



CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

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Scott Morelli
City Manager

MINUTES

O'Neil Street Facility Re-Use Planning Committee

Thursday, July 27, 2017

6:15 PM

City Hall - Council Chambers

Committee Members

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

Consultants

Laura Moorehead (Facilitator)

Absent

Sara Zografos (Resident)

1. Meeting was called to order by Patti Smith (Chair) at 6:15 pm.
2. The minutes of May 25, 2017 meeting and June 22, 2017 meeting were adopted unanimously.
3. L. Moorehead gave a recap of where the committee is at in the process and where it is going in the next couple months. She reviewed the feedback that was provided at the last Council workshop meeting. The Committee should begin work narrowing its recommendations to about three alternatives. This will require some additional analysis, including traffic report, economic feasibility, environmental, etc. The Committee should also consider if there are any community partners or non-profits who might have a role to play. Once the three alternatives are selected, the Committee will present its findings to the City Council for review. Following the next Council workshop, another Public Forum will be held to present the alternatives and solicit feedback. The process will culminate with a final decision from City Council on the

future disposition of the property. Tex proposed the Committee allow some time for public comments before the open committee discussion, and everyone agreed.

4. Public Comments (Part 1): Several members of the public spoke to the committee and advocated for balancing any new development with public green space. The Committee was asked to consider affordable housing. It was suggested that denser cluster development could represent a compromise to create both green space and a substantial number of new housing units. It was pointed out that the City has many priorities, and the Committee should ask how green space, for example, matches up against affordable housing, or other needs in the community.
5. Committee Discussion: The Committee spent time discussing various ideas for the parcel. Each Committee member was given the opportunity to speak, and L. Moorehead recorded all of the comments. H. Spetla presented a 3D visual of a design he created using computer software, which included mostly park area, and approximately six single family homes. Most Committee member comments were related to density, affordable housing, green space, the ratio of housing to open space, aesthetics and landscaping, community gardens and other public amenities, and the concept of universal design.
6. Public Comments (Part 2): Several members of the public spoke to the Committee. A representative of the Community Garden Collective advocated for the Committee to consider a new shared gardening space. Another speaker advocated for affordable housing with rooftop solar and a community garden and pocket park. They believe creating a new public park with land is not practical. Another resident advocated for the Committee to make broad recommendations to the Council, not specific design proposals, because there must be flexibility when working with an eventual developer. One neighboring resident asked the Committee to have a traffic study done. There is concern how traffic numbers will change at Cottage and Pitt if 20+ units of new housing are created. A representative of the Land Trust expressed interest in being a partner, and asked Committee to consider how they can be a part of this project. The last speaker asked the Committee to determine what the sale price of a home should be to be considered affordable to a household at 100% of AMI.
7. Closing Discussion: T. Haeuser suggested the City might consider an arrangement with future developer to provide transparency with project costs. This would be more of a partnership approach. The Committee expressed support for many of the ideas that had been presented, i.e. community garden, strike the right balance between new development and open space, etc. It was proposed that in addition to recommending three design schemes, the Committee articulate certain qualities and characteristics that are preferred to be included as part of a redevelopment. For example, rooftop solar and green building design, maximize open space to create community common areas,

universal building design, etc. The final redevelopment plan may or may not include these features, but the City should seek to integrate these into the project if feasible. A suggestion was made that a small group of committee members meet before the next meeting to review all of the ideas and comments and come up with a plan for the next couple meetings to iron out all of the lingering issues, which experts should the Committee hear from, etc.

8. The chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm.

Next meeting is on Thursday, August 24 from 6:15 – 8:00 pm at City Council Chambers.