

Newburyport Redevelopment Authority
City Hall Conference Room
July 20, 2011
Minutes

1. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Newburyport Redevelopment Authority was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Chair James Shanley.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members James Shanley, Patty Dorfman, Adam Guild, Tim Brennan and John Morris. Also in attendance was Carol Powers.

3. Public Comment

None

4. Review of Report by Barry Abramson

Patty Dorfman commented that Barry Abramson's draft report was balanced and well written, but she questioned the recommendations for the RFP process. She said it is not clear how the next steps should be shared with the City and the community. James Shanley said while the executive summary is clear, it must be presented in a manner that does not overwhelm the audience. The report outlined four scenarios, but it might not be desirable to present all four to the community. The four scenarios could provide the basis for discussions with the City. Mr. Abramson will be asked to present his final report. Tim Brennan said he would like the report to be consistent in the use of units, such as acres and square feet. The area of the existing park should not be included in the figures used in the report. NRA members will email their comments to James Shanley to be forwarded to Mr. Abramson for his final report, which will then be given to the City. These steps should take three weeks to complete. A meeting will be scheduled for August 10.

5. Parking Receipt Report

Adam Guild said the parking receipts between May 27 and June 30 totaled \$11,600. The revenue between July 1 and 13 was approximately \$17,000. The revenue for the same period in 2009 was \$46,000. He said the current revenue is about half of what it was in one of the years in which income was the lowest. Tim Brennan said he thinks the hourly rate is too low and \$1 per hour would have been preferable. He also thinks the rate should be higher on the weekends and for special events. John Morris said a fee should be charged for parking in the evening. Adam Guild will ask Richard Jones for a customer count.

Adam Guild reported on the meeting of the parking committee. Issues that were discussed included problems, signage and business that have requested special permits. At the next meeting he will bring up the idea of extending the hours until 8:00 p.m.

6. Review of Weston and Sampson Invoice

Patty Dorfman moved to approve a payment of \$12,367.09 for work performed through May 27. John Morris seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The work must be completed by September.

7. Treasurer's Report

Patty Dorfman moved to approve a payment of \$1,845.00 to ND Landscape for spring clean up, edging, mulching, and mowing on June 6. John Morris seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Patty Dorfman moved to approve a payment for the minutes of the June 29 meeting. John Morris seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Adam Guild moved to approve a payment of \$3,950 for work performed by Barry Abramson through June 29. Patty Dorfman seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

8. Not Your Average Joe's Dumpster

Carol Powers reviewed the agreement she sent to the restaurant's property manager. She said the contract, which could be terminated at any time with or without cause, includes a statement that the agreement is for the benefit of the SDAH. The restaurant would be responsible for keeping the area around the dumpster clear of ice and snow. The restaurant management has not yet responded. Tim Brennan asked if the restaurant is profitable, saying the SDAH would not benefit if the restaurant were to leave. He said he believes that lack of take-out parking is an issue for the restaurant and this should be provided. Carol Powers said she informed the restaurant that the issue would be considered after the current parking agreement expires in 2012.

9. Correspondence

James Shanley said he would like to respond to a June 15 letter from a group of citizens concerned about the meetings with New England Development and the development of waterfront. He suggested the group be invited to attend a meeting. Patty Dorfman said the letter contains opinions that are not based on fact. She recommended sending a letter that clarifies the facts about the meetings with New England Development to the editor of the *Daily News*. John Morris said the letter is accusatory and he would not respond other than to acknowledge its receipt and convey the NRA's mission statement. Tim Brennan said the citizens feel strongly about the waterfront and these feelings should be respected. James Shanley said he would like to understand the group's underlying fears. Carol Powers said the process must be transparent. John Morris said all meetings are open to the public and the group does not need to be invited to attend. Tim Brennan said a separate meeting should be held to discuss the NRA's plans, but Patty Dorfman said the NRA does not have the time or obligation to hold separate meetings with every group that might write a letter. Adam Guild said he believes the NRA has an obligation to reach out to groups and doing so might avoid conflicts in the future. James Shanley said problems arise when public participation is sought too late in the process and early meetings might provide an opportunity to discover sticking points. Patty Dorfman said she would like to speak individually with those who have voiced concerns and she is not in favor in adding a meeting to the agenda. Carol Powers said allowing three minutes for individual speakers could be a means of controlling a meeting. It was decided that the group would be invited to the next two regular meetings and might be added to the agenda at a later date if there are remaining concerns.

10. Approval of Minutes

Patty Dorfman moved to approve the minutes of the June 29 meeting as submitted. John Morris seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

11. Other Business

Carol Powers distributed a list of generic questions that should be considered when issuing an RFP, along with the advantages and disadvantages of different types of developers.

12. Upcoming Meetings

The next meeting of the NRA is scheduled for Wednesday, August 10 at 7:00 p.m.

13. Adjournment

Patty Dorfman moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:12. John Morris seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.