

ASTORIA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

City Council Chambers

September 21, 2015

ADC JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

A regular meeting of the Astoria Development Commission was held at the above place at the hour of 6:00 pm.

Commissioners Present: Price, Herzig, Warr, Nemlowill, Mayor LaMear

Commissioners Excused: None

Staff Present: City Manager Estes, Assistant City Manager/Police Chief Johnston, Community Development Director Cronin, Parks and Recreation Director Cosby, Finance Director Brooks, Fire Chief Ames, Library Director Tucker, Public Works Director Cook, and City Attorney Henningsgaard. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

Mayor LaMear recessed the regular Development Commission meeting to convene the Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:**Item 3(a): ORS 192.660(2)(e) – Real Property Transactions**

Mayor LaMear called for a recess at 7:00 pm to convene the City Council meeting.

The Development Commission reconvened at 8:09 pm, immediately following the City Council meeting.

REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS: There were no reports.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: There were no changes.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

The following items were presented on the Consent Calendar.

5(a) ADC Minutes of 8/3/2015

5(b) ADC Minutes of Special Meeting 8/14/2015

5(c) ADC Minutes 8/17/2015

5(d) **Authorize Contract for Heritage Square (Community Development)**

City Manager Estes noted that a revised memorandum on Item 5(d) was distributed to Commissioners prior to the meeting. Commissioner Herzig requested Item 5(d) be removed for further discussion.

Commission Action: Motion by Commissioner Nemlowill, seconded by Commissioner Herzig to approve Items 5(a), (b), and (c) of the Consent Calendar. Motion approved unanimously. Ayes: Commissioners Warr, Price, Nemlowill, Herzig, and Mayor LaMear. Nays: None.

Item 5(d): Authorize Contract for Heritage Square (Community Development)

City Manager Estes explained that City Council adopted a goal for the current fiscal year to investigate locating the Astoria Public Library as part of a mixed-use project on Heritage Square. At the August 17, 2015 Development Commission meeting, Staff was authorized to issue a request for qualifications (RFQ) to hire a consultant to investigate alternatives for Heritage Square and the existing library site. The City received five responses from design teams, which were reviewed by Staff. Staff recommends executing a contract with Walker Macy, a planning and landscape architecture firm, for a fixed price of \$16,000 plus expenses not to exceed 5 percent of the contract, which would provide for travel reimbursements to subcontractors. Staff believes a Mayor appointed stakeholder advisory committee would benefit the project. Staff recommends the Astoria Development Commission approve the contract with Walker Macy and authorize the Mayor to sign the contract and create a stakeholder advisory committee.

Commissioner Herzig was concerned that the City would be paying \$16,800 for an annotated memorandum and a PowerPoint presentation. He asked which part of the study Staff was not competent enough to complete on their own. Director Cronin explained that he was a city planner, not an architect. Staff needs architects to help

arrange puzzle pieces on Heritage Square. Architects have a much different skill set than anyone on Staff has and they provide more resources to help engage the citizens. Architects also bring more technical skills to the project in terms of urban design.

Commissioner Herzig asked what a high-level massing plan was. Director Cronin said the plan would include a bulk and massing diagram, which is boxes on top of boxes. Pretty pictures would be developed in the next phase of this project if City Council authorizes another phase.

Commissioner Herzig said according to the memorandum, the contractor would conduct a one-day session in Astoria. This would be the only time the contractor visits Astoria, other than when they make a presentation. The one-day session would be a workshop with selected stakeholders and community members. He believed the workshop should be open to the entire community. The project is for the whole city and he wanted to make sure Staff would not be picking and choosing who could attend. The second page of the proposal discusses three possibilities; keep the library in its current location, renovate the library building for an alternative use, or demolish and rebuild in the current library location. He did not recall any Councilor suggesting the library be demolished and rebuilt. If no one on City Council was willing to vote in favor of demolishing and rebuilding the library, he asked if the option could be removed from the list of things to consider in an effort to save money. He was shocked because he did not believe this was ever suggested.

Mayor LaMear believed demolishing and rebuilding meant renovating because much of the building would need to be demolished.

Director Cronin explained that demolish and rebuild reflected that a developer looks only at the property, not the building. A developer would just build something new according to the building codes. However, renovating the building would allow for a current use. The proposal simply lays out all of the options.

Commissioner Herzig understood the proposal meant the library would be demolished and a new library would be built in the same space. Director Cronin confirmed that would be one option. However, from a developer's perspective, demolishing the building would create a clean slate on which to build anything that complies with current zoning and codes, like a new mixed-use building or apartment. City Manager Estes added if the City determines the library fit best at Heritage Square, the consultant team would consider what could happen at the existing library site to determine if there was a higher and better use for the property.

Commissioner Herzig said he wanted to make sure the proposal did not mean tearing down the library and building a new library on the same spot. He asked that the language be clarified. City Manager Estes said the existing language keeps all options on the table so they can be analyzed. The purpose of the study is to determine the preferred location for the library and if the library were moved to Heritage Square, what would be the best use of the existing building and space.

Commissioner Herzig said if the space turns out to be more valuable than the building, the building would be torn down. On the fourth page of the proposal, it says the scope of work would be limited to the city block between Duane and Exchange and 11th and 12th Streets. He wanted a little bit larger area to be included. However, more focus may be a good thing. Director Cronin confirmed the area extended to 10th Street. The proposal that stated 11th Street was a previous copy.

Commissioner Herzig said he had spoken to former County Manager Scott Summers about the possibility of building a parking structure south of the Boyington Building. Mr. Summers had indicated he spoke with Astoria's City Manager and Mayor about this project. He understood a parking structure was outside the scope of this study, but wanted City Council to discuss it. He asked if Staff believed this expenditure of \$16,800 for a memorandum and a PowerPoint was worthwhile. Director Cronin answered yes. City Manager Estes said the work of the consultant team is necessary to synthesize all of the information and produce the product. City Staff does not have the necessary skill sets to put the entire process together. One of the benefits is having a third party look at the project from a fresh perspective.

Commissioner Herzig agreed it would be good to have a fresh perspective. However, the group would only make one site visit before making a recommendation. He confirmed the consultants would prepare an Excel spreadsheet of high-level costs based on the recommendation. Instead of presenting three options, the consultants would explain why one option is preferred and how the City might go about moving forward. Director Cronin explained that Staff's goal is to present public and private sources of funds and the total cost to City Council at their last meeting in November. This will give Council an understanding of the City's participation. As

the process moves forward, numbers will be refined more and more, but the high-level numbers are a starting point.

Commissioner Herzig believed this report would be much more useful than the report created by Michelle Reeves several years ago. Ms. Reeves created a great report, but the City has not done much with it. There is more motivation on the Council to move forward with this project. He thanked Staff for answering his questions.

Commissioner Nemlowill said over the last 15 years, the City has spent a lot of money on consultants and multiple studies for Heritage Square. She hoped that this time, the plan would actually be implemented. Director Cronin noted he would move the project forward as fast as he could.

Commissioner Herzig added that receiving a report in November would be a quick turnaround time.

Commissioner Price said she was pleased that a local architect would be included. She wanted this to be an Astoria project, not a Portland project.

Commission Action: Motion by Commissioner Nemlowill, seconded by Commissioner Price to approve the contract with Walker|Macy and authorize the Chair to sign and create an associated advisory committee for the project. Motion approved unanimously. Ayes: Commissioners Warr, Price, Nemlowill, Herzig, and Mayor LaMear. Nays: None.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

Item 6(a): Lease of City Property for Chowder Boat (Community Development)

In February 2015 Teresa Estrada applied to the City of Astoria for a lease on City owned property located at the US Coast Guard parking lot adjacent to the Bowpicker food cart. For various reasons described in a City Council staff report dated April 30, 2015, the City declined the request on May 4, 2015. The ADC owns other property in Astoria including 250 21st Street located adjacent to the Riverwalk, Barbey Maritime Center, and City Lumber Company. The site was a former freight warehouse (Darigold Building) which the ADC demolished in 2011. Ms. Estrada submitted another lease request on July 1, 2015 for this property.

This request is located in the Astor East Urban Renewal District, which is under the jurisdiction of the Astoria Development Commission. After receiving the request, staff from Engineering and Community Development worked with Ms. Estrada to understand the nature of the request and its implications for the property and neighborhood. Based on this information, and subsequent analysis completed by staff, there are a number of issues to consider before entering negotiations for a lease let alone a land use application which would immediately follow an executed lease.

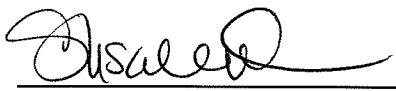
It is recommended that the Astoria Development Commission decline the lease request, direct staff to consider an asset management policy that formalizes lease criteria to evaluate future requests and determine procedural steps needed to initiate a letter of intent for prospective tenants, and develop a disposition/investment strategy for the property consistent with ADC policy.

Mayor LaMear said a request had been made to postpone this item to the October 19, 2015 Development Commission meeting.

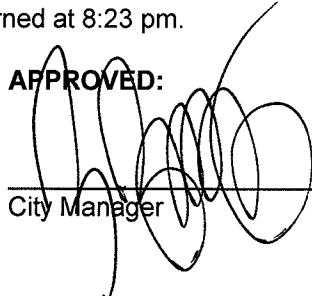
ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 pm.

ATTEST:


Secretary

APPROVED:


City Manager