



CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT
CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT &
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE
c/o Community & Economic Development Office
City Hall, Room 32 • 149 Church Street • Burlington, VT 05401
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Councilor Selene Colburn, Chair, East District
Councilor Tom Ayres, Ward 7
Councilor Adam Roof, Ward 8

Tuesday, December 13, 2016
6:30 – 8:00 PM
Contois Auditorium

Draft Minutes

In addition to the Councilors noted above, the following people were in attendance: Noelle MacKay (Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO)), Caryn Long, Stephen Marshall, Ian Jakus (CEDO), Ted Wimpey (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity Fair Housing Project), Council President Jane Knodell, Jeffry D. Glassberg, Joe Speidel (University of Vermont (UVM)), Morgan True (VTDigger), James Lockridge (Big Heavy World Foundation), Devon Ayers (Burlington resident and Vermont Legal Aid), Todd Rawlings (CEDO)

1. Review Agenda – At 6:33 p.m. Chair Colburn started the meeting and reviewed the agenda. Councilor Roof made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilor Ayres. Motion approved unanimously.

2. Public Forum

James Lockridge (Big Heavy World Foundation) said that all-ages venue 242 Main is an important historical and community resource for Burlington and that when Memorial Auditorium is redeveloped, inclusion for 242 Main in the new development should be a priority. He has a petition with over 500 signatures of people who support 242 Main and its place in the new development.

3. Approval of Minutes – Councilor Roof made a motion to approve the July minutes as drafted, seconded by Councilor Ayres. Motion approved unanimously.

4. Inclusionary Zoning Evaluation Report

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said that an evaluation of the Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) Ordinance was part of the City's approved Housing Action Plan. A Request For Proposal (RFP) process was conducted, a consultant was selected, and now the consultant has delivered a draft of the report. Staff reviewed this initial draft of the report and determined that further information and research were required to fill in gaps and provide factual support for statements. The consultant can come to Burlington on January 30th or 31st to present the final report.

Councilor Roof said that he was very interested in the report and after the final report was issued, he wanted access to the initial draft to see what had changed.

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said that she hoped to make the report publically available two weeks before the January meeting.

Chair Colburn asked if that meant that it would be available on January 15?

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said yes.

Devon Ayers (Vermont Legal Aid) said she has been following this process and she is concerned about delays and about the process not being transparent. Vermont Legal Aid supports IZ and believes that it affirmatively furthers fair housing.

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said that the difference between drafts will be that the final draft has more citations and more information to back up statements.

Devon Ayers (Vermont Legal Aid) said she also wants to see both drafts.

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said that she will speak with the City Attorney to discuss any issues around sharing these drafts.

Ted Wimpey (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity Fair Housing Project) asked what has come out in the draft. IZ is of major importance to the fair housing work that he does. With declining public dollars for affordable housing, Burlington must leverage private development to create affordable housing.

Chair Colburn said that she was frustrated by the amount of time between the initial and final drafts. It is important that the January deadline be met. The delay has held up the work of this committee.

The committee members discussed the schedule for the January IZ meeting. They agreed that January 31st was best, starting at 6:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m.

5. Memorial Auditorium Update

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said that evaluations of the condition of Memorial Auditorium occurred in the 1980's and has been updated periodically since then. Since that time, there have been public votes to commit funds to the repair of Memorial, but those votes failed to get sufficient voter support. The building is now not safe or fit for occupancy. Last year, the City drafted a general RFP to redevelop Memorial, but just before that RFP was released, UVM announced that it was exploring a new arena in South Burlington and other locations. UVM is looking at this arena in the context of updating other existing buildings on campus. UVM is looking at the feasibility of Memorial as a potential site for a new arena. The City is not interested in managing or programming an arena. If UVM determines that Memorial is a viable site for an arena, then the City will look at next steps to determine whether to issue a new RFP or use the existing RFP. She has met with James Lockridge to discuss 242 Main in the context of Memorial redevelopment.

Councilor Ayres asked when UVM's consultant would reach a recommendation about the arena.

Joe Speidel (UVM) said that the consultant is still working on the recommendations and that the board is eager to learn the results of the consultant's report.

Jeffrey D. Glassberg (consultant for the City on the possible Memorial redevelopment) said that his understanding is that UVM's consultants expect to come to a conclusion in January. If Memorial has been determined to be an option for UVM, at that point a public process can begin. The Memorial property represents a very viable redevelopment opportunity on Main Street. The RFP could be released by the end of the first quarter of 2017 and proposals could be received by the end of the second quarter of 2017.

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said that those dates should be considered provisional.

James Lockridge (Big Heavy World Foundation) asked whether the public will have a role in the RFP process.

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said yes.

Councilor Ayres said that he recognizes the importance of 242 Main and he knows how much it means to the community. He is amenable to locating 242 Main outside of Memorial.

James Lockridge (Big Heavy World Foundation) said that 242 Main is an historic resource and the petition signers were not receptive to locating outside of Memorial. 242 Main makes an enormous contribution to the cultural resources of the City and he hopes that the City and its partners wish to continue to support it.

Councilor Roof said that he recognizes the value of the building and block to the community. We must be conscious of the history of the building as a memorial to veterans and he wants to be mindful of all users of the building and block (which include a tattoo

business and a home). Any redevelopment should include a community gathering space and a performing space. It should be more than arena.

Stephen Marshall said the City should do a general RFP to explore all options and we should be aiming for a diversity of resources. It is important to have art groups side-by-side to foster community.

Caryn Long asked if the City had decided that we don't need particular tenants or uses in Memorial? The art studio moving is a loss for Edmunds and she values the farmers market. She asked whether an arena would require a zoning change.

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said the tenants had to move because the building was not safe. Previous public votes to commit funds for rehabilitation had failed. The estimated costs to renovate the building were \$8,000,000 - \$12,000,000.

Joe Speidel (UVM) said that UVM would be a big tenant in the project, but the arena would not be a UVM project. Other uses in addition to UVM's uses would be great.

Councilor Roof said that his vision was that UVM would not "have the keys" but UVM's role could help the viability of the project which would include other diverse uses.

Councilor Ayres said he wanted to clarify that the \$8,000,000 - \$12,000,000 cost was just to make the building safe for occupancy. Memorial is a 20th century building trying to function in the 21st century. He emphasized that it has been used a sport venue throughout its history, but a new use must consider parking and traffic issues.

Council President Jane Knodell asked, if UVM is interested in partnering with the City on an arena redevelopment, would there be a flexibility of use?

Jeffrey D. Glassberg (consultant for the City on the possible Memorial redevelopment) said that UVM would use the building for events about 65 nights a year, which leaves many opportunities for many other uses. The end product should meet a multitude of uses and added that a hockey arena might require 4,500 seats and basketball would require closer to 3,500 seats. The historic use should be considered a baseline in terms of impact: many large events have been successfully held on the site over the years and the site has no parking.

Stephen Marshall said that infrastructure and transportation issues must be considered regardless of how Memorial is redeveloped.

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said that we are already thinking about those issues in the Burlington Town Center project and that the City already has a great framework of alternative transportation options. The Library and Park departments are already reaching out to teens about their needs and wants.

Chair Colburn said that the City should activate the historic use in the redevelopment, but the voters communicated there is not an appetite to preserve Memorial. Memorial worked well for 242 Main and others because of varied uses and scales of spaces and it provided a low barrier access to varied uses. 242 Main is important and she would love to see it

preserved, but that right now it is not primarily a teen space.

6. Micro-Housing Update

Councilor Ayres said that at the last meeting of this committee, he proposed a conference focusing on micro-housing which could occur in the spring of 2017. Due to the IZ process, this conference has been put on the back-burner, but he would like pick it up again. He is hearing skepticism about whether micro-housing can have an impact in Burlington. This conference would address the need for education around what barriers there might be to micro-housing in Burlington. The conference would occur over a weekend and should include representatives from Champlain Housing Trust (CHT), Planning & Zoning, CEDO, Committee On Temporary Shelter (COTS), and others. A conference could look at the following questions:

- Ancillary Units? There may be opportunities for micro units in the New North End which has many homes with big back yards. What are the incentives and barriers?
- Can micro-housing help homeless people? It seems to be used in other cities creatively.
- Can Yestermorrow be a good resource for tiny house knowledge?

Chair Colburn said that we should be mindful of not overburdening City staff with the planning and coordination of this conference.

Councilor Ayres said that he agreed and he is willing to organize the conference and that City staff would be panelists. He will bring a progress report to the next meeting.

Chair Colburn said that the Housing Action Plan included a review of micro-housing.

Councilor Ayres said that a discussion about micro-housing folds into the conversation about permit reform.

CEDO Director Noelle MacKay said that she has some experience with micro-housing from her role with the State of Vermont. It should be considered a tool in the tool box, but there are environmental concerns around micro-housing. It would be useful to look at the work that Norwich University did competing in the Solar Decathlon. Also, Norwich has developed a unit which can be used as an accessory dwelling unit.

Stephen Marshall said that he is housed now but has been a member of the homeless community. He expressed some thoughts about current programs for the homeless.

Councilor Roof said that this committee has reached out to the homeless community and recognize the value of their input. It is important to try to connect what homeless people with that they want and need.

Chair Colburn said that the last time that this committee discussed micro-housing, she shared research on simple and successful solutions where residents were empowered to shape their environments. There is room for a diversity of approaches to help homeless

people. CHT is trying to be innovative and there is a need to think about this problem creatively. CHT went out on a limb for Beacon Apartments and Harbor Place.

Caryn Long said that there is a place in California called “The Flats” where homeless people have a lot of autonomy around their housing. She thought it might be near Palm Desert on a decommissioned Air Force base.

Stephen Marshall said that he had recently read a book called “White Trash” which investigated the relationship between housing and status. This must be considered with any micro-housing solution.

7. Update on Community Development Block Grant Funding

CEDO Housing Program Manager Todd Rawlings gave an overview of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Notice of Funding Availability. CEDO administers the CDBG program. Although the CEDO does not yet know how much will be appropriated, CEDO estimates \$110,500 for Public Service projects and \$470,845 for Development projects. In addition to the above, \$112, 649 of unallocated funds are available from previous grants with \$58,510 available for Public Service projects and \$54,139 for Development projects. CDBG projects must benefit low and moderate income households and applications are due Wednesday, January 11, 2017. The CDBG Advisory Board evaluates the proposals and is composed of 8 members from Neighborhood Planning Associations, 3 Mayoral appointees, and 1 member from the Agency of Human Services. Public meetings are from January 26, 2017 through early April 2017. The public has right to attend and can make comments during comment period. The Advisory Board makes a recommendation to the Mayor and final recommendations are voted on by the City Council (with public hearing) on approximately April 17, 2017. The Notice of Funding Availability is located on CEDO’s website: <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CEDO/Requests-for-Funds>

Chair Colburn asked if the members of this committee were invited to participate and if so how? She also asked if any of the unallocated funds were reserved for use on the opioid issue.

CEDO Housing Program Manager Todd Rawlings said that he did not know, but would find out and get back to the committee on these questions.

8. Schedule Meetings Through March 2017

Committee members agreed on the following provisional meeting schedule:

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|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| • January 31, 2017 | Start: 6:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. | Location: TBD |
| • February 23, 2017 | 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. | Location: TBD |
| • March 23, 2017 | 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. | Location: TBD |

9. Councilor Roof made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Councilor Ayres seconded that motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Todd Rawlings
Housing Program Manager
CEDO