

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Portsmouth Housing Authority Re: Re-Use of Lafayette School

October 1, 2007 – 6:00 p.m.

Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

City Council Present: Mayor Marchand, Assistant Mayor Ferrini, Councilors Grasso, Dwyer, Reynolds, Whitehouse, Smith and Hynes

City Council Absent: Councilor Pantelakos

Staff Present: John P. Bohenko, City Manager; Robert P. Sullivan, City Attorney; Cindy Hayden, Deputy City Manager; David Moore, Assistant Community Development Director; and Kelli L. Barnaby, City Clerk

Officials Present: Joe Couture, Executive Director of Portsmouth Housing Authority; Ruth Griffin, John Leith, Tom Heany, Anita Freedman, Housing Authority; Judy Bunnell, Ted Connors, Ed Hayes and Bill Shanahan

At 6:05 p.m., Mayor Marchand called the work session to order. Mayor Marchand said we are here this evening to discuss the possible re-use of the Lafayette School.

City Manager Bohenko said we have been discussing the possibilities related to the re-use of Lafayette School since July. He informed the City Council that staff members have worked with Director Couture and a possible plan will be reviewed this evening. City Manager Bohenko spoke to the option of entering into a lease with the Housing Authority for the re-use of Lafayette School.

Director Couture reported that they have completed the federal loan banking application for the possibly re-use of Lafayette School.

Mr. Shanahan reported that the application has been submitted and he will discuss design plans. He said the plan is to construct at least ten one-bedroom units of elderly housing for tenants that earn 60% or less than the area median income who are over fifty-five years of age. He informed the City Council that the estimated total cost of the project will be \$2,273,141.00 to develop the ten units of housing, the addition of an elevator, public meeting spaces in the basement area, storage area for residents in the basement area, at least ten exterior parking spaces for residents, one handicapped parking space, one maintenance vehicle parking space and appropriate landscaping. There is no plan to encroach on the existing recreational/park area adjacent to this property. Mr. Shanahan said they would like to hold a lease on the building for ninety-nine years. He reported that construction should take approximately ten to twelve months with an anticipated opening in the summer of 2009.

City Manager Bohenko reported that this would have a limited impact on the park area.

Councilor Dwyer asked if there was a way to ensure that City residents would have an opportunity to rent these apartments. Director Couture explained the process for renting these apartments under the law. He spoke to the fair housing issues and said that there are 470 people on the waiting list and 80% have a Portsmouth preference. Mr. Heaney said the moment people move to the City they will be considered a resident and eligible to be considered for renting an apartment.

City Manager Bohenko said that the City will work with the Portsmouth Housing Authority on the planning and design. In addition, we will work with the Recreation Department on their plans. He informed the City Council that we will identify capital funds for our recreational fields.

Councilor Smith recommended during the planning process that meetings be held with the neighborhood on this project.

City Manager Bohenko said we entered into the option agreement and from the discussion this evening there is a consensus to move forward with the Housing Authority and we will build in funding in the CDBG funds. He further stated that there will be no local tax dollars spent with this project.

At 6:30 p.m., Mayor Marchand closed the work session.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kelli L. Barnaby, CMC/CNHMC
City Clerk