

Newburyport Redevelopment Authority
City Council Chambers
September 9, 2015
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Tom Salemi called a regular meeting of the Newburyport Redevelopment Authority to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Tom Salemi, Leslie Eckholdt, Bob Uhlig and Andy Sidford. Carol Powers was also in attendance.

3. Minutes

Bob Uhlig moved to approve the minutes of the August 12 meeting as submitted. Leslie Eckholdt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

4. Easement for Culvert Project

Andy Port described the project to install a drainage culvert in Riverside Park, for which the City is seeking an easement. A small section of the existing culvert is on NRA property. Mr. Port said until recently the City did not know a culvert existed in that location. The culvert runs under the entrance to the parking lot and its roof is collapsing, creating a public safety hazard. The City wishes the NRA to grant both a temporary construction easement and a permanent easement for the culvert. During the work vehicles would be re-routed into the parking lot but the NRA spaces would not be impacted.

The language of the draft easement was revised to require that a LSP be on site during construction to test the soil as necessary. City Engineer Jon-Eric White said a representative of GZA would be on site full time. The excavated soil would be tested and wrapped in plastic tarps and additional testing would be done if any unusual results were observed. He said the impact to NRA property would be negligible because only a small triangle of land would be involved. The AUL is on the east lot, not on the property to be impacted by the construction, but an old consent order might be in place for the west lot. The DPS intends to follow the standard DEP protocol but there might be additional requirements under the consent order. Carol Powers will review the draft easement and send it to Andy Port to be forwarded to Kopelman and Page. The City will cover the cost of her work on the document.

Andy Sidford moved to approve the temporary and permanent easement and authorize the Chair to execute the easement document subject to approval by Carol Powers, provided that the NRA receives reports on the results of the soil testing. Tom Salemi seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

5. Pop-Up Park

The park was well used during the Riverfront Music Festival on Labor Day weekend. A high school student is now being paid \$70 per week to put out and take in the furniture

daily. The operator of a food truck, Buen Sabor, has requested to use the park between 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. on September 18. Pizza will be served in the park that night between 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. as a part of Savor Newburyport.

6. Parking Lot and Lighting Improvements

Due to the work on the culvert the installing of the new light fixtures will not take place until October or November. The realignment of the parking spaces will be done in the spring. Some spaces in the parking plan crossed the boundary line between NRA and Waterfront Trust properties. The plan will be changed so that all spaces will be completely on NRA land.

7. Parking Agreement Negotiations

There have been no new developments regarding the extension of the parking agreement with the City. Tom Salemi moved to extend the current agreement through the end of calendar year with the understanding the NRA wishes to pursue an increase in rates and an extension of hours to go into effect on April 1, 2016 in order to fund current and future improvements to its property. Andy Sidford seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

8. Secretary's Report

Leslie Eckholdt distributed a draft of the annual report that is to be submitted to the Sate. The report provides a summary of FY2015 expenditures and accomplishments. The appointment dates of the members will be added.

9. Treasurer's Report

Leslie Eckholdt distributed a written report. Bills from Ethan Cohen and Rockingham Electric will be reviewed before payment is issued. Only one of the seven lights included on the National Grid bill is on NRA property. The remaining six are on Waterfront Trust land and Scott Sutherland will be contacted about the issue. A bill from ESS related to the installation of a light pole in the east lot will be forwarded to Richard Jones, who was the client for the work. Tom Salemi moved to approve the payment of the bills as submitted. Andy Sidford seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

10. Property Maintenance Report

Tom Salemi will review the existing signage in the east lot. The signs should indicate that overnight parking is not permitted and is done at one's own risk. He will also ensure the NRA is protected in terms of insurance for the restrooms. The city is working to consolidate the restroom maintenance agreements.

11. Long Range Vision

There have been no new developments with regards to the City Council's intention to form a central waterfront ad-hoc committee to work with stakeholders to explore alternatives for the waterfront.

12. New Business

Custom House Request

Thom Gould said the Custom House Maritime Museum is requesting the transfer of the remaining portion of the lawn that is not included in the lease. The museum's board believes the transfer would assist them with their fundraising efforts. The NRA members said while they support the Custom House, they would not approve of the transfer of the lawn while they are considering the long-term vision for their property. Carol Powers said they should consider a lesser type of ownership, such as a license agreement, that would allow the museum to develop its long-range plans while providing protection for the NRA.

13. Public Comment

Elizabeth Heath said the appropriate protocol should be followed for the installation of the light post on the east lot.

14. Adjournment

Bob Uhlig moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Andy Sidford seconded the motion. The motion was approved.