

Approved May 6,  
2005

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**PORTSMOUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

April 11, 2005

Conference Room A

7:30 a.m.

Members Present: Dana Levenson, Chairman; Cliff Taylor, William Gladhill, Everett Eaton, John Hynes, Paul Harvey Sr., Scott Pafford, Mark Simpson, Edward Hayes, Robin McIntosh, John P. Bohenko; City Manager

Staff present: Nancy Carner, Economic Development Program Manager

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**Minutes**

Commissioner Hynes moved and Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 11, 2005. The motion passed unanimously.

**Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) scheduled in the Central Business District in summer 2005**

Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director distributed a summary of public projects that have been approved and funded for implementation and construction during the 2005 construction season (see attached summary sheet of projects). Mr. Parkinson explained that the projects outlined were only a partial list of activities funded in the 2005 CIP, but included economic development activities citywide. Mr. Bohenko commented that it is a challenging task to schedule work in the central business district without disrupting business and tourism in the community. However, the city makes a concerted effort to minimize the disruption. He said that the city now has State Historic Preservation Officers and archeologists review most projects in the central business district, noting that although this may prolong a project, it is important to preserve our history.

**Summary of Future (2006-2011) Capital Improvement Projects proposed in the Business Districts**

Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director and David Holden, Planning Director distributed a summary of public economic development-related projects that are included in the CIP currently being reviewed by the City Council for approval (see attached summary sheet of projects).

When asked about the Riverwalk project, the City Manager responded that it is progressing and staff is currently working on securing letters of intent from abutting property owners. He also clarified that the walkway will begin at Ceres Street and end at the steps at Harpoon Willy's. It was agreed that Deputy City Manager will be invited to a future EDC meeting to provide an update on the Riverwalk.

The EDC also expressed a desire to see consistency and standardization in the local wayfinding system. Mr. Bohenko concurred. Mr. Parkinson said that the city is currently inventorying all signs under the federal requirement for retro-reflectivity. Commissioner Hynes said that he would like to see some of the signs consolidated at the Chamber information kiosk in Market Square.

Commissioner McIntosh asked if Phase II of the old Public Works development off Islington Street will include workforce housing. Mr. Holden said that currently it is all market rate housing.

Chairman Levenson asked about the Bartlett Street intersection as it relates to Route 1. Mr. Holden responded that the plan is to make the connection to Route 1 much more seamless than it is today.

Mr. Levenson thanked Mr. Holden and Mr. Parkinson for their presentation.

### **A Look at the Portsmouth Residential Condominium Market**

Steven H. Berg of Sargent Consulting Ltd., provided an overview of the city's residential condominium market. He provided information on the demand for housing and noted that by the year 2010 there will likely be a need for 540 additional housing units or 90 units per year between now and then. He said that from 2000-2003, there was an average of 44 housing units built per year, meaning that if that trend persists, demand will likely continue to exceed supply. This demand has consequently fueled price increases at 4 times the rate of inflation for the period 2000-2004 or an average of 17.5% in the condominium market and 15.1% in the housing market. However, the demand for condominiums priced below \$300,000 is brisk. Mr. Berg's conclusion is that the condominium market is currently not overbuilt in the city. However, he cautioned that developers should take note of the price range that is most attractive to potential condo buyers so as not to saturate the market with units priced too high.

A brief discussion ensued regarding local subsidized housing rates and capital reserves for condos to assure that the developments are properly maintained. When asked if there is a way to ensure adequate capital reserves for condo development upkeep, Mr. Berg said that banks' due diligence and interest in having their mortgage collateral kept in good condition is the best "de facto regulator."

### **Old Business**

#### *Sheraton Hotel & conference Center Expansion*

City Manager Bohenko informed the EDC that the project started its work sessions with the Historic District Commission (HDC) on March 30th when preliminary design concepts were presented. Site feasibility work is still on track for completion in mid-to late April.

Ms. Carmer distributed copies of two design concepts presented to the HDC on March 30<sup>th</sup>. The project includes 200 hotel rooms, a restaurant, pool and health amenities. It also includes 6,000 square feet of retail space in Deer Street section of the 668-space parking garage, an 11,800 square foot exhibit hall, and other breakout conference rooms. The project also proposes road intersection reconfigurations and an elevated walkway connecting the existing Sheraton with the new Westin Hotel complex. It is anticipated that the HDC work sessions will continue for several months as the applicant responds to the Commission's desires.

#### *Seacoast Shipyard Association (SSA) Update*

Chairman Levenson reported that he sent a letter on behalf of the EDC to the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of Defense urging them to keep the yard off the closure list as part of the SSA letter-writing campaign.

### **Public Comment**

There were no members of the public wishing to comment.

### **Next Meeting**

Next EDC Meeting is May 6, 2005.

With no further business, Commissioner Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 AM. Seconded by Commissioner Pafford. Vote to adjourn is unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy M. Carmer

Community Development Program Manager

**Economic Development Capital Improvement Projects-2006-2008**

Phase I Preliminary Design-The Demolition and Redevelopment of the McIntyre Federal Office Building Site	46
Piscataqua Riverwalk Project	60
Public Transportation-Trolley Service-Lafayette Road-Downtown Portsmouth-Pease International Tradeport	83
Public Transportation-Spaulding Turnpike Commuter Express Bus Services	86
Public Transportation-Trolley Service to Rye/Hampton	87
Public Transportation-Transit Infrastructure Improvements-Citywide	89
Public Transportation-Greater Portsmouth Transportation Management Association (GPTMA)	90
Parking-Parking Facility Studies-Worth Municipal Parking Lot	91
Parking-Parking Facility Studies-Sheraton Conference Center	92
Parking-Fee Public Parking/Shared Lot Agreements	93
Bike/PED-Market Square Area Granite Crosswalk Replacements	95
Bike/PED-Market Street Extension Bike/Ped. Improvements	96
Bike/PED-Market Street Sidewalk Expansion & Pedestrian Improvements	103
Bike/PED-Lafayette Road Overpass Pedestrian Improvements	105
Intersection/Signals-I95/Exit 7 Interchange Widening	111
Intersection/Signals-Islington/Bartlett/Jewell Ct. Realignment	113
Bridge-Scott Ave. Bridge Replacement	118
Memorial Bridge Rehabilitation	119
Ceres Street Improvements	124
Roadway-Congress Street Area Improvements	125
Roadway-Gosling Road Improvements	130
Roadway-Downtown Wayfinding Sign System	139

**Capital Improvement Projects in Central Business District-2005**

High Hanover Parking Facility-Capital Improvements	45
Public Transportation-Trolley Service-Lafayette Road-Downtown Portsmouth-Pease International Tradeport	69
Public Transportation-Transit Transfer/Multi-Modal/Streetscape Improvements-High Hanover Parking Facility	75
Parking-HHPF Traffic Flow Improvements	79
Bike/PED-New Castle Avenue New Sidewalk Construction	89
Intersection/Signals-Maplewood Avenue RR Crossing	97
NH DOT Bridge-35-NH 33/B&M RR Bridge Replacement	102
NH DOT-51-Roadway-Middle Street-State Street to Congress Street Reconstruction	118
Roadway-Citywide Tree Replacement Program	121
Maplewood Avenue Waterline Replacement	144

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Deer Street Pump Station

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