a. Rules and Regulations**

Erford Fowler reported that the City Council currently is reviewing the Rules and Regulations for the Waterfront Trust, and would like to come up with unified rules and regulations for all City parks. He would like to have the City Clerk invite the Waterfront Trust, Newburyport Redevelopment Authority, and other appropriate boards to one meeting to come up with unified policies. That will be separate from our regular meeting. Members agreed that this should be pursued.

### **8. Senior Center Proposal**

Roseann Robillard, Council on Aging Director, reviewed the work of the Senior Center Site Selection Committee, originally appointed by Mayor Mead to study needs and locations for a senior center.

- The committee has worked for 7 years and looked at a number of sites.
- Cushing Park has always been on the list and is currently the top choice. The City is carrying out a feasibility study.
- The NRA's East Lot is ranked second. Challenging issues include community opposition to any building on the waterfront, high demand for parking at peak periods (with potential for conflicts with seniors using a facility there); and the possibility that the City will enact a paid parking program covering the waterfront lots.
- The City has set aside \$125,000 for site planning. Of this, about \$4,000 was used for assessment of the Port Rehabilitation site and \$10,000 is funding the Cushing Park feasibility study.
- The Executive Office of Elder Affairs suggests that senior centers include 5 square feet of floor area per elder in the community. Newburyport will have 6,000 seniors in 7 years, so the suggested ratio would imply a 30,000 square foot center.
- State has promised \$600,000 for a senior center in Newburyport, but this was for the Armory site.
- Additional sources of funding include foundation grants, private donations, fundraising.
- Initial cost estimates for the Cushing Park site: at least \$4 million for a 14,000 square foot facility. The facility may need to be smaller in order to save money.

George Roaf argued against the Cushing Park site and in favor of a waterfront location for the Senior Center.

Jack Rollin spoke on the Senior Center issue, emphasizing that a center's services and activities are more important than a downtown location. He cited the Chelmsford Senior Center, which was built on town-owned land 6 miles from the downtown and is an

extremely active and popular center. The dining room serves 150 people per day, and there are 100 cars in the parking lot at lunchtime. He suggested that this kind of activity would be difficult to support in the downtown area because of parking congestion.

**9. RFP for Park Designer**

Janet Marcus distributed her notes on what should be in the Request for Proposals for a park designer. She asked other members to review and give her comments. She would like to hire the designer this winter.

Nat Norton asked whether the City should conduct a comprehensive parking needs survey before the NRA embarks on planning a park expansion. The number of spaces that are specified in the RFP will be arbitrary – not based on any analysis of supply and demand

**10. Signage Referrals to City Council**

Deferred to a future meeting

**11. Deed Restrictions**

Deferred to a future meeting

**7. Adjournment**

On a motion by Nat Norton, seconded by Erford Fowler, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 P.M.

Submitted by Rick Taintor