



Meeting Minutes

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Community & Economic Revitalization Committee (CERC)

Information: 360.753.8244

Monday, March 30, 2015

5:30 PM

Room 207

Special Meeting of the Council to Conduct Business of the CERC

1. ROLL CALL

Present: 3 - Chair Nathaniel Jones, Councilmember Jim Cooper and Councilmember Julie Hankins

OTHERS PRESENT

Councilmembers Steve Langer and Cheryl Selby, CP&D Director Keith Stahley and Consultants Lorelei Juntunen and Jay Reich

2. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Jones called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 3.A [15-0295](#) Approval of March 5, 2015 Community and Economic Revitalization Committee Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved.

- 3.B [15-0332](#) Approval of March 23, 2015 Community and Economic Revitalization Committee Minutes

The minutes were approved.

4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 4.A [15-0319](#) Continue Review and Consideration of Revised Draft of the Community Renewal Area Request for Proposal Document and Process

Mr. Stahley presented an update of the Community Renewal Area (CRA) Request for Proposal (RFP) document and process. Previously the Committee narrowed the number of sites down to six. The sites were then further narrowed and consolidated to four and then three. Considerations during consultant assessment included focus on key parameters, building-to-land value, ease-of-development, unique site and locational qualities, ownership, and constraints of various sites.

The consultants presented their assessments. To aid in assessment, numbers were applied to sites via criteria to assess potential. Then, the properties were viewed in person to get a sense of location and features.

Site One is the area around the Isthmus. Advantages of the Isthmus area include a large site, lots of City ownership, relatively little development, and it presents a high-value setting with both water and park access with potential for open-space amenities. However, there is no cohesive vision on how it should be developed, there are traffic issues, and it's a large undertaking.

Site Two is the area around the "Griswold block" and the Smart Lot. The Griswold/Smart area is near the bus lines and is already mixed-use, but is less likely to promote higher value housing being developed, doesn't have the flair of being on the water, and may not have the desired catalytic effect.

Site Three is the area around Percival Landing and Water Street. The Percival area needs a lot of repair, but would likely find strong community support. There are opportunities to reconfigure with property owners and create a contiguous network of the area. It offers park land, views, significant City ownership, events, park-oriented development potential, and serves as a connector between parks. A suggestion was made to consider expanding Site Three to include the historic City Hall and the currently owned parking lots nearby, which would also include the historic town square of 4th Avenue and Capitol Way.

Each site will pose different levels of attractiveness to owners and developers of different types, and amenity value will be key in maximizing interest. It is also not the whole area that is expected to be developed, but that is still a potential. This will depend on the developer and the vision associated with the site. The plan could be developed in stages. When a site is decided, a master plan could be created for the space that could include all of the lots within an area. The qualities that would need to be in play to be interesting to a developer, but not too big, will depend on what the City can put forward and what mixed uses can be offered. Concerns were expressed about figuring out community vision before allowing a developer to set the vision. A master plan could also be useful for developers, as they can know exactly what parameters and costs they are getting into. A developer doing all lots in a site would likely plan and then come to an agreement with the City, but it is likely the development would be implemented over time instead of all in one go. Grounding in reality and having partners at the table will allow a realistic plan, input from the public, and greater likelihood of support and investment. Requiring developers to engage with the public can help them come to the table and have as wide a vision as possible.

Additional considerations include willingness of property owners to work with the City, and sea level rise is an issue that should be considered, especially at the waterfront site. Property owners that were spoken to were very responsive to the potential for working with developers. There is the potential for trading properties or selling them to get the optimal outcome for the site as a whole. Support from the City for relevant

issues would need developer plans associated to discuss options. The idea is to be the last dollar in, helping on the edges, not funding the majority of the project. Some support can be towards something the City was planning to do anyway, like widening a sidewalk, that can make a difference to a developer and help them commit. Honesty about restraints and reducing uncertainty to increase developer comfort are important. The residential component needs to include market rate housing to balance the market spread, but diversity is also desired. It is also possible some of the Isthmus area may be needed to open an estuary later on, but is currently regarded as sufficient.

The current prioritization is the waterfront area first, the Isthmus area second, and the Griswold area third. It should be noted that the decision of which area to focus on does not exclude any other areas from being utilized, but denotes which one will complete the CRA process first. Development will not proceed without a master plan, where questions can be answered and values assessed. The CRA is a way in which the downtown plan can be energized and the urban landscape can be changed in ways the public wants.

No formal decisions were made tonight. Site prioritization will be discussed at the City Council meeting on April 14, 2015 before a recommendation is developed.

The discussion was completed.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.