

Approved
December 6, 2002

MEETING MINUTES
PORTSMOUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

November 1, 2002

Conference Room A

7:30 a.m.

Members Present: Steve Alie, John Hynes, Cliff Taylor, Dana Levenson, Scott Pafford, Tom Ferrini, Paul Harvey Sr., Everett Eaton, John Bohenko, City Manager

Members Absent: Mark Simpson, Chairman (excused), and Edward Hayes

Minutes of September 6, 2002

Commissioner Cliff Taylor moved and Commissioner Alie seconded the motion to approve the September 6, 2002 meeting minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

Second Parking Garage Feasibility Study

John Burke introduced Robert Durfee and Mike Nolan, representatives of Hoyle-Tanner Consulting to provide an update on the geotechnical analysis of the Worth Lot. According to Mr. Durfee, the findings indicate that the site has an adequate subsurface to support a parking structure and there is no need to excavate ledge.

Mr. Durfee outlined the potential configurations for the structure and reported that the study team concluded that the optimum siting for the structure is to butt it up to the law office and furniture store on the north side of the lot. This location would guarantee the 5% green space required by zoning as well as provide adequate natural lighting and a twenty-foot wide walkway on the south side. The rough dimensions for the structure would be 115 feet wide, 350 feet long and 60 feet high and allow for five levels, each with three aisles of parking. The main access and egress would be from Hanover Street. This will minimize traffic back-ups on Maplewood Avenue. Cost for the structure would vary from \$6.2-\$6.8 million depending on the final design of the structure.

As requested, the consultants reviewed three options for the structure. The first provides 100% parking with 430 spaces or 320 net spaces when factoring in the existing 110 spaces on the site. A second scheme allows for an alternate use on the top floor such as offices or residential. This option provides 310 spaces and would cost significantly more because of the need to support the infrastructure needed for uses other than parking. This extra cost would offset any revenues contemplated from leasing space on the top floor.

A third scheme is to incorporate an alternate use such as retail on the first floor facing Vaughan Mall. It requires 4,500 square feet and encroaches 50 feet into the structure. It would not necessarily have to be an enclosed structure, but could be an area for outdoor vendors such as a farmer's market. This scheme provides 355 parking spaces.

The next step for the consultant is to fine tune the costs associated with the various schemes and to outline the various constraints associated with the three alternatives.

Commissioner Levenson asked what the cost per space is and what the potential revenue would be. Cost per space is in the \$1,800 per space range and the revenue stream would depend on the alternative selected. Commissioner Taylor asked about the mass and scale of the structure relative to the abutting buildings. Mr. Durfee responded that the adjacent buildings range in height from a low of 16' (the Shaines law office) to a high of 51' (the Franklin Block). Mr. Robert Shaines expressed concern about the structure abutting directly to the south wall of his building as it has several windows facing that direction.

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Commissioner Pafford asked if it would be possible to prepare a point paper that contrasts the three schemes presented. Mr. Bohenko said that staff will prepare the paper and distribute it to the EDC.

Quarterly Report -Chamber of Commerce/City Partnership

Marge Hubbard and Jennifer Quinlan provided a summary of tourism and e-Coast activities for the period ended September 30, 2002. Ms. Hubbard distributed two travel news articles written on Portsmouth from Providence, Rhode Island and from the Dominican Republic. Ms. Quinlan provided copies of the agenda for the upcoming November 13th Tech Connect event.

Other Business/Updates

Vaughan Mall - Final construction drawings are complete and the benches, trash receptacles and tables and chairs are ready to be installed. Santorelli Construction will be completing the concrete repair work specified in the design. Santorelli is currently finishing up work on South Street and, depending on when that work gets done, some the concrete repair may be done this fall. Otherwise, the work will be done in the spring.

Report on meeting with Sheraton Owner – re: Northern Tier – Mr. Griswold, the owner of the hotel is interested in developing a proposal to expand conference space and rooms to support such space on the Deer Street parking parcel. At a recent meeting with Mr. Griswold, Mr. Bohenko requested that he prepare memorandum outlining the proposal so that Mr. Bohenko can move the proposal forward. The memorandum should be received by the end of the month for discussion at the December EDC meeting.

Schedule Tour of Lonza Facility - Ms. Carmer will try to arrange for a tour of the Lonza facility on Friday, November 22nd. She will e-mail the Commission with the details.

Update on Snowflake Festival / ProPortsmouth – Mr. Bohenko updated the Commission on the upcoming Snowflake Festival which will replace the Winter Solstice event previously administered by Pro Portsmouth. To kick off the Christmas season, there will be a Christmas Parade and tree lighting produced by the Prescott Park Arts Festival in conjunction with the Portsmouth Neighborhoods Association. In the works is a promotional brochure for the downtown including Christmas cultural events such as the Strawberry Banke Candlelight Stroll and Ballet New England's Nutcracker.

Ex-officio EDC member for newly appointed Arts Agency – A board of directors for the new arts and cultural agency has been announced. The selection committee has requested that a member from the EDC serve on the board in an ex-officio capacity along with the City Manager. Ms. Carmer will distribute a list of the new board of directors to the EDC and requested that anyone interested in serving on the board in an ex-officio capacity contact her.

Public Comment Session

No members of the public present wished to comment.

Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy M. Carmer
Community Development Program Manager