



CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

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Scott Morelli
City Manager

MINUTES

O'Neil Street Facility Re-Use Planning Committee

Thursday, October 26, 2017

6:15 PM

City Hall - Council Chambers

Committee Members

Patti Smith (Chair, Council Rep)	Barbara Dee (Conservation Commission)
Linda Boudreau (Planning Board)	Linden Thigpen (Resident)
Steve Marston (Resident)	Harold Spetla (Resident)
Joshua Reny (Asst. City Manager)	

Consultants

Laura Moorehead (Facilitator)	Owens McCullough (Consultant)
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Absent

Sara Zografos (Resident)	Craig Piper (Comprehensive Planning)
Tex Haeuser (Planning Director)	

1. Meeting was called to order by P. Smith (Chair) at 6:16 pm.
2. Following a motion by S. Marston and second by B. Dee, the minutes of the September 28 meeting were adopted by unanimous vote of the committee.
3. L. Moorehead greeted the Committee and asked O. McCullough and J. Reny to recap the most recent conversation with prospective developers. Staff have met with a total of 5 developers, each with different types of experience and strengths. This process has been very helpful to understand an RFP process that will work for the City and developers who will be asked to submit proposals. Generally, it will be helpful for the RFP to frame the process and goals of the City, what parameters exist, etc. The RFP should not be overly prescriptive as that could impact how creative the proposals could be. Several developers expressed interest in submitting more than one design concept. The selection process should weigh several factors, primarily experience, and

especially working with Cities on redevelopment projects. The selection process may also weight the public engagement plan, whether the proposal generally keeps with the Committee's vision, etc. There is a lot of interest in this property and all developers agreed it is a feasible project when considering financing, demolition and cleanup, etc.

4. L. Moorehead invited the Committee to review the draft timeline that was circulated prior to the meeting. J. Reny walked the group through each of the next steps and timeline. The Committee believes it would be too soon to present to Council on Nov. 6th as proposed and asked that that presentation be pushed back to late November or December, and the dates of subsequent steps updated appropriately to reflect that change. The Committee would also like to have appropriate representation during the RFP and selection process. It was discussed whether the Committee as a whole could act as the selection team, or if a subset of the group with City Staff and consultants would be a more streamlined process. Josh reminded the group that the committee's current charge from City Council is to make recommendations on a redevelopment plan, not to manage the selection process so if that is desired it would require making that request to City Council, to empower the committee to act in that capacity. It was agreed the RFP and selection process and timeline would be reworked and discussed at the next Committee meeting.
5. The Committee next discussed the list of recommendations it developed at the last meeting, and some related questions posed by staff in response. The committee was asked to elaborate on some of its recommendations and clarify others where questions still remain. **A complete list of comments are included in the handout attached to these minutes.**
6. Public Comments
7. The chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Committee Recommendations & Questions

Questions are underlined

10/26 COMMENTS IN ALL CAPS

General:

- The area has a sense of security, community and peace.
 - Does this mean the Committee wants to explicitly state in RFP that redevelopment should be limited to residential uses?

10/26 COMMENTS: HOME OCCUPATIONS SHOULD BE ALLOWED AS THEY ARE UNDER CURRENT ZONING. HOWEVER, THE RFP SHOULD NOT CONSTRAIN POSSIBLE REUSE OPTIONS FOR THE PARKS BUILDING ON-SITE. IT MAY END UP AS RESIDENTIAL, BUT LET US BE OPEN TO OTHER IDEAS.

Housing

- The housing works for South Portland and the neighborhood
 - What does this mean? How is this measured?

10/26 COMMENTS: DESIGN STANDARDS SHOULD BE PART OF NEW ZONING; THE RFP SHOULD ASK FOR RESPONSES RELATED TO UNIVERSAL DESIGN; RFP SHOULD STATE EXPLICITLY THAT CONCEPTUAL DESIGNS WILL BE JUDGED BASED ON WHETHER THEY FIT WITH THE NEIGHBORHOOD; THIS DOES NOT MEAN THE DESIGN MUST LOOK LIKE EVERY OTHER STREET, BUT IT NEEDS TO TAKE THE NEIGHBORHOOD INTO ACCOUNT; THIS REDEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE AN AWKWARD ISLAND UNTO ITSELF; ARCHITECTURE IS DIVERSE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD SO NOT LOOKING FOR COOKIE CUTTER.

- It is affordable
 - Affordable to whom? Only to buyers with median income? Would some rental units be desired? If yes, should they only be market rate, or would some units targeted to low-to-moderate income households be desired? The Committee need not include this explicitly in the RFP, but it is important for those creating proposals to understand what is open for consideration.

10/26 COMMENTS: PROPOSALS SHOULD RESPOND TO THE ISSUE OF HOUSING AFFORDABILITY; NO REQUIREMENTS, BUT MUST TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT; RFP MIGHT STATE THAT HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES AFFORDABLE TO PEOPLE OF MEDIAN INCOME WILL BE WELCOMED.

- It includes contemporary design, but fits in the neighborhood. It is appropriately scaled.

- Does this mean the Committee would recommend that specific Design Standards are added to any contract zone eventually created?

10/26 COMMENTS: IN THE BULLET ABOVE, STRIKE THE WORD "CONTEMPORARY"; THE RFP SHOULD ASK FOR RESPONSE REGARDING HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR VARIOUS DEMOGRAPHICS, I.E. ELDERLY, FAMILY, YOUNG PROFESSIONAL, ETC; RFP MIGHT STATE THAT HOUSING THAT ENCOURAGES A MULTI-GENERATIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD IS WELCOMED.

- The development flows into the existing neighborhood; its boundaries are "soft." It is a friendly design, not so inwardly focused that it feels separate.
 - Does this mean that development should generally be less intensive ("softer") in areas closest to current homes? Developer should give due consideration to "buffering"?

10/26 COMMENTS: THE RFP SHOULD ASK FOR RESPONSE REGARDING DEVELOPER'S PLAN TO CREATE BUFFERING AND/OR LIMIT IMPACT TO CURRENT NEIGHBORHOOD.

- Houses are interspersed with landscaping and open space.
 - Does this generally mean a variety of housing and publicly accessible open spaces throughout the property?

10/26 COMMENTS: STRIKE ABOVE RECOMMENDATION ALTOGETHER; RFP SHOULD ASK FOR DEVELOPER'S APPROACH TO OPEN/GREEN SPACE; SHOULD BE DESIGNED FOR FUNCTIONALITY AND USE BY NEIGHBORS; EXPLICITLY STATE THAT DESIGN CONCEPTS THAT INCLUDE A PLAYGROUND AND/OR PARK AND/OR COMMUNITY GARDEN WILL BE SCORED HIGHER BY THE TEAM; PROPOSALS SHOULD CONSIDER PUBLIC ASSETS.

- Would the Committee want to see Senior Housing as one component of the overall redevelopment?

10/26 COMMENTS: YES, A MULTI-GENERATIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD WOULD BE WELCOMED.

- What else might we generally describe as housing we would like to see, or housing we would not like to see?

10/26 COMMENTS: RFP SHOULD STATE A PREFERENCE FOR LOW MAINTENANCE AND “GREEN” LANDSCAPING PLAN; BUILDING HEIGHTS SHOULD BE REASONABLE AND FIT WITH CHARACTER OF NEIGHBORHOOD.

Open Space

- Thoughtful landscaping, with fruit trees, gardens, native trees and grasses; using the municipal plant palette
 - Should RFP require a response in proposals that speaks to landscape design?

10/26 COMMENTS: STRIKE THE WORD “FRUIT” ABOVE; EMPHASIZE BIODIVERSITY AND NATIVE FLORA; PROPOSALS SHOULD RESPOND TO LANDSCAPE DESIGN, IT IS IMPORTANT; EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATION SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE TEAM’S ARCHITECTURAL AND LANDSCAPING QUALIFICATIONS.

- Shared gardens and play spaces
 - Available to the immediate residents only or community at large?

10/26 COMMENTS: PROPOSALS SHOULD RESPOND TO HOW GARDENS AND/OR PLAY SPACES WILL WORK, I.E. ACCESS, PARKING, ETC.

- Useable green space
- Low maintenance
- Makes use of the unique slope

Traffic

- The road is curved, or at least traffic calming and safe.
 - Is the word “curved” too prescriptive? Should the RFP simply emphasize traffic calming and safety?

10/26 COMMENTS: STRIKE THE WORDS “IS CURVED” ABOVE; THE RFP SHOULD STATE THAT COMPLETE STREETS PRINCIPLES SHOULD GUIDE THE DESIGN OF THE STREET AND SIDEWALKS, ETC.

- Provides mobility for vehicles, pedestrians and bikes
- Curb cuts
 - What does this mean?

10/26 COMMENTS: STRIKE THE ABOVE RECOMMENDATION “CURB CUTS”; THE RFP SHOULD REQUIRE A RESPONSE REGARDING STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND USE OF BEST PRACTICES I.E. LOCALIZE TREATMENT OF STORMWATER.

- Does this Committee want to recommend that O’Neil Street be connected through to Pitt Street?

10/26 COMMENTS: YES, THE RFP SHOULD STATE THE COMMITTEE ENDORSES THE CONNECTION OF O’NEIL TO PITT.

Ecologically Focused

- Liberal use of smaller rainwater drains, porous pavement on the road, and rain gardens – best management practices (BMPs)
 - Should the RFP require a response that describes the approach to manage rainwater using best practices?

10/26 COMMENTS: RFP SHOULD INCLUDE THE STATEMENT, “TO MEET THE HIGHEST LEVEL STANDARD”.

- Houses are oriented to the sun, south oriented windows, heat pumps
 - Does this mean that if the buildings are not built with solar panels at the start, then they should at least be built in such a way to easily accommodate solar as a follow-on improvement made by the homeowner?

10/26 COMMENTS: RFP SHOULD STATE THAT SOLAR IS A PLUS AND ASK FOR RESPONSE, HOW IT MIGHT BE INCLUDED, I.E. PASSIVE SOLAR; BEYOND SOLAR, PROPOSALS SHOULD SPEAK TO SUSTAINABLE BUILDING AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY; THIS WILL BE A CONSIDERATION DURING SELECTION.

- Expanded infrastructure as the housing expands
 - Does this mean that houses are built in such a way to accommodate future additions, amenities, appliances? Should the RFP ask developers to consider this approach as a way to achieve affordability?

10/26 COMMENTS: ABOVE RECOMMENDATION SHOULD BE UPDATED; RFP SHOULD ASK DEVELOPERS TO SIMPLY CONSIDER INNOVATIVE WAYS TO ACHIEVE AFFORDABILITY; PROPOSALS SHOULD GIVE EXAMPLES; RFP MIGHT STATE THE CITY IS WILLING TO BE A PARTNER TO ACHIEVE AFFORDABILITY.

The Reuse Process Itself

- The RFP is written with qualitative considerations, as well as quantitative
- The Reuse Committee will have a chance to review the draft RFP
- Some Reuse Committee members serve on the review committee with Councilors and City Staff
- Neighbors/abutters are notified by mail when demolition will happen
 - Should the RFP require proposals to explain a Public Engagement Process to be undertaken by the preferred developer prior to contract approval and also during construction?

10/26 COMMENTS: YES, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS WILL BE KEY;
PROPOSAL SHOULD LAY OUT THE PLAN AND TIMELINE.