



Office of Mayor Miro Weinberger

To: City Council
From: Mayor Miro Weinberger
Date: May 9, 2016
Re: Appointment of CEDO Director

I respectfully submit for your consideration and approval Noelle MacKay as the City's new Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO) Director, effective August 1, 2016. Noelle comes to the City of Burlington following more than 16 years of community development, land use planning, and economic development experience. Noelle served for five years as the Executive Director of Smart Growth Vermont, an organization dedicated to protecting Vermont's natural environment and strengthening the State's downtowns. For the last five years she has served as Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) focused on developing housing policy, overseeing the Mobile Home Park Program, and strengthening Vermont's downtowns. (DHCD is a Department of the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development.) If confirmed by the City Council, Noelle intends to step down as Commissioner at the end of June 2016.

I am pleased to nominate an individual of Noelle's experience, dedication, and vision, and I am requesting City Council approval of this appointment at your May 16, 2016 meeting.

Extensive experience in community and economic development, affordable housing, strengthening downtowns, and community partnerships

Through her work at Smart Growth Vermont, Noelle worked in communities from Bristol to Burke to Danville to Burlington as a trusted partner, offering advice and practical solutions to Vermont towns to help build stronger communities, preserve their character, and protect the surrounding environment. She built a reputation as a careful listener, a thoughtful advocate for balanced land use policy, and a skilled manager able to handle complex challenges.

As Commissioner of DHCD, she has balanced economic development interests with a strong desire to preserve Vermont's sense of place and natural beauty. DHCD's mission is to "grow our economy, help businesses create jobs, and support vibrant and resilient communities." Noelle championed the creation of housing that is affordable for low-income Vermonters and earned respect both for her work at a statewide policy level and in local projects serving many of our State's cities and towns. Her policy accomplishments included the creation of the new Neighborhood Development Areas designation (In 2014, Burlington was the first City in Vermont to approve such a designation) and a legislatively-approved amendment to Act 250 aimed at incentivizing the creation of mixed-income housing. She also oversees the State's historic preservation efforts to properly steward Vermont's unique heritage. And, in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene, she worked closely with other State officials, including Chief Recovery Officers Sue Minter and Neale Lunderville, to help provide relief and to rebuild towns damaged by the storm. As part of the Community Planning Initiative, Noelle brought together teams of senior members of the Governor's cabinet from Agencies and Departments across State government, as well as non-profit partners, to better understand the needs in hard-hit

communities.

Experienced leader and manager

Noelle's current role as Commissioner includes responsibility for managing a staff of 40 permanent and 50 seasonal historic site employees and a budget of \$28 million. Prior to her work in Vermont State government, Noelle had a decade of non-profit senior management experience, including as the Executive Director of Smart Growth Vermont.

Commitment to public service and community partnerships

Noelle has spent the past five years with State government and both understands and embodies the merits of public service and the importance of community participation in local government. She is driven to make the world a better and more just place, and her work as both a State Commissioner and as the leader of Smart Growth Vermont has made her a believer in the importance of strong and dynamic community partnerships and building relationships across diverse stakeholders. As Commissioner of DHCD, Noelle also focused on community and economic resilience in five communities (Barre, Brattleboro, Brandon, Enosburg, and Woodstock) around the state and provided analysis and recommendations on how to protect economic assets and infrastructure. In 2014, Noelle was a Council of State Government's Henry Toll Fellow, successfully completing one of the nation's premier leadership development programs for state government officials.

Strong ties to Burlington and Chittenden County

After moving to Vermont in 2005 to begin her work at Smart Growth Vermont, Noelle lived on Crombie Street in Burlington's Old North End, after which she purchased a home in the South End, and now lives in Shelburne. In addition to her primary professional responsibilities, Noelle was an active member of the Champlain Housing Trust Board of Directors until stepping down to begin her term as Commissioner of DHCD in January 2011.

Moving forward

Further details of Noelle's career can be found in her attached resume. Following your confirmation of Noelle's appointment, I intend to place her at step 5 of the CEDO Director pay scale for an annual compensation in FY17 of \$96,836. Noelle will begin her service to the City of Burlington on August 1, 2016, and CEDO Assistant Director for Community Development Marcy Esbjerg will serve as Acting Director of the Department until that time.

Noelle currently owns a home in Shelburne with her husband and intends to continue to reside and vote there. I respectfully request that the City Council consider an amendment to the City Council rules regarding "personal hardship" extensions of the deadline Department Heads have for becoming a legal voter within the City of Burlington and grant Noelle such an extension. The proposed amendment would grant extensions to appointees who own and reside in a home in Chittenden County at the time of their appointment and who certify that having to move from that home to become a legal voter of Burlington would cause the appointee's family significant hardship. The Council has the discretion to grant this amendment under the City Charter, and the proposed change is substantively consistent with current Council rules, which acknowledge that some internal candidates promoted and appointed to Department Head positions would experience undue hardships if they were expected to move as a result of their promotion.

I am requesting that Noelle receive a personal hardship extension because Noelle and her husband purchased a home in Shelburne in 2012 and have put significant resources into restoring it. If they are required to sell their home in the next year, they are likely to suffer a financial loss. Noelle will be living a short distance from Burlington and has committed that the location of her home will in no way impact her ability to attend evening or weekend commitments or otherwise engaging in the Burlington

community. Noelle's certification of personal hardship will be in the City Council materials this week for consideration of the hardship at the City Council meeting on May 16.

Noelle is a dedicated public servant and an experienced leader and manager who has demonstrated a strong commitment to Burlington, Chittenden County, and the State of Vermont over the past decade. I am confident she will make an exemplary CEDO Director, will be a forward-thinking and trusted member of the City's leadership team, and will continue CEDO's proud traditions of affordable housing, community and economic development, and community justice.

Thank you for your consideration.