



City of Olympia

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Meeting Minutes - Draft Community & Economic Revitalization Committee

Thursday, March 6, 2014

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Joint Meeting with Citizens Advisory Committee

1. ROLL CALL

Present: 3 - Committee Member Stephen H. Buxbaum, Committee Member Nathaniel Jones and Committee Member Julie Hankins

2. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

4.A 14-0228 Community and Economic Revitalization Committee/Citizens Advisory Committee Joint Meeting

Mayor Buxbaum opened the meeting by sharing that tonight we will hear from property owners, from each other, and the consultants will share in detail how the process will work in the design workshop and next steps. He asked everyone to trust the process as a lot of information would be discussed tonight.

He acknowledged the gap of time that has passed since the last CAC meeting. He reminded the CAC of their concerns regarding focusing on the isthmus property, a need for a downtown master plan, the properties with blight, and other opportunities. The City Council wishes to pursue development differently than in the past. There is interest in the community to consider the isthmus property and City Council has asked this group of creative opinion leaders to start the conversation. He asked the CAC to join together as co-creators to set ground rules for a CRA process and help identify opportunities for improvement.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones added that the CAC is here tonight because City Council needs their help and asked them to participate in this creative process to improve the community and economic environment. Councilmember Hankins agreed and believes we will learn how to do things differently through this process.

Mayor Buxbaum then turned the meeting over to ECONorthwest Senior Planner Lorelei Juntunen to provide context of the larger picture and how the design workshop fits in the plan. Ms. Juntunen reported an overview and notified the CAC that they

met with isthmus property owners in February regarding their vision for the future. The Community & Economic Revitalization Committee (CERC) agreed to move to the next steps which resulted in the meeting tonight. During the meeting tonight, the CAC will develop guiding principles for the design workshop on April 5. At the workshop the CAC will discuss design ideas for the properties. There is no commitment to the ideas involved but a way to creatively develop scenarios for alternative futures. We will then present the scenarios to a broader representation of the community at an open house in July.

Ms. Juntunen invited property owners to share what they may see on the property in the future. The City is one of the property owners so Mayor Buxbaum was asked to represent the City property. Mayor Buxbaum stated the City property is owned by the citizens and we are striving to find the common good for the best use of this property. Currently there is an obligation with the County and Parks Department for a park. We are also looking for ways to leverage the property which would include a return on investment in public benefit, with a revenue base, event space, interactive space and amenities.

Kevin Stormans said he hopes to see the business on his property remain a viable business. He would like a combination of park and buildings on the isthmus to create an energetic space that will draw people to live and recreate there.

Tom Skillings, representing the Olympia Yacht Club (OYC), reviewed community events they currently host and what they envision in the next 20 years. The OYC consists of facilities and a clubhouse, a caretaker house, and mooring. They host boating events, boating courses, and fundraising events with the intent to give back to the community. They have been doing this for 110 years and they want to expand on community interaction in the future.

Ray Laforge discuss the building where the business Traditions is located. He has owned the building for 31 years and believes the building should be replaced. It is sitting on a floating base on tidal flats and is no longer energy efficient. He envisions the new structure facing Heritage Park with parking available. Mr. Laforge stated that changes would require communication with the property owner and the tenants in the building. The property owner must be protected and economic viability of the tenants must not be harmed.

Neil Falkenburg, property manager of the Capitol Center building stated they have owned the building for 20 years. The owners planned to put a hotel on the site but the City has changed the zoning. Mr. Falkenburg stated he is happy the City is looking at what the highest return on the isthmus properties may be. They have a current building permit and would like to move forward and believes a hotel would benefit everyone.

Victor Zvirzdys has owned the ImageSource building for 20 years. He would like to see a space that is available for public activity to bring traffic to the area and generate

revenue and business for private industry.

Ms. Juntunen turned the meeting to Fregonese Associates Principal Scott Fregonese. He began his presentation by discussing why we are scenario planning. Traditionally, a planner creates a plan, the plan is brought to the public, and the plan is voted down. With this methodology, based on input tonight and the workshop in April, we will build 3 or 4 possible scenarios and test them with the guiding principles and evaluation criteria.

Mr. Fregonese introduced a Stability and Change exercise. The properties on the isthmus are to be categorized as stable, for redevelopment, or adaptive reuse on the provided map. The table groups will then report back to the larger group. The groups worked on the table activity and a representative reported back.

The CAC took a 10 minute break and during this time ranked the initial guiding principles by using dots. Mr. Fregonese then reviewed the outcome of the voting. The CAC requested adding a principle for creating a vibrant waterfront.

Mr. Fregonese presented the agenda and tools we will use during the design workshop. After the workshop, maps will be digitized where the group has reached consensus and scenarios will be built. We will also discuss legal constraints, parameters for the park, and what is out of our control.

Mayor Buxbaum closed the meeting saying City Council wants to hear from the community and this is all about relationships. We want the community to respectfully and professionally listen to ideas.

The discussion was completed.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.