



**MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE
ON BUILDING Re-USE MEETING
Wednesday, April 20, 2007 at 7:30 a.m.
City Hall, City Manager's Conference Room**

The Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Building Re-Use met on Wednesday, April 20, 2007 at 7:40 a.m. at City Hall in the City Manager's Conference Room.

Present were John Bohenko, City Manager, Economic Develop. Program Manager Nancy Carmer, City Council Representatives Christine Dwyer, Laura Pantelakos and Ken Smith. State Representative Martha Fuller Clark. Public Representative Heather Hurtt, Chair, Tom Heany and Richard Cyr. Also present was Suzanne Woodland, Assistant City Attorney. Beth Shepard-Rabadam by telephone.

The Chair stated this is the final meeting and recommendations will be made to the City Council on May 7, 2007.

RFP Point System - Tom Heany reviewed the point system. Beth Shepard-Rabadam provided Tom with information which Tom had not had a chance to update. Tom prepared a spreadsheet which was provided to the Committee. There were 4 categories that were broken down. Tom will continue at the end of the meeting.

South Meeting House Discussion and Vote – The Chair asked that the letter be read that was presented at the April 10th listening Session from the Friends of the South End (FOSE). It was quite evident from the listening session that the residents are interested in the property and are ready to partner with the City. They wanted to have at least part of the property used for public or community oriented purpose and were willing to partake both to help manage as well as raising funds in the future to support this but not necessarily raising all the funds.

The City Manager stated there is a lot of community interest. The City Manager for discussion only, would like to explore perhaps looking at the idea of some kind of special assessment for example, stewardship of the building. Set up a special assessment district for an assessment of a small amount per year, all the money going into the assessment district be used for improvements and maintenance and will look into the statutes to see if this is possible.

The Chair was impressed with the fact they weren't asking the City for all the money and turn it into a non-profit use, talked about doing some sort of for profit. Having a tenant on the lower level and opening second level with a variety of uses from renting that space for private parties, having exhibits, lecture series, etc.

What the City Manager heard from FOSE was the big issues and challenges are parking, stewardship of the exterior of the building and what would the building be used for?

The maintenance of the building will take approximately \$50,000/year, which also depends on its use.

Laura Pantelakos referred to the African American's not going in there because of the maintenance cost.

Councilor Smith was concerned with the fairness of not giving anyone else an opportunity. Councilor Dwyer stated that when a city owns a building in a residential neighborhood, and the neighborhood association is interested in the maintenance for purposes of the neighborhood and will assume responsibility, would be a first priority and may be a way to address Councilor Smith's concern.

The City Manager stated this would need to be more legally formalized.

Councilor Dwyer stated having a central gathering place in a neighborhood is an important thing and would be a priority. Also the historical uses and historical significance should be given a priority in terms of function.

Councilor Pantelakos stated that there was interest from the African American Culture Center and pulled back because of the cost and feels they need as much of a chance as FOSE.

Senator Clark stated they may be interested that somebody else is coming with them and would need to demonstrate the financial wherewithal.

The City Manager stated he felt they were comfortable where they are and we will continue to work with them.

Senator Clark stated she has a sense that FOSE very well might be able to raise the money for the capital improvements and to make sure that the assessment is really for the long term stewardship of the building.

The City Manager referred to Councilor Smith's concern of fairness and the need to make sure that whatever is done from the capital improvement specifically benefits the neighborhood.

Senator Clark stated the assessment is to guarantee the stewardship of the building.

Councilor Pantelakos wants to make sure they are fair with other people that have shown an interest in this building.

Richard Cyr pointed out nowhere did they say they would assume that responsibility, they are talking about assisting the City in a partnership.

Senator Clark suggested adopting Councilor Dwyer's language feeling it is an excellent priority which moves us beyond looking at a specific project in looking at some of the principles we are trying to put in place.

MOTION made by Senator Clark to adopt Councilor Dwyer's language: 1. When a City owns a building in a residential neighborhood and the neighborhood wants to use the building and can demonstrate their ability to assume stewardship they should be given first opportunity and 2. the historical uses and historical significance should be given a priority in terms of function and plan. Seconded by Councilor Smith. Motion passed.

The key to defining stewardship is if there is an ability to create an assessment district?

Senator Clark stated the Land & Community Heritage Program at the state level (LCHP) has devised a very clear requirement, definition and expectations around stewardship. The key component is if the State is to lend money on projects there has to be a long term commitment for stewardship.

Councilor Dwyer suggested this language could apply to our rentals as well.

The Chair asked for a motion in terms of final recommendations to the City Council on the South Meeting House.

The City Manager suggested spending some time with the neighborhood as there is so much interest and so many issues surrounding it.

Senator Clark stated given this building is not going to be vacant for another year and there's a strong demonstration of interest from the people living in the neighborhood that the short term is further investigation with the neighborhood to make this a potentially viable project.

Richard Cyr suggested not making a suggestion on this particular property as there is neighborhood interest and a delay in time

Councilor Pantelakos stated whatever we do especially with this building is not to put the burden on the taxpayers.

The Chair stated that one of the guiding principles that has come out of this committee is ground leasing, another guiding principle is community investment and partnering with neighborhoods and with this particular building suggested further investigation and talk with FOSE.

MOTION made by Councilor Smith that we do not make a recommendation to move forward but to continue the investigation and to move with potential partners with a time frame of January 1, 2008. Seconded by Councilor Dwyer. Motion passed.

The Chair reviewed the recommendations with the Committee for the final report.

1. Recommended that the Library be ground leased and is currently in the RFP process. The Chair asked the committee if we do not receive any RFP's that we recommend the City talk with various developers. The City Manager stated the next step would be to suggest to Council to identify three developers and have them come in competitively to make a proposal of how they would develop this and the cost, have panel review it and make recommendation to City Council.

2. Ground leasing was recommended for the Lafayette School and to do an RFP and the City will determine when this would be sent out.

3. Plains School and Creek AC recommend 1. that the beginning of the next lease there be a year extension for both tenants with special provisions that they demonstrate a public benefit, that the buildings be assessed and the rents would equal what the tax would be and if they could not then an RFP would be put in place to find tenants and some of the other existing terms would continue such as capital issues, maintenance and that type of thing.

Nancy Carmer asked was it give them one more year or finish this year? Both Councilors Dwyer and Smith responded give them one more year giving them to the spring of 2009. In regard to the Creek AC any revenues would go to stewardship of the park. A fund would be set up, have the neighborhood raise money and rent from the Creek would go into the park.

4. Ground leasing for Rock St. Garage.

Beth Shepard Rabadam informed the committee there has not been a report back for Plan New Hampshire.

These recommendations will go into the report and the documents going to City Council will be the Guidelines with User Guide, Building Stewardship Policy, Public uses list and the worksheet for RFP's.

Richard Cyr informed the Committee that there are students at UNH specializing in putting these types of things together and will provide a contact person.

Tom Heany walked through the draft/template of the RFP Submission Evaluation Matrix sheet which he prepared. This template is comprised of four basic categories, Financial Value,

Stewardship Ability, Public Purpose and Neighborhood Impact and Tom went through an exercise explaining how it would weigh an RFP.

NEXT STEPS - The Chair suggested working with the City Manager on refining Tom's draft/template of the point system.

The City Manager stated he will incorporate this in any type of review and probably try to utilize somebody from the University to help with some of the weighting factors and language. The City Manager suggested creating four of these forms, one for each of the four categories that weigh financial value, stewardship, neighborhood impact and ask the City Council which form do they want for a building. The Committee felt this was a good idea. The City Council will make their decision based on what they feel is in the best interest of the community and their constituents.

Approval of Minutes - MOTION made by Councilor Ken Smith to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Councilor Laura Pantelakos. Motion passed.

The Chair will prepare for the presentation on May 7th, writing a final report and e-mail to the members for any comments. Will create an executive summary and will create binders or place everything on a CD for City Council.

MOTION made by Councilor Ken Smith that the Chair have the authority to approve the minutes of this final meeting. Seconded by Laura Pantelakos. Motion passed.

Richard Cyr stated that he voted and seconded the Motion on the Creek Athletic Club and Plains School, that there was no part of the vote that said they got an extra year in the lease. After review, the minutes will be amended. Did we say we would give them an extra year. There was discussion of giving them credit for their past stewardship. What he voted on was they got status quo for the rest of their lease, but before that starts again they need to meet the requirement of raising the tax dollars.

Senator Clark stated that one year extension has already been granted, goes to 2008, what happens after that is contingent upon their meeting other criteria.

The Chair thanked the Committee stating her appreciation for all their time and work and thanked John, Nancy and Elaine.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Hurtt, Chair

Richard Cyr seconded and voted, but there was no part of the vote that said they get an extra year in the lease at the Plains School of Creek. Doesn't remember it being something we voted on.

Need to Amend minutes

Under Creek Athletic Club and Plains School -

We did say we were going to give them an extra year?

THEany Discussion given them credit for past stewardship

What Richard voted on was they get the status quo for the rest of their lease, but before that starts again they have to meet the requirement of raising the tax \$s

SMFC That one year extension has already been granted, goes to 2008, what happens after that is contingent upon meeting these other criteria. Money going to improvement of the park.

2. **Creek Athletic Club Discussion and Vote** – City Manager stated the organization has been there for 50 years, it does have some historical significance to the community. Suggested having a conversation with the group about concerns and their taking more stewardship of the park and having the pumper available. Public purpose was discussed to help the neighborhood and enhance the park. A single family residence was discussed with approximately \$3500-4000 in taxes. If it were rented at \$5,000 we would be getting tax monies out of it. Another suggestion was the Fire Department taking it over as a museum.

Councilor Smith stated if we could get the rent for the amount of taxes, the City would be gaining as well as being able to keep control of the building and one of the services for them is maintain the pumper and their stewardship of the park as well would give them a public purpose.

The City Manager suggested the Assessor value the property and determine the assessed value.

MOTION made by Councilor Smith to have the City Assessor determine the assessed value of building and land (excluding the park), work into a lease that would equal taxes and ask for stewardship of the Park and continuation of pumper and recommend money collected go towards improvement to the Park and develop a public purpose. Seconded by Councilor Dwyer. Motion passed.

3. **Plains School Discussion and Vote** – After discussion Councilor Smith made this Motion.

MOTION made by Councilor Smith to have the City Assessor determine the assessed value of the building and land, work into a lease that equals taxes, and ask for stewardship. Seconded by Richard Cyr. Motion passed.